

# The Postal Record

Volume 133/Number 1 January 2020

The monthly journal of the NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF LETTER CARRIERS

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## Beyond the call of duty

Carriers deliver  
community service  
year-round

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# The urgent first step of postal reform: Enacting the USPS Fairness Act



**Fredric V.  
Rolando**

*“(W)e passed the 2006 law that reclassified a long-term liability into a short-term liability which created a real pinch on the Postal Service that should have never occurred.”*

*—Sen. Ron Johnson (R-WI), chairman, Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs Committee, 2016*

**B**ack in August in this space, I reported on the introduction in the House of Representatives of the USPS Fairness Act (H.R. 2382), a bill to repeal the retiree health pre-funding mandate that has severely damaged USPS finances for more than a decade. I called on NALC’s army of activists to rally support for the bill in Congress, and wow,

did our activists rise to the challenge. As this issue goes to press, a bipartisan super-majority of 298 House members has co-sponsored H.R. 2382, and Reps. Peter DeFazio (D-OR) and Tom Reed (R-NY) have taken steps to place the bill on the House’s so-called Consensus Calendar. Under House rules, bills with more than 290 co-sponsors are eligible for a floor vote if the committee with jurisdiction does not act in 25 business days, providing a second option for a floor vote. I am pleased to report that the chairwoman of the House Committee on Oversight and Reform, Rep. Carolyn Maloney (D-NY), supports the USPS Fairness Act and is working with us to ensure its passage.

I want to thank our team of legislative and political organizers, our branch and state association leaders, and the thousands of carriers they inspired to contact their members of Congress about the Fairness Act. Thanks to your efforts, and thanks to the active and retired members who responded to our push notifications on the NALC Member App, we were able to build a huge majority for our bill in just four months.

**Now we must do the same on the Senate side of Capitol Hill.** Happily, I can report that Sen. Brian Shatz (D-HI) and Sen. Steve Daines (R-MT) have introduced a Senate version of the USPS Fairness Act (S. 2965), which is identical to H.R. 2382.

The outlook for enacting the Fairness Act in the GOP-controlled Senate is somewhat uncertain. On one hand, as the quote at the top of this column makes clear, the chairman of our oversight committee in the Senate (the Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs Committee, or HSGAC), Sen. Ron Johnson (R-WI), agrees with us that Congress made a mistake when it adopted the retiree health pre-funding mandate in 2006. On the other hand, many other senators may want to do more comprehensive postal reform.

We agree that other legislative reforms will be needed to fully restore the Postal Service’s finances. And there are many steps we can take to strengthen the Postal Service. We could start by investing our retirement funds better. As I argued last month, the requirement that all our funds be invested in low-yielding Treasury bonds has cost us tens of billions of dollars in forgone investment returns, which in turn increases expenses for pension and health benefits. We could free the Postal Service to deliver beer, wine and spirits, and to innovate in other ways to generate greater revenues. And we could adopt a more sensible rate-setting process—an action that the Postal Regulatory Commission is once again working on in earnest.

But let’s be honest; we have been trying to enact comprehensive postal reform legislation for the past five sessions of Congress. So far, in the 116th Congress, no postal reform legislation has been introduced in either chamber of Congress. Prospects for such legislation in the House suffered a setback with the tragic death of Oversight Chairman Elijah Cummings (D-MD) in October, and with the decision by Rep. Mark Meadows (R-NC) to step back from leadership on postal reform.

On the Senate side, we know that Sen. Johnson has opposed the bipartisan bill advocated in the last Congress (2017-2018), but we don’t know what he and the GOP majority on the HSGAC Committee might offer as an alternative, or even whether they plan to offer any alternative. But if Sen. Johnson wants to enact comprehensive postal reform, we also know from experience that the more moving parts there are in any legislative proposal, the more difficult it becomes to achieve consensus. Given the requirement of 60 votes to overcome filibusters, this is especially true in the Senate.

**It’s time to take a different approach. There is broad bipartisan consensus that repealing the retiree health pre-funding mandate, the policy responsible for roughly 90 percent of the Postal Service’s reported financial losses since 2007, makes sense as a matter of fairness. That step would dramatically reduce the size of the problem. This action, combined with a new rate-setting system in 2020, would provide Congress with the breathing room to consider a less complicated postal reform bill, one that can attract broad consensus.**

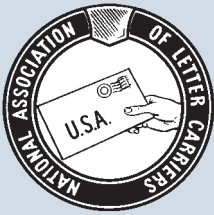
The definition of insanity is trying the same failed strategy over and over and expecting a different result. Let’s end the insanity and take a step-by-step approach to postal reform.

You can help us execute this strategy by contacting your senators and urging them to co-sponsor S. 2965. We did it once (on the House side); let’s do it again.

## Contract update

In November, NALC and the Postal Service reached an agreement on a neutral arbitrator for the interest arbitration. Unfortunately, the arbitrator in question is not available. The parties are now working on selecting another arbitrator to serve as the neutral arbitrator.





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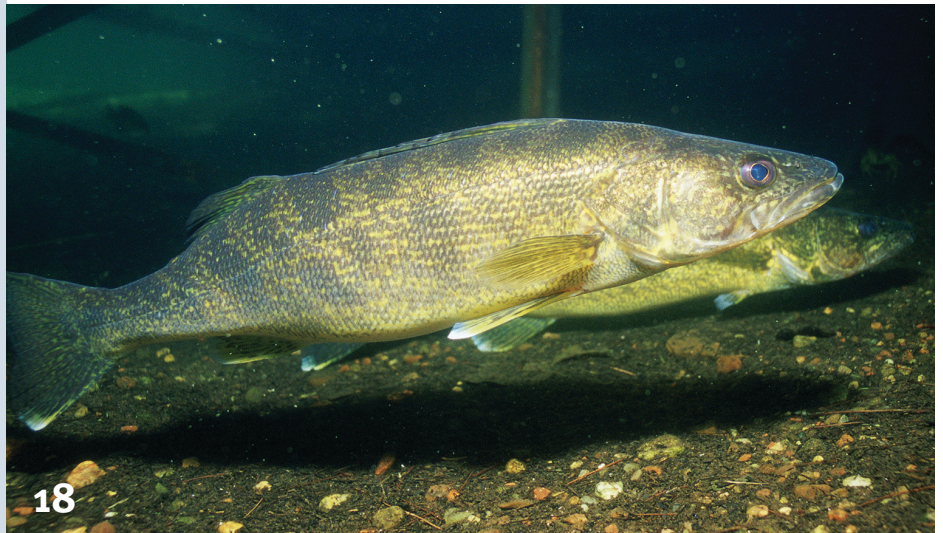
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## Journalists' perspective



Philip  
Dine

**I**f letter carriers get out their message better than anyone else in the labor movement—and they do—it's not by chance. It is, rather, the result of an interactive, two-way process involving carriers and journalists.

It starts with so many of you, letter carriers at all levels who work diligently to counter the misleading conventional wisdom regarding the Postal Service, thereby facilitating the needed legislative and regulatory reforms.

Your communications efforts, though, would not be fruitful if journalists weren't receptive, both to you and to your message. Fortunately, they often are, and so your work has a profound impact. Here are a few illustrations of their willingness

to listen, and why they chose to do so—in their own words.

**The Postal Service issues quarterly financial reports and an annual report.** The most recent one, the annual Fiscal Year 2019 report released in mid-November, drew substantial media interest. Almost all of the articles not only included comments from President Rolando but also were informed by his thoughts and featured NALC's take on the financial numbers and the factors behind the numbers. Our president and the postmaster general were the most-quoted people overall.

That wasn't an outlier—President Rolando generally is relied on by news outlets to help explain USPS financial reports. To find out why, I turned to one of the most prolific journalists covering these events; Jory Heckman, who reports on federal workforce and postal workforce issues for Federal News Radio.

"I definitely do think that hearing from President Rolando always provides valuable context, so we always make it a point to include his comments in the story," Heckman said.

"Particularly in the last report, the Postal Service was citing some of the costs with the liabilities and the pre-funding, so it was really great to hear President Rolando reflect on it, give some broader understanding of what that means."

Heckman added that, more broadly, "It's really good to know what NALC sees as some of the bigger issues for the Postal Service and its workforce."

**Leadership that helps deliver the message effectively is a big boost.** Leadership that inspires others to do the same is—to deploy a term we've used before in this space—a force multiplier for us.

John Paige, who carried mail for almost 43 years and is president emeritus of the Idaho State Association, has had letters to the editor published in recent weeks in the *Idaho Statesman*, *Idaho State Journal*, *Post Register*, *Coeur d'Alene*

*Press* and elsewhere. Those letters, like his many others over the past few years, touch on a breadth of issues, including public service, reasonable rates, universal service, earned revenue and the large presence of military veterans.

Why do the papers run so many of his letters?

We turned to Scott McIntosh, opinion page editor at the state's largest newspaper, the *Idaho Statesman*.

"I appreciate his attempts to dispel the myths, and I appreciate that his letters tend to be fact-based and verifiable and informative—and that they provide information that most people are not aware of," McIntosh said.

McIntosh mentioned the initial submission he received from Paige, during his prior stint as top editor of the *Idaho Press-Tribune*, the state's fourth-biggest paper.

"Absolutely, I remember the first time I got a letter from John. He had something in there, and I said 'that's not right.' I looked it up, and he was dead on. After that I got a few more letters. I checked them too, and sure enough... He always is fact-based and accurate."

The impact of Paige's letters extends beyond readers and lawmakers, McIntosh said: "I definitely learn stuff from his letters. I think he does a real good job of informing everyone—not just the general public but journalists as well."

**We've noted in this space that retired letter carrier and Navy veteran Aubrey Fisher of Delaware, a 51-year member, reached out to a *Barron's* reporter after reading an article that he felt didn't tell the full story about postal finances.** That reporter subsequently researched the role played by pre-funding and has since written several balanced and insightful articles.

So why did Al Root, a senior writer at the nation's leading finance weekly, listen, do his due diligence and incorporate a new perspective into his journalism?

"It's an underrated source of information, when knowledgeable readers reach out and offer a different perspective," Root said.

"It can take me down a path that I did not see in the course of my regular reporting. It presents a fuller picture of what's going on. I don't know everything."

Diligent letter carriers, inquisitive journalists—and look what happens.

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*The Postal Record* (ISSN 0032-5376) is published monthly by the National Association of Letter Carriers. Periodicals postage paid at Washington, DC, and at additional mailing offices.

POSTMASTER: Send address changes to Membership Department, NALC, 100 Indiana Ave. NW, Washington, DC 20001-2144.

Subscription included in membership dues. First-class subscription available for \$20 per year (contact Membership Department).

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Circulation: 287,000. Union-printed using soy-based inks.

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# News from Washington

## USPS Fairness Act surpasses 290 in House; introduced in Senate

**C**ongress returns from the holidays this month to begin the second session of the 116th Congress. The first session was an active one, with the House passing more than 430 bills and the Senate continuing to prioritize nominations. With the 2020 elections just 10 months away, it's expected that it will be a busy spring on Capitol Hill. NALC is hopeful that the second half of the 116th will see some activity beneficial to letter carriers, postal employees and federal workers, though election years can be tricky—many lawmakers focus on must-pass legislation, such as appropriations, when they aren't out campaigning for reelection. In the meantime, let's review the legislation, the accomplishments and the hang-ups of the last year.

### Postal activity

In early December, Sens. Steve Daines (R-MT) and Brian Schatz (D-HI) introduced the USPS Fairness Act (S. 2965), a bill to repeal the mandate to pre-fund postal retiree health benefits. The bill is identical to the House legislation (H.R. 2382) introduced earlier last year, which has reached a bipartisan super-majority by surpassing 290 co-sponsors. With the introduction of a Senate companion bill, there now is demonstrated bipartisan and bicameral support for repealing the mandate.

Repealing the pre-funding mandate is at the top of NALC's legislative agenda, as it will end an unsustainable and unfair financial burden and thereby free USPS to invest in its infrastructure, better utilize its vast networks to further serve business and residential customers, and serve as a key step in achieving future postal reform.

"Pre-funding repeal is the key to

achieving postal reform, and letter carriers should celebrate the accomplishment of surpassing 290 co-sponsors in the House," NALC President Fredric Rolando said. "While our focus remains on increasing the number of co-sponsors on the House bill, we will provide more information on what NALC members can do to build support for the Senate bill in the near future."

Additionally, in December, the Postal Regulatory Commission (PRC) issued a revised proposed rulemaking regarding the system for setting postage rates of the Postal Service's Market Dominant products. The PRC proposal eliminates the previously proposed "CPI+2 percentage points" per year cap in favor of a CPI price cap with an annual adjustment for changes in delivery "density"—which would allow the Postal Service to raise rates further if mail volume and revenues fall while the number of delivery points increases. It also tweaked its original proposal to give the Postal Service the authority to raise rates by an additional one percentage point above the CPI if it meets certain efficiency and service quality targets. NALC is studying the potential effects of the proposed system and will fully participate in this process to strengthen the nation's universal postal network.

This past year, significant strides were made on our priority resolutions with record numbers of bipartisan House co-sponsors for door delivery and six-day mail delivery, and for anti-privatization of the Postal Service in both the House and Senate. Restoration of service standards still lags behind the levels of previous Congresses and has yet to surpass 218 co-sponsors, the number needed for a majority in the House.

In August, Ashley Poling and Ann C. Fisher were confirmed to be commis-

sioners at the Postal Regulatory Commission (PRC); Ron Bloom, Roman Martinez IV and John Barger were confirmed to the Postal Board of Governors (BOG); and in early December, current chairman of the BOG Robert M. Duncan was confirmed to his second term at the board. With these confirmations, the PRC is fully staffed and there are enough members on the BOG to achieve a quorum for the first time since 2014. NALC expects more nominations in 2020, as four vacancies remain on the BOG.

Other important legislation to letter carriers includes the Social Security Fairness Act of 2019 (H.R. 141/S. 521) and the Federal Retirement Fairness Act of 2019 (H.R. 2478), both of which continued to add co-sponsors through December. NALC fully supports both pieces of legislation and hope a consensus may be reached in Congress that leads to their eventual passage in 2020.

The bipartisan Know Your Social Security Act (H.R. 5306), which would reinstate the printing and mailing of the annual Social Security statement until such time as a wage earner selects to receive it by electronic delivery, was unanimously approved in December in the House Ways and Means Committee. The Coalition for Paper Options, of which NALC is a member, supports this legislation and is encouraged by the growing support in Congress for this bill.

### Other activity of note

There was other significant legislative action for federal workers, the broader U.S. workforce and the country at large.

The Fiscal Year 2020 National Defense Authorization Act compromise between the chairmen and ranking members of the Senate and House Armed Services Committees in Decem-



ber produced a \$738 billion defense policy bill with far-reaching provisions. Among these provisions was language to provide 12 weeks of paid parental leave to the federal workforce and a pay raise for military members.

A deal was announced between congressional leadership and the White House on the United States-Mexico-Canada Agreement (USMCA), a trade agreement replacement for the 1994 North American Free Trade Agreement

(NAFTA). Both the White House and Congress, Republicans and Democrats, are claiming victory with the revised plan. Of note, the new deal includes significant improvements to labor provisions over the administration's initial proposal. As this issue went to press, the House is set to take up the deal in a vote, while Senate Majority Leader Mitch McConnell (R-KY) has said that the Senate would not consider the deal until the new year.

## Budget activity

As this issue of *The Postal Record* was going to print, Congress was working to meet the Dec. 20 deadline to pass a long-term spending deal through the end of Fiscal Year 2020 or pass a temporary measure to complete work on long-term funding. Be sure to check the NALC Government Affairs webpage for the latest information on FY 2020 and FY 2021. **PR**

# Customer Connect adds up for USPS

**B**y touching every address in the United States at least six days a week, letter carriers naturally develop special relationships with their customers. Since USPS's Customer Connect program began in 2003, thousands of carriers have successfully leveraged their interactions with business customers to encourage them to use the Postal Service, rather than rely on private delivery and mailing services. Below are some recent stories about Customer Connect leads submitted by letter carriers that have helped USPS earn new revenue.

## Business expansions also expand USPS's bottom line



**William Prezkuta**

instead of just continuing with small talk, the carrier saw an opportunity for the Postal Service.

In a conversation with one of his longtime customers, Long Island Merged, NY Branch 6000 member **William Prezkuta** learned that the business owner was expanding into a new business venture. But

Prezkuta asked the customer if, given the increased amount of shipping he was going to generate with the expansion, he would like to speak with a USPS sales representative. When the owner seemed interested, the carrier took down his contact information. Prezkuta later passed that information to his postmaster as a Customer Connect lead.

After a sales representative presented the store owner with explanations about the various benefits that the Postal Service can provide to its customers, the owner agreed to use USPS for his new business as well. The opportunity to save money, eliminate surcharges and facilitate his personal business needs proved to be persuasive.

Prezkuta's ability to turn a casual conversation into a fruitful partnership generated more than \$526,840 in new estimated revenue for USPS.

Another carrier had the same idea about turning a business expansion into an opportunity for the Postal Service. Uniontown, PA Branch 520 member **Virginia Glisan** was speaking to one of her customers, the owner of a local auto shop, when he mentioned that he was looking to increase business in the area.

The carrier didn't let this comment

go by—instead, she explained about the USPS benefit of Every Door Direct Mail (EDDM). EDDM is designed to help local small businesses with affordable targeted advertising. When Glisan walked the All Care Auto owner through how convenient and easy the process was, he agreed to meet with a USPS sales representative.

When the carrier got back to the post office, she filled out a lead card and gave it to her postmaster. From there, and armed with the knowledge Glisan had found out about the expansion, the sales team was able to convince All Care Auto to use EDDM for its new business needs. Similarly to Prezkuta's situation, the success of the sale depended on Glisan's willingness to go the extra mile for her customer, and tailor her sales talk to the store's needs.

Thanks to Glisan's connection, her lead generated nearly \$1,000 in new estimated revenue for the Postal Service. **PR**



**Virginia Glisan**



## NALC shows ‘Solidarity Without Borders’



NALC Region 10 National Business Agent Javier Bernal participated in the AFL-CIO’s “Solidarity Without Borders” event on Oct. 29 and 30.

**O**n Oct. 29, Region 10 National Business Agent Javier Bernal joined 100 labor leaders from more than 20 unions across the country in El Paso, TX, to hear workers’ stories about surviving and organizing in border communities in the United States and Mexico. The “Solidarity Without Borders” event was organized by the AFL-CIO to call for due process, labor rights and human rights on both sides of the border.

“This country was built by immigrants from many different countries,” Bernal said. “We must recognize

and utilize our strength as organized labor to provide support to those in need across the border to help ensure their rights as human beings.”

Bernal, AFL-CIO Executive Vice President Tefere Gebre and other leaders observed an afternoon session at

the immigration court in El Paso that hears the cases of detained immigrants, before attending a dinner at La Mujer Obrera, a community space that once was a garment factory. The day ended with a solidarity vigil held at the memorial next to the El Paso Walmart—the site where, on Aug. 3, a gunman killed 22 people and injured 24 others in an attack meant to target and terrorize the immigrant and Hispanic community.

On Oct. 30, AFL-CIO Secretary-Treasurer Liz Shuler and the delegation heard from researchers, activists providing legal aid to refugees, and organizers on the ground in Juarez, Mexico. After crossing the border bridge on foot from El Paso into Juarez, the delegation witnessed firsthand the challenges and humanitarian crisis that exist in many locations along the border. The delegation heard accounts of people organizing fellow Guatemalan migrants fleeing land seizures; textile and mine workers fighting company unions and organizing an independent labor union in the economic aftermath of NAFTA; and U.S. military veterans deported for immigration reasons but who want to live in the nation they served.

“The AFL-CIO’s Solidarity Without Borders delegation is a starting point for union leaders and union members to build a common message of solidarity that acknowledges worker rights and human rights and dignity,” the AFL-CIO said in a statement.

Bernal added, “There are many different unions willing to come together to help others. When that happens, we not only make a difference in other people’s lives, but in ours as well. We must continue to help our union brothers and sisters across the border in their struggle for fair wages and benefits.” **PR**



# Combined Federal Campaign ends Jan. 12

**T**he opportunity for letter carriers to contribute through the world's largest and most successful workplace charitable giving drive, the Combined Federal Campaign, is almost up. The last day of Open Season for federal employees to register to participate is Jan. 12.

During Open Season, employees may make pledges to the eligible non-profit organizations of their choosing. The CFC uses paycheck deductions to allow carriers to conveniently make regular charitable donations.

Carriers can choose which organizations to donate to from a list of more than 2,000 eligible charities. After those selections are made, carriers may then specify their desired donation amount for each organization; that amount will be automatically deducted from their paychecks every pay period and sent to the charities.

If retired letter carriers choose to donate, they will follow the same steps but will have their selected amount deducted from their annuity payments.

Three charities on the CFC list have ties to NALC:

**The Muscular Dystrophy Association (MDA)** is NALC's only official charity. It is the world's leading non-profit health organization sponsoring research, treatments and improved technological assistance for individuals with neuromuscular diseases. MDA research grants support about 150 research projects worldwide, as well as camps and activities for children with neuromuscular diseases. For more information, go to [mda.org](http://mda.org).

**The Postal Employees' Relief Fund (PERF)** provides small relief grants to assist active and retired postal employees whose primary residence has been destroyed or left uninhabit-

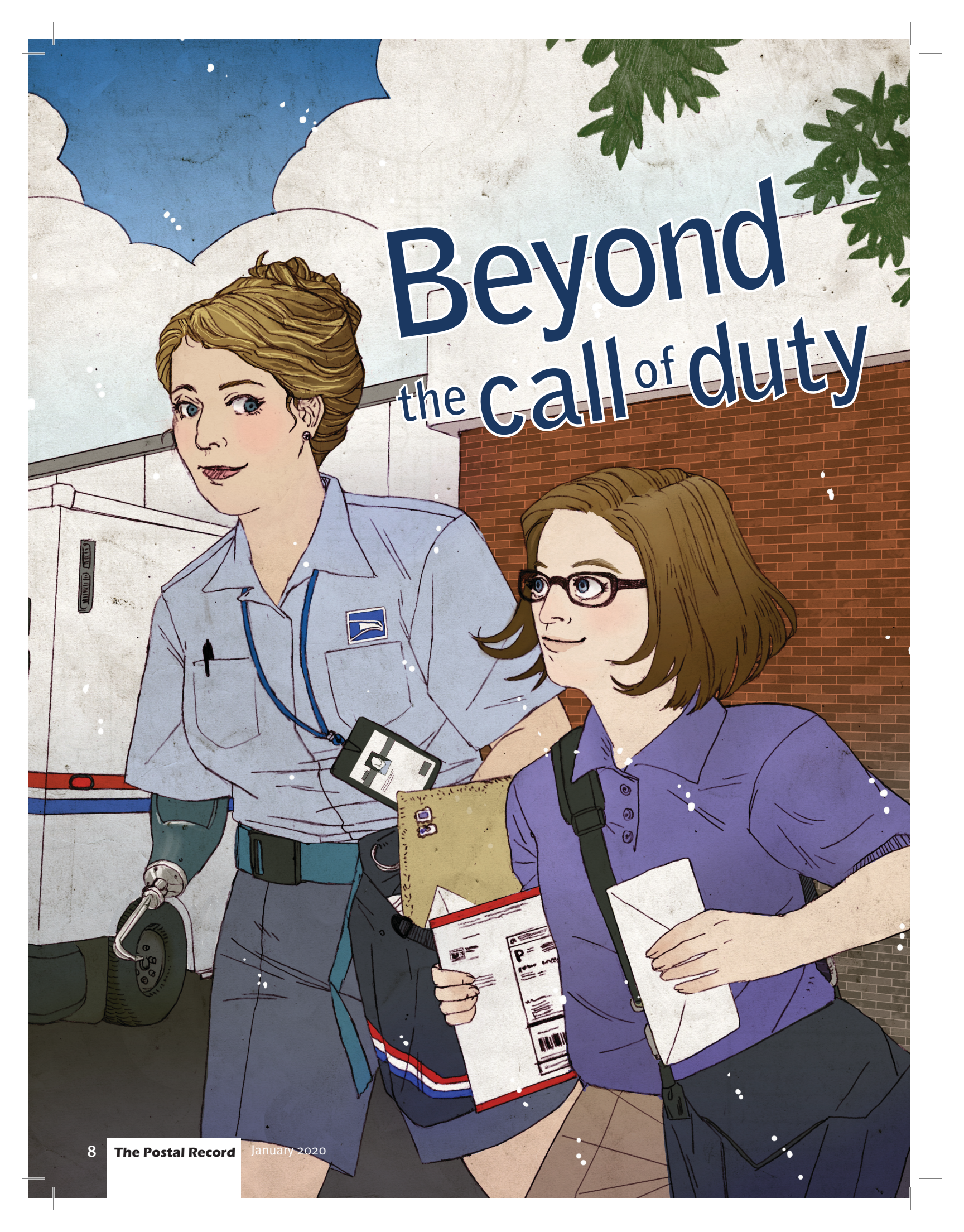


able by a major natural disaster or house fire. The fund helps qualifying victims re-establish residence and replenish necessities in the aftermath of these disasters. The charity is run by the four postal employee unions and the three management organizations—their members support PERF through voluntary donations. Information and applications for assistance from PERF can be found at [postalrelief.com](http://postalrelief.com).

**United Way Worldwide** is the leadership and support organization for the network of nearly 1,800 community-based United Way organizations. The program spans 40 countries and territories, and focuses on using community-driven solutions to increase access to developmental cornerstones such as education, financial stability and health. For more information, go to [unitedway.org](http://unitedway.org).

The simplest way to sign up to contribute is through the CFC Online Donation System at [opm.gov/showsomelovecfc](http://opm.gov/showsomelovecfc). **PR**





# Beyond the call of duty



# Letter carriers deliver community service year-

**L**etter carriers set an example for their community every day by their hard work, dedication and compassion for their customers. Sometimes carriers take extra steps to show others what service to the community means.

In this issue of *The Postal Record*, we bring you a few stories of carriers who go the extra mile for others. Some encourage people with difficult challenges to live life to the fullest. Some give blood to save lives. Some bring joy to their neighbors or

patrons by helping them fix problems. Whatever they do, these carriers remind us that we can all find ways to bring happiness and fulfillment to our communities.

We know that for every story in this issue, there are many more, because NALC members and branches help those in their communities year-round in a variety of ways. If you have a story to share with us, please contact *The Postal Record* by phone at 202-662-2851, by email at [postalrecord@nalc.org](mailto:postalrecord@nalc.org) or by letter at 100 Indiana Ave. NW, Washington, DC 20001.

## On a route for a day

**M**elissa Tilton had some help on her route one day last August—Cincinnati, OH, resident Grace Flannery, a young woman with Down syndrome looking for a job in the mail field, cased the mail with her and went out with her to deliver it.

Tilton, a four-year carrier and Cincinnati Branch 43 member, served as Flannery's job coach that hot summer day. Though it was just one day in the life of a letter carrier to fulfill Flannery's keen interest in mail delivery, Tilton showed Flannery how to do every task necessary to deliver the mail.

"She did every part, which is fantastic," Tilton said. "Her accuracy was fantastic and she had a great attitude. She was very careful, very thorough, and she did a great job," Tilton said. "I loved her passion, and her people skills are really, really good.

"Some of the customers came out on

their porch to get the mail from Grace," Tilton said, and this gave Flannery a chance to greet patrons, a task she handled with aplomb.

Flannery also got a sample of the hot weather letter carriers often face. "She sweated right there with me," Tilton said, "and she didn't complain."

The postmaster chose Tilton to help Flannery because she has a prosthetic right arm and could relate to Flannery's challenges. After her arm was amputated due to side effects from medication for an infection, Tilton could no longer perform her job as a nurse. The Postal Service gave her a chance at a new career. Even with her right arm gone, Tilton made it through 18 months as a CCA to reach career status.

Tilton is thankful to the Postal Service for giving her the opportunity, and she hopes some of it rubbed off on Flannery.



**Melissa Tilton (l) helped Grace Flannery be a letter carrier for a day.**

“I told her from the beginning, ‘Grace, you can see by looking at me that I’m not the same as everybody else in here, so I’m going to carry mail differently from [the way] the mailman who comes to your house carries mail. But I’m able to, because the Post Office said, ‘Here’s someone who wants to work,’” Tilton said. “Go with it, and smile, and work hard—that’s all it takes.”

For Flannery, who wore a postal

uniform for the day, her time spent as a letter carrier was more than a wish fulfilled—she is working on developing job skills and finding a permanent occupation with the help of job coaching. Flannery’s goal is to work in a company mailroom.

“I want to do this again,” Flannery said after her day as a letter carrier. “I feel great, I feel proud and I feel confident.”

## Giving his blood 58 gallons and counting

Brian Fronheiser has been donating blood since 1979.



**B**rian Fronheiser has given the gift of life in the form of donated blood steadily for decades, and it has added up to more than 58 gallons.

The retired member of Allentown, PA Branch 274 began donating blood in 1979 as an Army paratrooper serving in Alaska. When he left the Army and joined the Postal Service in 1982, Fronheiser continued the tradition.

“It just makes you feel good as a person,” he said. Donating blood is in Fronheiser’s blood, so to speak—his late father also gave blood frequently, and his brother has given even more than the carrier has. Fronheiser usually donates blood platelets instead of whole blood. Platelets are a component of blood separate from red and white blood cells that can provide life-saving treatment, especially for people with certain diseases such as leukemia or those undergoing chemotherapy. The primary function of platelets is to form blood clots, which stops the body from bleeding too much from an injury. When platelets are low, serious or life-threatening bleeding can occur.





Unlike whole blood, which requires months between donations, an individual can safely donate platelets as soon as 10 days after the last donation. Fronheiser takes a trip to the Miller-Keystone Blood Center in Bethlehem, PA, every two weeks to give. In platelet donation, blood is drawn from the donor into a machine that separates and extracts platelets and then returns blood cells to the donor's bloodstream. This process makes giving platelets longer than drawing whole blood—a platelet donation session takes about two hours.

Having survived cancer, Fronheiser understands the dire need for blood donation and what it means for recipients. He urged other letter carriers to take advantage of the Postal Service's

policy, outlined in the *Employee and Labor Relations Manual (ELM)*, providing up to three days of administrative leave time for blood platelet donation for full-time employees.

"Hopefully, people will take advantage of that," he said.

"His generosity has saved countless lives in the community," said Debra Nalbandian, donor recruitment manager for the Miller-Keystone Blood Center. "His donations directly impact the well-being of cancer patients, trauma victims, premature infants and burn victims," she said.

Fronheiser said the donations don't make him feel sick or sluggish. "It's just the opposite," he said. "You feel good for doing it for a good cause."

## Two times ten turkeys

Though he is a retired carrier, **Sandy Lleo** can still lift a few pounds, including Thanksgiving turkeys he distributed to people in need in his community.

Lleo, sergeant-at-arms of South Florida Branch 1071 and a Navy veteran, hatched a plan in November to deliver Thanksgiving turkeys to those in need. He found a donor in the community, who provided 20 turkeys. Lleo split them between two Miami human service non-profit groups.

He took 10 turkeys to Camillus House, an agency that provides humanitarian services to homeless or poor people. Camillus House serves more than 12,000 men, women and children each year, helping with housing, food and other basic needs.

He delivered the other 10 turkeys to Lotus House Women's Shelter, a non-profit group providing housing, food and



health care assistance to area women and children in need. "Their eyes actually watered, they were so amazed," Lleo said.

Lleo helps Miami's hungry eat in other ways. For several years, he and some fellow branch members also have volunteered as food preparers at an annual Christmas celebration for underprivileged children held by a local picnic ground company, and he is a long-time NALC food drive volunteer.

"We receive all year long," he said, "but this time of the year, we have to give."



**Sandy Lleo drops off the turkeys at Camillus House (l) and Lotus House (r).**

# Hot and cold

## Looking out for patrons in extreme weather

**W**e've all heard it before: "Neither snow nor rain nor heat nor gloom of night stays these couriers from the swift completion of their appointed rounds."

Those words have long been associated with the Postal Service, and letter carriers often go above and beyond on their routes for their customers, including Pocatello, ID Branch 927 member **Brett Hochhalter**.

Whenever there is a surprise snow shower, chances are good you will find the 21-year letter carrier at a customer's house, either at the beginning or end of the workday, grasping a snow shovel.

Hochhalter has had the same 50-block route, which covers about eight miles, for 18 years and has been doing the extracurricular shoveling for about the last 15 of those. "Last year, I did three every day when it snows," the carrier said.

If it has snowed overnight, "I do it on my way to work," he says. "Every morning, I'll do a couple [of paths]. I've always got a snow shovel in my truck." Occasionally, a customer will leave a shovel on the porch.

If it snows during the day, Hochhalter will shovel once the workday ends, after he's gone home and switched out of his postal uniform. Last winter, a man who lived on his route came outside and told Hochhalter, "I never even knew that was you." The carrier explained that was because he "would go home and change."

He has said that he has had to deliver warnings about city code for failure to clear walks during inclement weather. He dislikes doing that, and never wants anyone on his route to receive a citation for something he feels he could easily help with.

He regularly shovels the driveway of a 95-year-old widow on his route. "I've

done hers forever," the carrier said. "I'll always do her house."

The woman's son lives in California, so he tries to watch out for her. "I'd hate for the woman to fall," he added. "She can't do it herself."

Other than hers, which driveways he shovels depends on whom he sees and on what people's needs are. He will try to do any elderly customers' drives, including a brother and sister who live together on his route, and those where the residents work later into the evening. Last winter he cleared the home of a single mother with three children. Hochhalter was so careful and discreet in his actions, though, that the carrier said, "I'm not sure she even knew I did it."

His secret was out, though, when someone from the Idaho State Journal drove by last February while he was in action. That was "the only reason I got the accolade," he said. The carrier didn't really want to be the subject of a story, but finally agreed to speak with a reporter in the hopes he could inspire others.

He soon was approached at a local restaurant by a woman who had seen the story and wanted to help. "There's a lot of people everywhere who do care," said Hochhalter, who also spent a dozen years serving in the military—two years in the Army and 10 years in the Air Force.

The carrier said that the results of his actions were widespread. "This helps everybody," he said, including "people who are walking to class at [Idaho State University], the homeowner and then me delivering the mail."

Hochhalter hopes to encourage younger people to do the same thing in their communities. He said that several carriers in his post office shovel on their own routes.



Christina Zahnter (l) with Lovie Weekly





**Brett Hochhalter delivers mail to a patron on his route in Pocatello, ID.**



One thing Hochhalter says he definitely tries to avoid is commenting, “I hope we get a light year.” Whenever he says or thinks that, Pocatello has a tendency to get walloped by storms, he added with a laugh.

So why does he shovel snow, year after year? “Just to help people out,” he said. “I’ve never done it for attention. It’s not about me. It’s about other people who need help.”

## From hot to cool

As we all know, letter carriers also deal quite frequently with the heat.

Kansas City, KS Branch 499 member **Christina Zahnter**, a first-year carrier, recalled delivering on her route one morning last July during a triple-digit heat wave in the Midwest. She said that local TV stations had been urging people to “Check on your neighbors.”

That day, Zahnter went to deliver to a woman, Lovie Weekly, who is confined to a wheelchair. The customer normally opens the door to get her mail from the carrier so she doesn’t have to go all the way to her mailbox.

When the woman opened the door that day, “a bunch of heat came out,” Zahnter said.

She asked the woman if she had air conditioning, but the woman told her, “No, honey, that broke years ago.” Weekly hadn’t fixed it, and was trying to get by with some small fans.

Determined not to let her customer suffer, Zahnter told her she was going to work on the problem.

Despite not being on the non-permanent hold-down route that long, the carrier has had the opportunity to get to know the community. Zahnter later told people at a local barber shop and a couple of the other neighbors, “We’ve got to get this lady an air conditioner.”

A neighbor named Rick Strunk, upon hearing of Weekly’s situation, told Zahnter: “She’ll have it before the night’s over with.”

Strunk called his church pastor, who, as luck would have it, had an unused window air unit sitting in storage and gladly donated it. Strunk brought the A.C. over to Weekly’s house and began to install it.

“As soon as I got off work that day, I went by,” Zahnter said. “They were plugging it in.”

The woman soon was crying out of gratitude. “It makes me feel overwhelmed,” Weekly later told the local Fox News affiliate. “I’m thankful, very thankful.”

Why did Zahnter help her customer? Simple answer, she said: “Because it was hot outside.”

She added, “Wouldn’t everybody?”

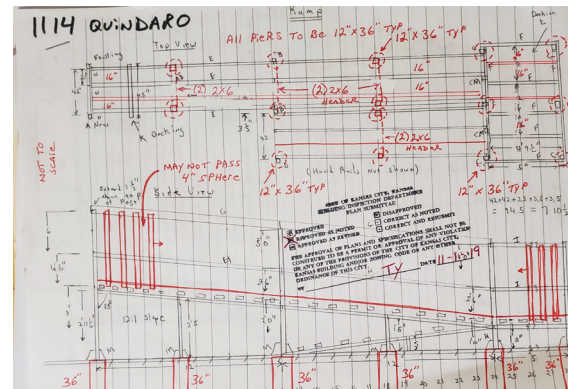
And the carrier’s assistance didn’t stop there. When Zahnter mentioned to the neighbors that Weekly did not have wheelchair access from her house, they collectively began to brainstorm how to build her a ramp as well.

When Weekly’s children come to take her to doctor’s appointments and other places, “they have to carry her down the stairs,” Zahnter said.

The carrier spearheaded an effort to get community organizations to donate money and materials, and Zahnter received permission from the local historical society to build the ramp, since Weekly’s house was zoned as historical.

“My daughter’s in the ROTC program in high school. They’re going to build it,” Zahnter said, adding that they also have received a building permit from the county, which waived the fee.

“We’re good to go—just waiting for a good day to start it,” the carrier said. She hopes that this will happen this



**The plans for the ramp to Weekly’s house**

winter, and says that she has received offers from fellow letter carriers to help build it.

Her customers have reacted positively to her efforts. “I’ve gotten hugs from them,” Zahnter said. “You get to meet the people. You do what you can.

“I care about the community and I live in the community,” she added. “They’ll look out for me if something happens to me out there. It goes both ways.”

### Paying it forward

Both Zahnter and Hochhalter said that it’s easy to make a difference on your routes, and they had advice for

carriers wanting to get started.

“Talk to people. Get to know your customers,” Hochhalter said. And if you see something that needs getting done, “just go out there and do it,” he added.

Zahnter concurred. “I’d encourage them to pay attention,” she said. “That’s all it takes. Kindness and compassion, paying it forward. Sometimes all they want is a hug.”

The carriers encouraged fellow NALC members to help in their communities in whatever way they’d like. “Everyone needs help at some point in their lives,” Hochhalter said. “If we can help others, there’s good in our lives.”

Retired letter carrier Bob Avila now teaches people to play golf.



## Teaching golf and goodwill

“You’re very calm, methodical, patient,” someone once told Greater East Bay, CA Branch 1111 member **Bob Avila** about his demeanor when he teaches people to play golf. Avila took it to heart, and now he uses his skills to introduce his favorite pastime to kids with special needs, free of charge.

“It’s very rewarding,” Avila said, “and I get to play golf while I’m teaching.”

Avila started carrying the mail in 1988 and took up golf a decade later (he now lives on a golf course). He discovered a gift for teaching, so he took up golf instruction, especially for young beginners. At group lessons and tournaments, he often ran into people with special-needs family members. Soon, word went around about his teaching demeanor and Avila became the go-to guy for teaching golf to children with special needs. He has taught more than a dozen of these students, who range in age from 10 to 16.

What’s different about teaching golf to a youngster with special needs than to other students? “The enthusiasm of hitting a good shot, the excitement of being out with mom and dad, or a friend,” Avila said. Many have seen golf on TV or watched from the sidelines and enjoy the thrill of doing something they had thought was out of their reach.

“I always make it really fun for them,” the carrier added. “With my special-needs kids, it’s all about bonding with their mom or dad or family member.”

Unlike some sports, golf allows everyone to go at their own pace, he said: “The game is self-satisfying—everybody has a different game, and you can take it wherever you want.” The experience goes beyond the students with special needs and extends to the whole family, he added. “If you get mom and dad and sister and brother out there, what a great outing that is,” Avila said. **PR**



# Are you at risk for hypertension?

**W**hen was the last time you had your blood pressure checked? If it was more than two years ago, you might be in for a troubling surprise: you're more likely to have high blood pressure now than you were before. That's because in 2017, the American College of Cardiology, the American Heart Association and nine other groups updated their blood pressure guidelines, lowering the rates at which Americans are considered at risk for hypertension.

If you've ever had your blood pressure checked, you know that you get two numbers, one over the other. The top number is your systolic blood pressure, which measures how much pressure your blood is exerting against your artery walls when the heart beats. The bottom number is your diastolic blood pressure, which measures how much pressure your blood is exerting against your artery walls when the heart is resting between beats.

The change, the first in 14 years, lowered the rate considered high blood pressure from 140 over 90 to 130

over 80. According to *The Washington Post*, that means 46 percent of U.S. adults now are considered hypertensive, up from 32 percent under the old guideline.

The chart below explains the levels of risk. High blood pressure is the second-leading cause of preventable death in the United States, after smoking. Hypertension can lead to heart attacks, strokes, severe kidney disease and other problems that kill millions every year. Blood pressure is affected by genetics, age, diet, exercise, stress and other diseases such as diabetes. Men are more likely to have high blood pressure than women, and African Americans are more likely than whites. Even those who exercise regularly can be hypertensive. Many people are unaware that they have the condition because there are no symptoms.

Lifestyle changes and medication can help reduce your risk of complications from high blood pressure:

- Eat a well-balanced, low-salt diet that emphasizes vegetables,

fruits and fat-free or low-fat products; includes whole grains, fish, poultry, beans, seeds, nuts and vegetable oils; and limits sweets, sugary beverages and red meats.

- Limit alcohol.
- Enjoy regular physical activity.
- Manage stress.
- Maintain a healthy weight.
- Quit smoking.
- Take your medications properly.

A number of inexpensive medications are available to help treat high blood pressure. If you haven't had your blood pressure checked in a few years, you should have it checked against the new guidelines and also consult your doctor.

The guidelines were changed in the hope that more Americans will adjust their behavior, especially younger adults. The lower score is expected to triple the number of men younger than 45 considered hypertensive and double the number of women under 45 with high blood pressure.

As reported by the *Post*, Thomas Frieden, the former director of the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention who now runs a global health initiative that focuses on heart disease and stroke, said the "big news about this guideline is it should end forever any debate about whether people should be treated with medicines once they hit 140/90." He said that until now there has been "a perspective that it's not that big of a risk, but that's just wrong."

"The fact is, lower is better," Frieden said. "Even what we considered mild hypertension before is a deadly disease." **PR**

BLOOD PRESSURE CATEGORY	SYSTOLIC mm Hg (upper number)		DIASTOLIC mm Hg (lower number)
NORMAL	LESS THAN 120	and	LESS THAN 80
ELEVATED	120 – 129	and	LESS THAN 80
HIGH BLOOD PRESSURE (HYPERTENSION) STAGE 1	130 – 139	or	80 – 89
HIGH BLOOD PRESSURE (HYPERTENSION) STAGE 2	140 OR HIGHER	or	90 OR HIGHER
HYPERTENSIVE CRISIS (consult your doctor immediately)	HIGHER THAN 180	and/or	HIGHER THAN 120

## Branch publication competition call for entries

**E**ditors of branch and state association newsletters and websites are invited to enter NALC's biennial competition for outstanding periodical publications.

A panel of publications experts will determine award winners in the various categories, which are listed below. The decision of the judges is final. Winners will be announced at a workshop held during the national convention in Honolulu, Aug. 17 to 21.

Entries must be received by **April 1**, at this address: Publications Competition, NALC, 100 Indiana Ave. NW, Washington, DC 20001-2144.

All entries must have been created by NALC members; been published in branch or state association newsletters, or been posted on a branch website or feed (for the Best Website award) between April 2018 and March 2020 (inclusive); and must be submitted by current branch officers or editors.

**Please duplicate the labels on the following page and attach one to each copy of each entry. SUBMISSIONS THAT DO NOT COMPLY WITH THESE DIRECTIONS WILL BE DISQUALIFIED. Each entry must be clipped or photocopied from your publication and, if smaller than 8½ x 11 inches, taped onto a full-size sheet of paper. Entries will not be returned. Entries will be judged in the following categories:**

**Overall Excellence:** This category recognizes publications that best serve the membership. Judges will consider content (appropriate and original articles, useful information, local angles), style (clear writing, effective headlines, good story placement) and overall appearance (readability, attractiveness, use of photos and art).

Judging will be based on three publication issues you choose to submit; please note that you must send two copies of each issue. Each copy must have a completed "Overall Excellence" label attached.

Publications will compete in the subcategories of 1) large branches and state associations and 2) small branches. Large branches are defined as having 500 or more members, but the judges may alter that threshold to create a balanced number of entries in both categories.

**Best Editorial or Column:** This category is for opinion pieces such as editorials or columns by union officers or editors. The judges will consider factors, including the author's effectiveness in putting forth his or her point of view and insight into the topic. Each branch or state may submit up to three editorials or columns. Send two copies of each entry.

**Best News or Feature Story:** This category is for reporting on topics important to letter carriers, or for profiling branch or member activities; do not submit columns or other opinion pieces here. Judges will weigh choice of topic, factual reporting and clear writing. Each branch or state association may submit up to three news or feature articles. Send two copies of each entry.

**Best Cartoon or Photo:** Each branch may submit any combination of up to three cartoons, photos or illustrations created by members of that branch. Cartoons will be judged on relevance, technique and how well they convey their point. Photos and illustrations will be judged on interest, impact and quality. Send two copies of each entry.

**Promoting Unionism:** The special award for the Promoting Unionism



category includes, but is not limited to, articles or photo treatments that raise members' awareness of and activism in the labor movement. The judges will look for attention-grabbing entries that promote pride in labor and involve carriers more deeply in NALC. Each branch or state association may submit up to three entries. Send two copies of each entry.

**Best Website:** This category recog-

nizes websites that best serve the membership. Judges will consider relevance of content, overall appearance and timeliness of information. Blogs, Facebook pages and Twitter or Instagram feeds may be submitted as well. Please print out the web address of the site onto two 8½ x 11-inch pieces of paper and attach the "Best Website" label to each. Send two copies of the entry. **PR**

**2020 NALC Publication Contest Entry  
OVERALL EXCELLENCE**

Number of members in branch: \_\_\_\_\_  
 Branch no. or state name: \_\_\_\_\_  
 Located in city, state: \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_  
 Name, title and phone number of person submitting:  
 \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_

**2020 NALC Publication Contest Entry BEST  
NEWS or FEATURE STORY**

Name of author: \_\_\_\_\_  
 Name of publication: \_\_\_\_\_  
 Month and year of issue: \_\_\_\_\_  
 Branch no. or state name: \_\_\_\_\_  
 Located in city, state: \_\_\_\_\_  
 Name, title and phone number of person submitting:  
 \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_

**2020 NALC Publication Contest Entry  
BEST EDITORIAL or COLUMN**

Name of author: \_\_\_\_\_  
 Name of publication: \_\_\_\_\_  
 Month and year of issue: \_\_\_\_\_  
 Branch no. or state name: \_\_\_\_\_  
 Located in city, state: \_\_\_\_\_  
 Name, title and phone number of person submitting:  
 \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_

**2020 NALC Publication Contest Entry  
BEST CARTOON or PHOTO**

Name of artist or photographer (must belong to your branch): \_\_\_\_\_  
 Name of publication: \_\_\_\_\_  
 Month and year of issue: \_\_\_\_\_  
 Branch no. or state name: \_\_\_\_\_  
 Located in city, state: \_\_\_\_\_  
 Name, title and phone number of person submitting:  
 \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_

**2020 NALC Publication Contest Entry  
PROMOTING UNIONISM**

Name of creator: \_\_\_\_\_  
 Name of publication: \_\_\_\_\_  
 Month and year of issue: \_\_\_\_\_  
 Branch no. or state name: \_\_\_\_\_  
 Located in city, state: \_\_\_\_\_  
 Name, title and phone number of person submitting:  
 \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_

**2020 NALC Publication Contest Entry  
BEST WEBSITE**

Number of members in branch: \_\_\_\_\_  
 Branch no. or state name: \_\_\_\_\_  
 Located in city, state: \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_  
 Name, title and phone number of person submitting:  
 \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_

## Checklist for entries

✓ **Submit two copies of every entry in the print categories.** A copy may be clipped from the publication and taped to a sheet of 8½ x 11 inch paper, or it may be a page from the publication (or a photocopy of that page) with everything but the entry crossed out.

✓ **Attach a completed label to each of the two copies of every entry.** Please type or print clearly. For example: If a publication decides to enter one editorial and two columns in the "Best Editorial or Column" category, it must provide two copies of the editorial and two copies of each of the two columns, and it must affix a completed "Best Editorial or Column" label to each of these six items. Entries that don't comply with these rules will be disqualified.

✓ **Submissions must be received by APRIL 1 at the following address: Publications Competition, NALC, 100 Indiana Ave. NW, Washington, DC 20001-2144.**

# Big FISH



Adam Momirov

**A**dam Momirov has been catching walleyes since he learned to walk. His father first took him fishing as a youngster on Berlin Lake near Alliance, OH, not far from his current home in Minerva, OH, in search of the elusive fish species.

“They’re kind of hard to catch, but they are really good eating fish,” Momirov, a member of Alliance Branch 297 with five years of mail delivery under his belt, said. “It stuck with me.”

The walleye is a long, thin freshwater fish with a white belly and a gold back crossed with black bands. It can grow as long as three feet and weigh more than 20 pounds. Their range stretches from the Arctic to the Great Lakes and areas further south. Walleye boat-fishing season lasts year-round, except when ice intrudes.

The dual characteristics of being delicious but also challenging to catch have made walleye a favorite sport fish, and Momirov kept fishing them. He now is a top walleye fisherman with several fishing tournament successes under his belt, including a few first-place finishes.

Momirov competed in his first walleye tournament when he was 20 years old. He’s 35 now, and competes in five to eight tournaments a year. That’s a lot of fish caught.

Walleye are plentiful but shy, so tournaments take a full day of searching for and catching the fish. “Normally, they are eight-hour tournaments from start to finish,” Momirov said. On a large lake, the fish can range for miles, so travel time on a boat is a factor. “I’ve driven an hour one-way on a boat to get to a fishing spot,” he said, “so that cut our fishing time to six hours.”

The carrier’s fishing success has won him trophies, cash prizes and sponsorships from fishing equipment companies. He is the tournament director for Walleye Madness, an Ohio fishing group second in membership only to a group in Wisconsin. As a leader in the group, Momirov sets up tournaments, promotes the sport and teaches new generations how to fish, often at seminars he gives at boat shows.

Walleye Madness typically hosts four tournaments a year, two on Lake Erie and two on smaller inland lakes. Each tournament involves between 30 and 50 competing boats, each with a two-person team of anglers. The teams spend the day finding the fish and then catching the largest they can.

After eight hours on the water, each team submits its five largest catches to be weighed. The combined weight of those five is the team’s score. A sepa-



rate award goes to the competitor with the largest single fish of the day. Momirov has won the “largest fish” award enough times that he has earned the nickname “Big Fish Adam.” The largest walleye Momirov has caught weighed a little more than 13 pounds, though he bagged that one ice-fishing rather than in a competition.

The carrier has participated in one national walleye tournament held on Lake Erie, in 2017. The annual national walleye tournament typically attracts up to 250 teams and is nationally televised.

Momirov enjoys the challenge of finding walleye. “You really have to put some strategy into it,” he said. “Walleye are very finicky fish. They can be found in a foot of water one day and 50 feet the next day. They’re known as the fish of here today, gone tomorrow.”

Like other competitors, Momirov sometimes goes “pre-fishing” before a tournament to locate the best fishing areas.

“If a tournament is on Sunday, sometimes we’ll fish for a solid week straight, and try to locate where the largest fish are at on that body of water,” the carrier said. “They obvi-

ously are fish—they swim; they move; patterns change.”

At the end of a tournament, competitors bring their catch to a scale on shore, where the fish are weighed to determine the winners. Most of the fish are either thrown back in the water or end up on a dinner table—and sometimes they inspire the next generation of anglers among the spectators.

“Most of the time we release them,” Momirov said, “Occasionally, we’ll find a family on the side of the shoreline that’s close to the weigh-in and ask them if they want the fish, and nine times out of 10, they say, ‘absolutely.’ I’ve seen so many times where a kid is just staring into the cooler at the biggest walleye he’s ever seen and that kid will remember that, and say, ‘Hey, dad or mom, I want to catch one like that.’”

Momirov attributes his fishing success to experience. “It’s time on the water,” he said. “It’s never-ending, the learning experience.”

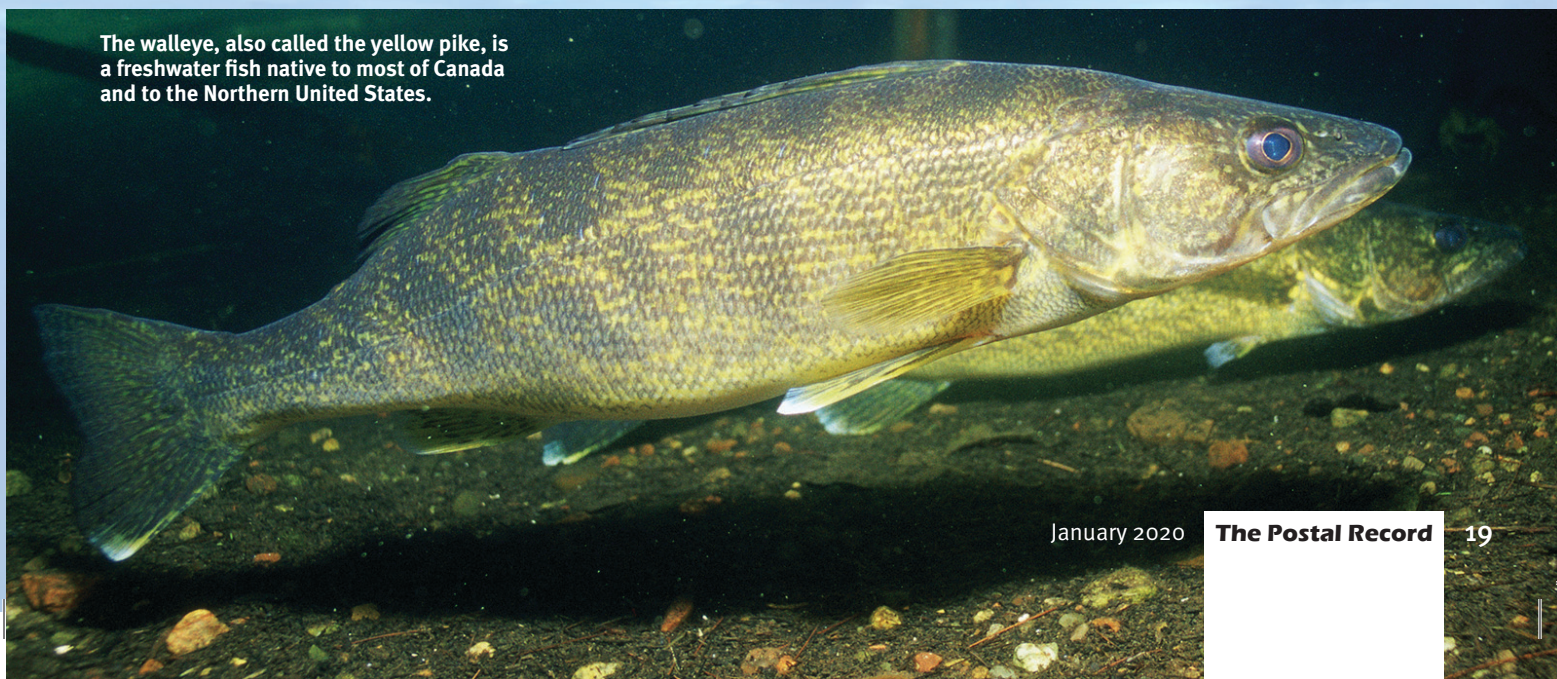
Catching a bounty of delicious fish—a species that goes for \$20 a pound in a grocery store—and the joy of sharing them with friends and family, make Momirov’s sport even more enjoyable to him.

Momirov with some of his winning catches



“You’re always going to have dinner,” he said. Momirov has a freezer just for saving fish. “I save them up throughout the year and then I’ll have a fish fry and invite friends and family over. It’s kind of what it’s all about.” PR

The walleye, also called the yellow pike, is a freshwater fish native to most of Canada and to the Northern United States.





## Proud to Serve

Proud to Serve is a semi-regular compilation of heroic stories about letter carriers in their communities. If you know about a hero in your branch, contact us as soon as possible at 202-662-2489 or at postalrecord@nalc.org. We'll follow up with you to obtain news clippings, photos or other information.

# Honoring heroic carriers

**H**eroism, like the mail, comes in many packages—think of police officers or firefighters. But for some citizens in need of assistance, their heroes come in the form of concerned letter carriers.

Letter carriers are members of nearly every community in this nation and know when something is wrong. Spotting fires and injuries, they often are the first to respond. The following stories document their heroism. For them, delivering for America is all in a day's work.

## Quick action saves man from overdose

While making his usual deliveries in a shopping center on his route on Sept. 10, 2019, South Suburban Merged, IL Branch 4016 member **Chris Gustafson** drove behind one of the stores and noticed a couple sitting in their car in the parking lot. The 13-year carrier pulled up and made his delivery, but when he began to drive away, he saw that “the girl had run around to the other side of the car.”

As Gustafson watched, the woman reached into the car and begin shaking her boyfriend, who the carrier could tell was unresponsive. “He was just flopping around,” Gustafson said. He quickly realized that the man was seizing, and dove into action. “I yelled out of my window that she should call 911,” he said, and then he ran to the car.

While the woman called, Gustafson took over the situation. “His lips were blue,” he said. “I shook him a little and his tongue was blue, too.” When the man did not respond, the carrier knew that he had to put into practice the skills he had learned in a CPR class more than 20 years before. “I’d never had to do CPR before,” Gustafson said, but he knew the man needed immediate medical assistance. He gave him “a

couple of breaths” and had just started chest compressions when the paramedics arrived and took over.

Later, the police disclosed that the man had overdosed on heroin, but had survived his ordeal thanks to the carrier’s timely assistance.

For Gustafson, it was more of a surreal experience than a heroic one: “One minute you’re just doing your job, and the next it’s literally life or death in the parking lot,” he said. “And then you go right back to delivering mail.”

## Carrier saves woman from vicious dog attack

Lorain, OH Branch 583 member **Alex Uber** was on his regular route on Nov. 6, 2019, when he heard screams coming from the backyard of one of his customers.

He ran down the driveway to see what was wrong, and found a woman being attacked by her dog. “I could see the dog grabbing her by the shoulder...it was dragging her across the grass,” the four-year carrier later told Cleveland 19 News. “She was bleeding pretty bad.”

He leapt over the fence into the backyard, where he sprayed his mace at the dog. When that didn’t work, he tried to pull the dog off of her shoulder. “I figured anything I could do would be more than just saying I walked past and didn’t do anything,” Uber said.

By alternately yelling and using his mace spray, Uber finally managed to distract the dog long enough for the woman to pull herself free, and both the carrier and the woman managed to get out of the backyard. She had 27 puncture wounds from the attack and was admitted to a hospital’s ICU, but fully recovered.

A neighbor who witnessed the attack stated, “If it wasn’t for [Uber], I think the

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**“I could see the dog grabbing her by the shoulder...it was dragging her across the grass. She was bleeding pretty bad.”**

**—Alex Uber**

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outcome could have been a lot worse.” The carrier demurred. “I’m not a hero,” he said. “I did what anyone would do.” Uber is currently enlisted in the U.S. Marine Corps and is set to begin active duty in February.

## Carrier risks flames to alert community about fire

“I was delivering across the street on the cul-de-sac when I saw flames shooting out of the window,” Santa Ana, CA Branch 737 member **Jose Garcia Jr.** recalled about his route on Sept. 18, 2019.

He had been in the middle of his deliveries when he noticed the fire, but once he saw the danger, he knew there was no time to lose. “That customer [in the burning house], she is always home,” the six-year carrier explained.

He jumped out of his vehicle and sprinted across the street, where he began banging on the windows,

desperately trying to alert the homeowner. While he attempted to do so, “the last window blew out, and suddenly the rooftop was on fire,” Garcia recalled.

The house now was engulfed in flames, so the carrier moved to the neighboring homes—the houses were connected duplexes, and he knew that any residents next door would also be in danger from the fire. Eventually, the firefighters arrived and took over the scene.

As it turned out, neither the homeowner or her neighbors were at home during the fire—in fact, the only injured person was Garcia himself. “Once the fire trucks arrived, I went



Alex Uber was interviewed by his local news affiliate after he saved a woman from a dog attack.

to go call the post office and tell them what happened,” he said. “And I just started feeling like my hand was burning.”

He later found out he had sustained second-degree burns to his hand from knocking on the windows, but his heroic actions ensured that no one was left inside while the fire raged. **PR**

## Help on the way

It was Sept. 26, 2019, and Chillicothe, OH Branch 452 member and CCA **Michael Jordan** was delivering mail when he saw a tan sedan run through a stop sign. “He kind of came up on the curb, and when I looked over, [the driver] was hunched over in his car,” the two-year carrier said. The sedan narrowly missed hitting Jordan, who had been walking right next to the curb. The car immediately pulled over; the driver, an elderly man, slumped out of his vehicle and called loudly for help. Jordan was only a few feet away, and rushed over to assist him. “You could see he wasn’t doing well,” the carrier said. He asked the man if he was all right, and the driver

requested an ambulance. The CCA called 911, and continued to wait with the man and talk to him until EMTs arrived. Jordan was most pleased that the story had a happy ending: “I heard he made a full recovery,” the carrier said.

On Saturday, Aug. 31, 2019, Sarasota, FL Branch 2148 member **Joseph Loeser** was delivering on his route when he saw one of his customers, Ray O’Brien, waiting by the bus stop. The carrier continued on his route, but when he passed the same area an hour later, O’Brien was still there. Given the temperature that day (“The heat index was around 110 degrees,” he recalled), and remembering the numerous talks about

heat stress he had heard from USPS, Loeser had a strong feeling that something was wrong. He asked O’Brien if he was okay, but despite the man’s insistence that he was fine, the carrier decided to get him some water. When he returned, O’Brien was slumped over on the ground. The carrier immediately put all of his heat safety training to use. “I got him sitting up, and then I just tried to keep him cool—I shaded him and put a water bottle on his neck,” he said. Loeser also told local security guards to call 911. An ambulance came and took O’Brien to the hospital, where they diagnosed him with heat stroke. After he recovered, O’Brien thanked Loeser for

helping him in his time of distress, but the one-year carrier was very modest about his role: “The real heroes are the EMTs,” he said. **PR**



Joseph Loeser

## Playing the role of a mentor



**Brian  
Renfroe**

**M**entoring plays an important role in the professional development of a letter carrier. Not just does it help develop the mentee, it also builds relationships and fosters a better work environment. Most carriers, whether they realized it or not, had a mentor when they started. Typically it was a veteran carrier who showed you the ropes. Whether they gave us safety reminders or tips on how to perform the day-to-day functions of carrying, we've all benefited from our fellow carriers' knowledge and willingness to help. Experienced letter carriers can take an active role in mentoring other carriers.

A mentor is generally an experienced and trusted adviser. Not to be confused with an on-the-job instructor, a mentor is more focused on the long-term growth of the mentee. Mentors can teach, provide wisdom, advise and support. Although an on-the-job instructor isn't necessarily a mentor, that doesn't mean these instructors can't be excellent mentors. What better way to establish a relationship with a new carrier than to provide immediate on-the-job training—and then maintain a relationship with the new carrier to fill the role of a mentor as the carrier progresses and continues to learn more about the job?

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**“Whether they gave us safety reminders or tips on how to perform the day-to-day functions of carrying, we’ve all benefited from our fellow carriers’ knowledge and willingness to help.”**

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**Although the overtime and unpredictable schedules for new employees hasn't changed much in the last few decades, the job has certainly changed and evolved due to an increased use of technology. Today's letter carrier performs a variety of tasks to improve customer service and meet expectations regarding tracking and transparency. New carriers have a lot to learn besides how to deliver the mail, which we all know is harder than just “following the mail.” Learning the technology, the procedures and protocols, and dealing with management are a lot to absorb all at once. Especially in the fast-paced, productivity-at-all-costs mentality that is prevalent on most workroom floors. A mentoring relationship can provide new employees with**

a resource to ask questions, get feedback and begin their journey to become a professional letter carrier.

The mentoring relationship doesn't end when the carrier is converted to career. Carriers need to learn how to maintain the route edit book, ensure that unsafe route conditions are reported and communicate changes with the carrier technician, to name but a few requirements. Proper route maintenance allows other carriers to professionally and accurately deliver all the mail on the assignment and is vital to providing the best customer service possible. Many of these skills will need to be taught to new career employees. Even if they've learned it before, reminders and active practice can make it routine.

**Besides the day-to-day tasks that revolve around getting the mail delivered, you also can mentor by teaching new carriers about the union. This can include getting them involved with the annual food drive, telling them about legislative issues or teaching them how the National Agreement is organized so they can learn more about their rights and how to enforce them. Even simple things, like making sure they understand their Weingarten rights and learning to consult with the shop steward when there are possible violations to the agreement, can be invaluable for new members.**

There are a lot of resources out there for letter carriers. A number of postal handbooks and manuals cover the many aspects of delivering and handling the mail. NALC has dozens of active publications: one in particular, the *Letter Carrier Resource Guide*, condenses a plethora of useful information for all carriers, but especially for new carriers. But these resources cannot and do not replace a mentor. These are just tools to be used in conjunction with a hands-on, personal relationship from a mentor that can help show them the big picture and focus on their priorities, whatever those may be at the time.

Consider whether you can be a mentor to any of your current or future coworkers, just as some experienced letter carriers likely did for you. Pass on your knowledge and skills. If, instead, you are a potential mentee, try to take an active role in seeking out a mentor. To get the most from a mentor and become a professional carrier, you should try to learn from all of your coworkers and glean some of their wisdom. If you engage with other carriers, ask questions and listen, you'll find that somebody is mentoring you, whether the other carrier realizes it or not.



## Some training opportunities in 2020



**Lew  
Drass**

**M**any of you will assume new roles in your branch after the Installation of Officers ceremony takes place. As a result, some of you will take on a more active role in processing grievances, and you, as well as many others who already do this work, may be interested in an opportunity to sharpen your skills. Here is an opportunity to do just that.

### **Advanced Formal A and Beyond training program**

We held two classes in 2019, and we have now held 10 classes since we started this program in 2016. According to the 781 participants that have attended, this training is a really good product. Every single participant that attended thus far said he or she would recommend it to others.

At present, we plan to offer two classes this year. We are asking that you discuss this issue within your branch now and submit your applications by the end of March. We will send every branch in the country a letter and some applications, which will arrive in time to give you the opportunity to discuss this issue at your January or February meeting.

The dates for the two scheduled Advanced Formal A and Beyond training sessions are Sept. 13 to 18 and Nov. 15 to 20. These two training opportunities will be held at the Maritime Institute in Linthicum Heights, MD, five minutes away from Baltimore-Washington International (BWI) airport.

The total cost of food and lodging per room to attend an NALC Advanced Formal A and Beyond training session in 2020 will be \$1,219.15 (single occupancy) or, \$1,816.80 (double occupancy). This is for five nights at \$243.83 (single occupancy) or \$363.36 (double occupancy) per day. This rate includes your room and tax for five nights, as well as all meals and refreshments during breaks each day. We will supply all the materials you will need.

Over the years, we have made adjustments to this training program based on suggestions from participants and from our own observations. One such suggestion we implemented was to offer an optional additional day of hands-on computer training for those who need/want to take advantage of it. This option has drawn high praise from those participants who attended the extra day of training over the last few years. We will offer the extra day of hands-on computer training again this year as an available option.

The extra day of computer training will take place on Saturday afternoon/evening and Sunday morning on the front

end of each session. This is a good opportunity for those of you who want to learn more than you know now about using a computer. While it does incur the cost of an additional night's stay (\$243.83 for single occupancy or \$363.36 for double occupancy) for your branch as referenced above, past participants report that it is well worth the additional cost.

Each Advanced Formal A and Beyond training session class has 80 participants, so we have a total of 160 spots open at present. Participants are selected from the applications we receive on a first-come, first-served basis. We already have received some applications, but there are plenty of spots open in each class if you are interested in attending. However, if you have an interest in attending, I would advise you to submit your application as soon as possible.

Applications will be sent out with the letter to your branch. They are also available on the NALC website. Simply go to [nalc.org](http://nalc.org) and click the tab labeled "Workplace Issues"; from there, a drop-down menu will allow you to select "Contract Administration Unit," and you then can click the tab labeled "Advanced Formal A and Beyond training program." On that page, you will be directed to information about the training, including two links to the application that provide the qualifications needed to attend. One is a fillable version and the other can be printed out and filled out by hand. Either way, please complete the application and mail it to me at: Lew Drass, C/O NALC, 100 Indiana Ave. NW, Washington, DC 20001-2144.

This training program is intense, rewarding and a great investment for your branch's current and future efforts to provide the best possible representation for its letter carriers. If you are going to attend this class, you should plan to work hard all week, but you will get a lot out of it, too. I will be looking forward to seeing many of you in one of our Advanced Formal A and Beyond training sessions.

### **Arbitration advocate training program**

We also will be offering two arbitration advocate training classes this year. The first class will be held from Jan. 12 to 18. The participants for that class have already been selected. However, we plan to offer a second class in the fall. I will report further on this when we have firm dates.

One of the requirements you will need in order to be selected for this training opportunity is to have some experience serving as a technical assistant (TA) in at least a few arbitration hearings. If you are interested in becoming an arbitration advocate, you should apply through your national business agent's office. Once again, recommendations for participants will be submitted by the NBAs.

In closing, I want to wish all of you and your families a happy new year!

# Reporting to the DOL: Electronic filing requirements



Nicole  
Rhine

**U**nless your branch has no annual income or financial activity, you must file one of three types of financial reports with the Office of Labor-Management Standards (OLMS); the type of financial report you send depends on the total annual receipts of the branch. The Labor-Management Reporting and Disclosure Act (LMRDA) requires that unions file the report within 90 days after the branch's (or state association's) fiscal year. Most branches' fiscal years end Dec. 31, so most should be filing by March 30 each year. Branch presidents and treasurers are responsible for ensuring that the required reports are filed timely and accurately. The

LMRDA does not provide or permit any filing extensions, for any reason.

#### The filing requirements are:

- **Form LM-2**—Lengthy report filed electronically by branches with \$250,000 or more in annual receipts.
- **Form LM-3**—Four-page report filed electronically by branches with total annual receipts of at least \$10,000 but less than \$250,000. The Department of Labor (DOL) instituted an electronic filing system, the Electronic Forms System (EFS), which replaced the Adobe Acrobat and digital signature system. With a web-enabled computer, treasurer may complete, sign (along with the president) and electronically file the LM-3 without purchasing a digital signature or downloading special software. In addition, EFS performs all calculations for the LM report and completes a form error check prior to submission to the DOL.
- **Form LM-4**—Two-page report filed electronically by branches with annual financial receipts of less than \$10,000.

The officers who are required to file annual financial reports are responsible for maintaining records that will provide, in sufficient detail, the information and data necessary to verify the accuracy and completeness of the report. The records must be kept for at least five years after the date the report is filed. Any record necessary to verify, explain or clarify the report must be retained, including, but not limited to, vouchers, worksheets, receipts and applicable resolutions.

Willfully failing to file a report or to keep required records

can lead to criminal penalties—specifically a fine of up to \$100,000, imprisonment for up to one year, or both. Knowingly making a false statement or representation of a material fact or knowingly failing to disclose a material fact in a report or other required document, and/or willfully making a false entry in, or withholding, concealing or destroying documents required to be kept may result in the same penalties listed above.

**As a reminder, since 2005, the OLMS has required that labor organizations submit Form LM-2 electronically.** OLMS also permitted, but did not require, those who file Forms LM-3 and Form LM-4 to file electronic reports. Under a new rule, OLMS requires all filers to file electronically. This new rule was applicable to fiscal years beginning on or after Jan. 1, 2017.

More information is available on the DOL website concerning electronic filing, as well as information on registering with EFS. Anyone who needs to prepare or sign an LM form in EFS will need a specific PIN for his or her union. The DOL advises that each union (i.e., each branch or state association) should select one representative to register with EFS online and obtain a PIN for that union (branch or state association).

More information on filing the appropriate LM form for your branch or state association can be found at [dol.gov/olms](http://dol.gov/olms).

**In addition to information on filing the LM report, the same link can be used to search for other important information, including, but not limited to:**

- **Conducting audits in small unions**—A guide for trustees with a limited, focused review of financial records that was developed for use by trustees from small unions. The guide can be found at the above link by clicking on “Union Resources” under “Compliance Assistance Resources” and then clicking “Publications” under “Union Financial Integrity.” The link to a PDF of the guide is under “Financial Safeguards.”
- **Bonding requirements under the LMRDA**—All branches and state associations that have liquid assets and annual receipts of \$5,000 or more in value must be bonded.
- **Bonding computation worksheet**—Many NALC branches and some state associations either do not have a bond and should, or are under-bonded. This worksheet will assist the branch treasurer in assuring that any branch officer who handles funds or who has access to funds is bonded for at least the minimum amount required by the Department of Labor. (Both the bonding requirements and the computation worksheet can be found by following the same links listed above for the guide for conducting audits.)



## Changing bylaws about branch officers



**Paul  
Barner**

**A**s chairperson of the Committee of Laws, it is my job to review submissions from branches for proposed changes to their bylaws. After reviewing, I make a recommendation—based on precedent from long-standing presidential rulings—to the full committee on whether the proposed change is in conflict with the NALC *National Constitution*. Also serving on the Committee of Laws are Director of Safety and Health Manuel L. Peralta Jr. and Director of Life Insurance James W. “Jim” Yates.

While reviewing submissions each year, it becomes apparent that there are recurring issues with branch bylaws. This month, I want to share with you some common problems the committee sees that pertain to branch officers.

- **Required officers**—Article 4, Section 1 of the *Constitution for the Government of Subordinate and Federal Branches (CGSFB)* lists the required officers of a branch. They are president, vice president, recording secretary, financial secretary, treasurer, sergeant-at-arms, a health benefits representative and a board of trustees (composed of either three or five members). The most common problem the committee encounters are branch bylaws that fail to provide for the election of one or more of the required officers.
- **Consolidating offices**—Article 4, Section 3 of the *CGSFB* allows branches to consolidate the offices of the branch, with the exception of the office of president. (However, branches with fewer than 10 active members may consolidate the office of the president with other offices.) This is another problem area the committee encounters, and it may be a contributing factor to conflicts found with Article 4, Section 1 of the *CGSFB* concerning the list of required officers in branch bylaws.

While it is permissible for a branch to have fewer elected officers than are listed in Article 4, Section 1 of the *CGSFB*, the bylaws must guarantee that only elected officers may handle the duties assigned to the officers listed in the *Constitution*. Accordingly, the branch bylaws must explicitly consolidate each office that the branch wishes to forgo with one of the other elected branch offices. For example, let’s say a branch wishes to consolidate the offices of recording secretary and financial secretary. This is permissible under Article 4, Section 1 of the *CGSFB*. However, the branch’s wishes must be expressly stated in the bylaws.

This could be accomplished in several ways: by simply listing the office as recording secretary/financial secretary; by including a sentence in the branch bylaws stating that the office of financial secretary will be consolidated with the office of recording secretary; or by listing the duties of the financial secretary (found under financial secretary in Article 6 of the *CGSFB*)

under the duties of the recording secretary in the branch bylaws. The bottom line is that long-standing presidential rulings have held that somewhere in the branch bylaws it should be clear that the offices were combined.

- **List of offices**—Every branch’s bylaws should contain a list of the branch’s elected offices. There are a couple of reasons for this requirement. First, it is important that the membership of the branch know readily what the branch offices are. Secondly, the *CGSFB* states that a board of trustees of either three or five members must be elected. If the offices of the branch are not listed in the bylaws, then it is unclear whether the branch’s board of trustees is composed of three members or five members.
- **Additional offices**—Article 4, Section 1 of the *CGSFB* also states that a branch may provide for additional elective offices in its bylaws. If a branch wishes to have additional elective offices then, of course, those offices also should be listed in the branch bylaws.
- **Term of office**—Article 4, Section 2 of the *CGSFB* provides that all officers shall be elected for a term of one, two or three years at the option of the branch. Often the committee encounters branch bylaws that fail to specify what the term of office is for its officers. The branch may decide that the term of office be either one, two or three years—but the bylaws must specify what term of office the branch opted for.

Again, these are just a few of the common problems the Committee of Laws encounters when it comes to proposed language concerning branch offices. To assist branches that may be considering revising their bylaws, the committee recommends that branches refer to the *CGSFB* as a guide. The *CGSFB* begins on page 66 of the *NALC Constitution*. The *NALC Constitution* may be found on the NALC website. The link can be found under the “Union Administration” tab at the top of the homepage.

### Update: One-Year Delay Announced on California’s Anti-Harassment Training

As outlined in the November 2019 edition of *The Postal Record*, California employers with five or more employees are required to provide sexual-harassment-prevention training every two years to all employees, including one hour of training to non-supervisors and two hours of training to supervisors. The initial training deadline was Jan. 1, 2020, but employers now have until Jan. 1, 2021, under SB 778, which Gov. Gavin Newsom recently signed into law. Starting Jan. 1, 2021, new employees must be trained within six months of their hire date, and newly promoted supervisors must be trained within six months of their

promotion. The new law clarifies that supervisors and non-supervisors trained in 2019 need not be retrained until 2021. If employees are not trained properly, an employer could be investigated by the California Department of Fair Employment and Housing (DFEH), and a court could order the employer to comply. Please note that, despite the extended training deadline for most employees, seasonal and temporary employees—including those hired to work for less than six months—must be trained within 30 calendar days of hire or 100 hours worked, whichever occurs first, beginning Jan. 1, 2020.

## New initiatives for City Delivery



**Christopher Jackson**

**W**inter is here again—and with shorter daylight hours and later start times, carriers are once again dealing with delivering mail in the dark. Delivering mail in the dark raises safety concerns for many letter carriers. Whether or not delivery can be accomplished safely depends on a variety of circumstances. The type of delivery (curbside, park-and-loop walking, cluster boxes), surroundings, adequate light sources and familiarity with the route are some of the factors that can affect safe delivery as the sun sets and darkness occurs.

Over the years, arbitrators have ruled that darkness in and of itself is not unsafe. However, darkness can contribute to an unsafe situation.

While there is no blanket policy regarding delivery in the dark, Article 14 of the National Agreement states that management has the responsibility to provide safe working conditions, and the union should cooperate and assist management to meet this responsibility. Keeping Article 14 in mind, the parties memorialized an agreement on this issue in a joint memorandum (M-00483), which states in part:

Normally, letter carriers deliver mail during daylight hours; however, we mutually agree that there is no contractual provision which would preclude management from assigning carriers to deliver mail in other than daylight hours. We also mutually agree that the existence of safety hazard in the office in question can only be determined by applying the fact circumstances to the provisions of Article XIV.

**“While carriers should not curtail or eliminate any scheduled delivery, sometimes safety concerns will limit opportunities for safe delivery.”**

Keep in mind, there may be obstacles or unsafe conditions that could become even more dangerous with darkness. These conditions can be even more hazardous if you are assisting on a route with which you are unfamiliar. It is your responsibility to attempt delivery and assess the safety circumstances that may preclude delivery. Be aware, customers and drivers are not expecting letter carriers to be out in the dark and may not react appropriately.

If you are on a walking route and an area is not well lit, you may not be able to transverse lawns safely while fingering the mail. Section 133.2 of *Handbook M-41, City Delivery*

*Carriers Duties and Responsibilities* speaks to the carrier's obligation to safety:

Do not finger mail when driving, or when walking up or down steps or curbs, when crossing streets, or at any time it would create a safety hazard to the carriers or to the public.

In some places, letter carriers are using their cell phones or personal headlamps to assist with lighting deficiencies. Letter carriers should not be using their personal devices to assist them with mail delivery.

**Carriers should always attempt to make delivery of all mail at every delivery point.** If you are performing park-and-loop delivery, you should approach each delivery point and determine whether lighting is sufficient to sort and deliver the mail. If you cannot make delivery, bypass the stop and continue to the next delivery point. Letter carriers should attempt to deliver at each and every possible address on their route. At the end of the relay, collect any undeliverable mail that was not safe to deliver and rubber band it together for proper processing upon return to the office.

If you are delivering curbside, you may have to turn on the dome light at each delivery point to sort the mail. Remember, you may need to let your eyes adjust to the dark again before driving to the next box to do it safely.

While carriers should not curtail or eliminate any scheduled delivery, sometimes safety concerns will limit opportunities for safe delivery. In the event you attempt and are unsuccessful in safely accessing a delivery point, carriers should always report the situation to management and complete a PS Form 1571, Undelivered Mail Report. Enter the particular circumstances related to the curtailment of mail, sign the form, attach it to the mail, and give it to the supervisor or manager on duty. Under Article 41.3.g of the National Agreement, letter carriers are entitled to a duplicate of the PS Form 1571 and should always request a copy. Usage of the PS Form 1571 protects letter carriers from disciplinary and potentially legal action. Federal law prohibits improper delay of mail and, in some instances, letter carriers have received legal citations for failing to document curtailed mail.

**It is important to remember that NALC does not endorse the unnecessary curtailment of any mail.** It is about each carrier's safety and the protection of the mail in our charge. It is the responsibility of each carrier to measure safety and report to supervisors any unsafe conditions encountered. Likewise, it is management's responsibility to provide a safe working environment.

With the winter solstice behind us as we progress into spring, hopefully concerns about delivering in the dark will wane. As always when delivering mail, use caution, protect yourself and remember that your safety is always the first priority.



## Vehicle fires, continued



**Manuel L.  
Peralta Jr.**

**O**ver the last decade, we have experienced hundreds of vehicle fires. In September of 2019, NALC requested a breakout of the number of recent vehicle fires involving city letter carriers.

USPS's response, released in October 2019, indicates that we have experienced 377 LLV Fires, 36 FFV fires and surprisingly, five ProMaster fires within the last five years. The ProMaster fires were all within the last two years.

### **Fire investigation—all city delivery vehicles**

Separate from the above, in November 2019, NALC requested reports prepared by an outside contractor concerning the investigation of fires involving vehicles used in

the city delivery craft.

In September 2019, LLV 3314535 was involved in a fire. The report determined that the point of origin for the fire was the dashboard area. Sadly, this vehicle was a loaner from the vehicle maintenance facility and should have been in tip-top shape if it was being serviced properly.

In the same month, LLV 0205495 also was involved in a fire. The report determined that the causation scenario included the ignition of escaping fuel and/or vapors out of the throttle body injection unit by an ignition source. In that investigation, the carrier reported having "...shut the truck off. Heard a pop noise come from the engine...didn't think anything of it...delivered a parcel...tried to start it three times...smoke started to come from the dashboard... saw flames coming from the engine..."

### **LLV problems continue**

The number of city delivery vehicle fires listed above includes 77 LLV fires in Fiscal Year 2019. Despite all efforts by NALC to encourage every letter carrier to inspect his or her assigned vehicle every single day, we know that it is not happening. The National Agreement, through the *M-41*, provides time for each and every one of you to conduct a vehicle inspection every morning. The purpose is for you to pay close attention to the condition of your vehicle, checking for any leaks and reporting any conditions that you believe to be a hazard. Your opinion counts and what you report must be addressed. If it is not, please see your shop steward.

### **ProMaster recall**

In August 2019, ProMaster 6420538 was involved in a fire. The fire investigation report suggested the probability

that "adverse electrical activity involving the cooling fan or one of the conductors, relays, or resistors that connected to the cooling fan module" was involved. The conclusion determined that the "cooling fan cannot be eliminated" as contributory to the fire.

The report added that there were at least eight complaints on the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA) website about the vehicle, there was no recall listed at the time.

In early December, Long Island Merged, NY Branch 6000 President Walter Barton brought a possible ProMaster recall to my attention, through his inquiry to the USPS in his area.

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### **"We seek to know which of our ProMasters are affected by the recall, and what USPS plans to do about the hazard..."**

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While researching the NHTSA website, we discovered the following information relating to ProMasters:

November 15, 2019 NHTSA CAMPAIGN NUMBER: 19V818000

Engine Cooling Fan May Seize and Cause Fire

An overheated fan motor increases the risk of a fire.

NHTSA Campaign Number: 19V818000

Manufacturer Chrysler (FCA US LLC)

Components ENGINE AND ENGINE COOLING, EQUIPMENT

Potential Number of Units Affected: 99,128

#### **Summary**

Chrysler (FCA US LLC) is recalling certain 2015-2018 Ram ProMaster vehicles equipped with 3.0L diesel or 3.6L gasoline engines and air conditioning (A/C). The engine cooling fan may seize which can cause the cooling fan motor to overheat.

#### **Remedy**

The remedy for this recall is still under development. Interim notices informing owners of the safety risk are scheduled to begin mailing on or before January 4, 2020. Owners will receive a second notice when the remedy becomes available. Owners may contact Chrysler customer service at 1-800-853-1403. Chrysler's number for this recall is VB2.

NALC has made an inquiry to USPS Headquarters. We seek to know which of our ProMasters are affected by the recall, and what USPS plans to do about the hazard until the manufacturer establishes the remedy as referenced above.

Upon receipt of relevant information, it will be forwarded to your national business agents (NBA) for distribution to the branches.

## Post-retirement debt collection



**Dan Toth**

**R**etired letter carriers who receive a written notice from USPS claiming a debt is owed should visualize flashing red lights and imagine loud sirens signifying extreme danger.

If a letter carrier receives such a notice and does nothing, the Postal Service may refer the claimed debt to the U.S. Treasury Department. Once a referral to Treasury is made, the amount allegedly owed can be increased by hefty penalty and finance charges. The total amount owed can be deducted from a Civil Service Retirement System (CSRS) or Federal Employees Retirement System (FERS) pension, from a Social Security benefit, from a federal tax return, or from other federal benefits. Treasury may

also sell the debt to a collection agency. All of this may happen even if the claimed debt is in error. Right or wrong, real or invented, correctly calculated or wildly inaccurate, post-retirement debts that are referred to Treasury can result in additional penalties and enforcement actions, such as confiscation. So, don't let the debt collection get referred to Treasury. A retired letter carrier can stop a referral to Treasury by formally disputing the debt collection notice through the grievance procedure or by utilizing the internal appeal procedure.

**“But every retiree who receives a letter of demand should be able to understand why they owe money and have enough information to ensure the amount owed is properly calculated.”**

Although retired employees generally lose access to the grievance process, a retiree who receives an invoice or notice of debt from the Postal Service can initiate a grievance through the local branch of their former employing office initiated directly to Step B. The grievance must be received at Step B within 30 days from the date the retiree first learned, or may reasonably have been expected to have learned, of the Postal Service's intent to collect the debt. The memorandum of understanding (*Re: Debts of Retired Employees*) that explains this process is found in the 2016 National Agreement on page 214.

In accordance with Section 485 of the *Employee and Labor Relations Manual (ELM)*, if the former employee timely

initiates a grievance in accordance with the collective bargaining agreement's provisions, the Postal Service will stay the collection of the debt by administrative offset until after the disposition of the grievance.

Additionally, the Postal Service's internal appeal procedure is available to retirees. It is a formal procedure involving both a first step known as “request for reconsideration,” and a second step known as a “petition for review.” Once a letter carrier properly invokes the appeal procedure, the law prohibits the Postal Service from further action toward collection, pending resolution of the appeal.

This appeal procedure can be used to obtain the documentation the Postal Service relies on to claim the debt; from these documents, the carrier can determine whether the Postal Service is correct that money is owed, and if so, whether the amount claimed is accurate. If the documentation shows that the debt exists but that the amount claimed is incorrect, an administrative law judge working within the appeal procedures can correct the error. If the documentation shows that the debt is claimed in error, the administrative law judge can order the Postal Service to cease all collection efforts. If the documentation shows that the debt is owed, and the amount is correct, the administrative law judge can agree to a reasonable repayment schedule. In all these situations, there is no referral to Treasury, and there are no penalties or interest charged.

Certainly, the debt could be valid, such as when a carrier used advanced annual leave and retired prior to earning it. This results in a negative annual leave balance at retirement. But every retiree who receives a letter of demand should be able to understand why he or she owes money and have enough information to ensure the amount owed is properly calculated.

If a retired letter carrier receives a debt-collection notice from the Postal Service and can't verify the validity of the debt, he or she should immediately seek assistance from their branch. If the branch does not have expertise in post-retirement debt collection appeals or needs assistance with the grievance procedure, it should contact the national business agent or the NALC Retirement Department.

Don't let post-retirement debt collection notices get referred to Treasury. To reiterate, a request for reconsideration must be submitted within 30 calendar days of receiving the notice, or a grievance must be received at Step B within 30 days from the date the retiree first learned or may reasonably have been expected to have learned of the Postal Service's intent to collect the debt.

A previous article from the Retirement Department published in the August 2014 edition of *The Postal Record* provides more detail of the specific technical guidance on accessing the internal appeal procedures.



# Information security



**James W.  
"Jim" Yates**

**T**he security of our membership's personal information is a very high priority for all of us at the MBA. We have all become aware of major corporations, banks, and even state and federal government systems that have been attacked by hackers. As a result of these attacks, the sensitive and personal information of millions of Americans has been compromised.

Cybersecurity is among the most significant challenges for all business organizations, including the MBA. As such, we have implemented an information security program based on a model law drafted by the National Association of Insurance Commissioners (NAIC), as well as on our own operations.

NAIC drafted this model law after almost two years of extensive deliberations and input from state insurance regulators and representatives for consumers and the insurance industry. While NAIC drafted the model, it is up to each individual state whether to adopt the law as is, modified to fit their needs or not at all.

To date, eight states have adopted some form of the model law (South Carolina, Ohio, Michigan, Mississippi, Alabama, Delaware, Connecticut and New Hampshire). Legislation to enact a version of the model law has been introduced in other states such as Nevada and Rhode Island.

**Within MBA's information security program, we monitor and manage material risks, perform vendor and third-party oversight, have third-party intrusion tests performed, and can report on any security incidents and breaches.** A portion of the monitoring of our intrusion prevention capabilities is automated and reported by our software and hardware systems. We continually strive to protect our membership and to maximize the capabilities of our system to stay ahead of attempts to compromise our data.

In addition to protecting our members' information on our computer systems from cyber attacks, we also take numerous steps to ensure that their information is secure, no matter the format.

When members call MBA or MBA calls members regarding a policy, they will be asked several questions to determine if they are the policy owner. They will be asked to verify their Social Security number, date of birth and address. MBA will speak only to the policy owner regarding the details of a policy, unless we have received permission from the owner of the policy to speak to someone else.

Whenever a conversation regarding a policy takes place, whether initiated by MBA or the member, notes are taken.

These notes then are added to the policy file in our database for future reference. We also maintain hard copies of our members' policy files. All hard copies of policy files and members' information are housed in a secured area.

Additionally, all policy documents are electronically imaged and stored in our database; thus, they always are available should the hard copies be destroyed in the event of a disaster. Furthermore, the database is encrypted and backed up off site. The database, and its backup, can be accessed only by MBA from our office or our disaster recovery location if necessary.

Any time there is a request to withdraw funds from or cancel an annuity policy, the policy owner's signature is verified. This is taken a step further when a life insurance policy is canceled. In this case, the policy owner's signature must either be notarized or the member's signature must be verified by a branch officer.

MBA requires written and signed requests to add, or make changes to, a policy's beneficiary or to change the member's address of record. Any addition or changes to a beneficiary are processed immediately upon receipt at MBA to ensure that any benefit claims are paid to the proper individual per the policy owner's request.

MBA has policies in place to ensure that any communication via email that includes a member's private information is sent in an encrypted format. Additional policies are in place governing cell phone usage in the work area that contains our members' sensitive information.

**Protecting our members' money is as important to us as protecting their private information.** Statements are mailed to the policy owners to confirm cash values, dividend amounts and loan values. Policy owners should contact MBA immediately if they notice any discrepancies.

It is our goal to process all premium payments received in our office on the day received. Any payment that is not processed on the day received is secured in our safe until the next business day. Once these checks and money orders are processed, they are secured for an additional 90 days. After 90 days, the checks and money orders are shredded. This process fully complies with banking regulations.

In addition to shredding any checks and money orders received at our office, MBA also shreds any discarded documents that contains our members' information. These documents are kept under lock and key until shredding is completed by a shredding and records management company contracted by MBA.

Members who receive monthly annuity payments are required to provide "proof of life" annually by having their signatures notarized on our proof-of-life letters. This ensures that our members are the individuals receiving the payments.

# New benefits and important reminders for 2020



**Stephanie  
Stewart**

**N**ew in 2020, the Real Appeal® Program through Optum™ is an online weight loss program that offers group and one-on-one personalized coaching through an online and mobile platform. The program focuses on weight loss through proper nutrition, exercise, sleep and stress management. Members will have access to a transformation coach and a suite of online tools to help track food and activity. Members also will receive a Success Kit to support their weight loss journey, including a food and a weight scale, resistance band, workout DVDs and more!

Coaching sessions are scheduled online at the members' convenience, and educational content is provided throughout the year. Coaches will be able to see the participants' progress throughout the course of the program and will be able to offer personalized support. Real Appeal® encourages members to make small changes toward more significant long-term health results with sustained support throughout the duration of the program.

Members can enroll in the Real Appeal® Program online at [nalchbp.org](http://nalchbp.org).

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**“Receive high quality, affordable care for minor acute conditions, wherever you are.”**

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## Telehealth visits (new for 2020)

Also new for 2020, we have added the convenience of telehealth virtual visits. Receive high-quality, affordable care for minor acute conditions, wherever you are. A virtual visit with a physician or nurse practitioner for things such as sinus problems, allergies, abrasions and minor wounds can save you time and money. If appropriate, prescriptions for medications can be ordered. All these services, for a \$10 copayment per visit! Download the mobile app, visit [nalchbptelehealth.org](http://nalchbptelehealth.org) or call 888-541-7706 to access this service.

## Other coverage reminder

As we start another year, I would like to take a few minutes to talk about keeping the Plan informed regarding Medicare and other coverage. If you have other coverage in addition to our Plan, have made changes to your other

coverage or will be gaining other coverage in the upcoming months, you will need to let us know.

You must tell us if you or a covered family member have Medicare coverage, and let us obtain information about services denied or paid under Medicare if we ask. You also must tell us if you or a covered family member have coverage under any other health plan (non-Medicare) or have automobile insurance that pays health care expenses without regard to fault. Another coverage could affect the primary/secondary status of this Plan and the other plan's payment.

## Medicare

All physicians and other providers are required by law to file claims directly to Medicare for members with Medicare Part B when Medicare is primary. This is true regardless of whether or not these providers accept Medicare. When you are enrolled in Medicare along with this Plan, you still need to follow the rules in the official brochure for us to cover your care.

When we are the primary payor, we process the claim first. However, when Medicare is the primary payor, Medicare processes your claim first. In most cases, your claim will be coordinated automatically, and we then will provide secondary benefits for covered charges.

If we believe that Medicare has incorrectly denied a service or supply, we will ask the provider or facility to refile to Medicare.

Keep in mind, the decision to enroll in Medicare is yours; however, if you choose to enroll, you will need to apply for Medicare benefits three months before you turn age 65. It's easy—just call the Social Security Administration to apply. If you do not apply for one or more parts of Medicare, you still can be covered under the Federal Employees Health Benefits (FEHB) Program.

## Other coverage (non-Medicare)

When you have other coverage, one plan normally pays its benefits in full as the primary payor and the other plan pays a reduced benefit as the secondary payor. Like other insurers, we determine which coverage is primary, according to the National Association of Insurance Commissioners' guidelines.

When we are primary, we will pay the benefits described in our official brochure.

Please keep in mind, if we do not have the correct coordination of benefits, an overpayment could occur. If we overpay you or a provider, we will make diligent efforts to recover benefit payments we made in error but in good faith. We may reduce subsequent benefit payments to offset overpayments.



**Contract Administration Unit**

Brian Renfro, Executive Vice President  
Lew Drass, Vice President  
Christopher Jackson, Director of City Delivery  
Manuel L. Peralta Jr., Director of Safety and Health  
Dan Toth, Director of Retired Members

# Withholding and excessing

**A**rticle 12 of the National Agreement gives management the right and responsibility to withhold full and part-time positions for employees who may be involuntarily reassigned due to the need to reduce employees in a craft or installation.

Recently the Postal Service has begun notifying several national business agent (NBA) offices of its intent to withhold letter carrier craft positions. These withholding notices are due to management's anticipated excessing of clerk and maintenance craft employees.

Involuntary reassignments of this nature, referred to as excessing events, can occur for a variety of reasons, such as route adjustments; automation, as in the case of delivery point sequencing (DPS) and flat sequencing system (FSS) implementation; facility closures and consolidations; and declining mail volumes.

Excessing may occur from one craft to another within the same installation, from one installation to another within the same craft, or from one craft to another in a different installation. Excessing also may occur from one section to another within the same installation if the local memorandum of understanding (LMOU) identifies separate sections for excessing purposes in accordance with Article 30.B.18.

When determining the need to excess employees, management is required to minimize the impact on the employee being reassigned, as long as the needs of the service can be met.

Article 12.4.A states:

A primary principle in effecting reassignments will be that dislocation and inconvenience to employees in the regular work force shall be kept to a minimum, consistent with the needs of the service. Reassignments will be made in accordance with this Section and the provisions of Section 5 below.

Article 12.5.B.2 states:

The Vice Presidents Area Operations shall give full consideration to withholding sufficient full-time and part-time flexible positions within the area for full-time and part-time flexible employees who may be involuntarily reassigned. When positions are withheld, management will periodically review the continuing need for withholding such positions and discuss with the NBA the results of such review.

This provision does not give the Postal Service the right to excess an employee based solely on the impact of the reassignment. Management must adhere to the jointly agreed-upon rules when determining where to reassign the impacted employee.

Page 12-9 of the 2014 USPS-NALC *Joint Contract Administration Manual (JCAM)* states:

This section is applicable to all excessing situations. It states the general rule, repeated in Article 12.5.B.1, that dislocation and inconvenience to employees in the regular work

force must be kept to a minimum. To accomplish this Article 12.5.C identifies the different circumstances under which excessing may occur and the correct procedures in each.

When an LMOU identifies sections for reassignments to the same craft within an installation as authorized by Article 30.B.18, the special rules provided for in Article 12.5.C.4.b apply.

When management needs to reduce the number of employees in an installation other than by attrition, the following applies:

- Management must seek to excess employees to another craft in the same installation under the provisions of Article 12.5.C.5.a(4).
- Then, management must seek to excess employees to the same craft in another installation under the provisions of Article 12.5.C.5.b(1).
- Finally, management may then seek to excess employees to another craft in another installation under the provisions of Article 12.5.C.5.b(2).

For example, it is a violation for management to excess a clerk to the carrier craft in another installation under the provisions of Article 12.5.C.5.b(2) when it could instead have excessed the clerk to a clerk craft position in another installation under the provisions of Article 12.5.C.5.b(1).

**The Postal Service does not have the right to withhold assignments indefinitely** when it determines the need to excess employees from the craft or installation. National Arbitrator Howard Gamser addressed the length of time the Postal Service may withhold positions in anticipation of an excessing event in NC-C-16340, Dec. 7, 1979 (C-05904). He concluded that a "rule of reason based on the facts and circumstances" must be applied to determine whether the length of the withholding was proper.

Under the provisions of Article 12.5.B.2, management may not withhold more positions than the anticipated number of employees who will be excessed.

Page 12-14 of *JCAM* states:

Management may not withhold more positions than are reasonably necessary to accommodate any planned excessing. Article 12.5.B.2 only authorizes management to withhold "sufficient ... positions within the area for full-time and part-time flexible employees who may be involuntarily reassigned."

Once management has withheld a sufficient number of positions to accommodate the employees being excessed, no additional positions may be withheld.

The Postal Service is required to evaluate the attrition rate of the losing craft in the installation when determining the number of positions to withhold.

*(continued on next page)*

## Withholding and excessing (continued)

Management must reduce the number of withheld positions if the projected attrition rate will lessen the need to excess employees.

Page 12-14 of *JCAM* explains management's responsibilities:

Withholding positions for excessing is only justified when positions in the losing craft or installation must be reduced faster than can be accomplished through normal attrition. Projections of anticipated attrition must take into account not only local historical attrition data, but also the age composition of the employees. Installations with a high percentage of employees approaching retirement age can reasonably anticipate higher attrition than installations with younger employees. Thus, accurate projections require an examination of the local fact circumstances rather than the mere application of a national average attrition rate.

Management may not withhold carrier technician positions in order to excess employees from other crafts unless the employee has prior service in the letter carrier craft.

*JCAM*, page 12-14, states:

Management may not withhold Carrier Technician positions in anticipation of excessing employees from another craft. Article 12.5.B.9, 12.5.C.5.a(4) and 12.5.C.5.b(2) require that when employees are excessed into another craft, they must meet the minimum qualifications for the position. The minimum qualification standards for Carrier Technician positions include one year of experience as a city carrier (See Qualification Standards for Carrier Technician—Q7- 02: Occupation Code: 2310-2010). Clerks cannot meet the minimum experience requirements for Carrier Technician positions except when former letter carriers will be excessed back into the letter carrier craft.

Management may not withhold higher-level positions in order to excess employees from a lower level.

*JCAM*, page 12-15, states:

Management may not withhold letter carrier positions in anticipation of excessing employees from lower level positions. The provisions of Article 12.5.C.5.a(4) & 12.5.C.5.b(2) specifically require that when excess employees are excessed to other crafts it must be to positions in the same or lower level.

For the purposes of applying this provision, letter carrier craft assignments are equivalent to level 6 assignments in the bargaining unit crafts represented by the American Postal Workers Union and the National Postal Mail Handlers Union. This means that management may withhold letter carrier positions only to excess employees in level 6 or higher assignments.

The Postal Service is barred from excessing part-time or non-traditional full-time (NTFT) employees from other crafts into full-time letter carrier craft positions. This prohibition prevents management from withholding full-time positions in anticipa-

tion of excessing part-time and/or NTFT employees from other crafts. National Arbitrator Dennis Nolan ruled in Q06N-4Q-C12114440, Feb. 16, 2014 (C-31171) the following:

The Postal Service may not reassign into a full-time carrier position any clerk craft employee who does not meet the definition of full-time employee specified in the Postal Service's Agreement with NALC.

The Postal Service at the area level is required to meet periodically with the NBA office to discuss the positions being withheld in the letter carrier craft.

*JCAM*, page 12-15, states:

Effective with the change in the 2001 National Agreement, area management will periodically review the continuing need for withholding positions and discuss the results of such review with the National Business Agents. The issues that should be discussed include, but are not limited to:

- The excessing that has occurred and the projected future need for excessing,
- The currently effective withholding notices,
- The continuing need for withholding,
- The vacancies currently being withheld in the letter carrier craft.

### Full-time Opportunities

Currently, full-time positions in the letter carrier craft are filled in accordance with the Memorandum of Understanding Re: Full-time Opportunities—City Letter Carrier Craft, found on pages 159-162 of the 2016-2019 National Agreement. This MOU requires that management fill full-time opportunities through assignment of an unassigned full-time regular letter carrier, promotion of a part-time flexible (PTF) in the installation to full-time, acceptance of a voluntary reassignment, or conversion of a city carrier assistant (CCA) to full-time regular career status. An exception to these requirements occurs when the opportunity is subject to a proper withholding notice pursuant to Article 12. In this case, management must hold the opportunity until the withholding is lifted under the circumstances described above.

Branches should contact their NBA to determine if a grievance should be filed when they are notified that an assignment is being withheld due to an excessing event. NALC has created grievance starters to assist local branches in filing grievances challenging the Postal Service's right to withhold letter carrier positions. Local NALC representatives can contact their NBA office to obtain copies of these grievance starters and any other information the NBA may have received regarding the withholding event.

Local NALC representatives and members wanting more information regarding withholding and excessing should review *A Guide for Understanding Excessing Rules*, which is available on the NALC website at [nalc.org/workplace-issues/city-delivery/body/Excessing-Book.pdf](http://nalc.org/workplace-issues/city-delivery/body/Excessing-Book.pdf).



# MDA end-of-year wrap-up



Christina Vela Davidson



**I can't say this enough: "Thank you, thank you! Thank you, brothers and sisters, for all your hard work!"**

Well, 2019 is over and 2020 is here. Many branches have either completed or at least started working on their budgeting process for 2020. A budget is simply a strategic plan for the way you will spend your money over the next year.

My article this month is tailored toward asking branch members to use the same type of planning that they do for their branch budget, but applying that structure to community service. Specifically, how are we going to be successful in raising money for our national charity, the Muscular Dystrophy Association (MDA)?

**So, what are the steps in a strategic plan? What factors do branch leaders need to pay attention to while planning for the coming year(s)?** A good planning process answers the following questions:

- How do we know where we are going?
- How do we evaluate our progress?
- How do we know if we succeed?

Of course, the beginning point is to have branch officers get together with the branch MDA coordinator and committee members who are responsible for MDA in your branch.

The planning process starts with reviewing the purpose of NALC involvement with community service in the first place. The next step is to determine branch goals for the next year. Has your branch set goals for MDA fundraising? Goals for strategic planning should be smart and not outrageous. You do not want to discourage your MDA coordinator, committee or branch members.

**That is, your goals should be specific, achievable and relevant—and you must have a timetable.** The strategies you develop will be based on the needs, information and goals identified by the group. Choose the strategies that will:

- Accomplish the objective.
- Be handled by your committee in a reasonable amount of time.
- Involve most of the people on your committee, plus other members and activists.
- Contribute to achieving your overall goal and purpose.

**The next step is to figure out what the branch wants to do to raise money.** Here is a list of easy ways to raise money for MDA:

- Casual days
- Raffles
- Car washes
- Yard sale

- Satchel drive
- Local credit union partnerships
- Bowling tournaments
- Pool and dart tournaments
- Comedy/karaoke nights
- Charity golf tournaments
- Corn hole and bean bag tournaments
- Bake sale
- Bingo night
- Branch member donation drives
- Pancake breakfasts or spaghetti dinners
- Muscle walks
- Texas hold'em tournaments (follow state laws)
- 5K Tough Mudder
- Trivia tournaments
- Text DeliverTheCure to 41444

**Once you have figured that out, you want to develop an action plan.** An action plan is a written outline that pulls all the pieces of your planning together. It includes specific tasks, times and assignments to each person about what needs to happen and when. The committee should periodically check the progress related to the tasks. The committee should ask themselves the following questions:

- Are we on schedule?
- Are our plans still feasible?
- Did we leave anything out?
- Have things come up that we did not anticipate?
- How did we handle them?
- Does new information suggest that changes in strategy are needed?

**Finally, review your objectives and strategy with the aim of adjusting and improving if necessary.** Depending on what the evaluation shows, celebrate your branch's accomplishments, make corrections and keep moving forward toward the goal. Then, next year about this time, repeat the whole process over again. If we can keep moving our strategic plan along, we will help get MDA ever closer to finding a cure, and we will provide the help and hope that the MDA families need.

We have been successful in raising money for MDA in past years because of branch leadership and coordinators. I can tell you that the MDA sings your praises at every opportunity. They are grateful for you, my sisters and brothers.

Again, I want to thank all those who have worked so hard to raise money for MDA. Let me end with this: "Remember, you never know when it might be you or someone you love who may need help."

Note: All MDA fundraising is reported on a calendar basis, i.e., January to December. If you have not already provided NALC Headquarters with the total amount of funds raised by your branch in 2019, please do so immediately.

## Updated Veterans List



**Assistant to the President for Community Services**  
Christina Vela Davidson

**A**s stated before, nearly one in four NALC members have served in the armed forces. These veterans traded their military uniforms for letter carrier uniforms, continuing their service to their nation and their communities. Due to the vast number of requests, submissions and corrections, I want to thank all those veterans who have signed up for the NALC Veterans Group.

The new resource guide is being completed, and, once completed, the guide will be available for all veterans in the Veterans Group. This

guide will be full of valuable information for active and retired carriers with past military service and those currently serving in a reserve component of the U.S. Armed Forces or the National Guard.

Just another reminder that next August, the Veterans

Group will once again sponsor a special service project for NALC members who are veterans to serve the local community at the national convention in Honolulu. Veterans Group members also may purchase exclusive merchandise from the NALC store. All products are union-made in the U.S. To buy these products, go to [nalc.org/store](http://nalc.org/store) to download an order form, or call 202-393-4695 to order by phone.

Again, membership is free and open to any NALC member with past or current military service. To join the NALC Veterans Group, fill out the form and mail it to: NALC Veterans Group, National Association of Letter Carriers, 100 Indiana Ave. NW, Washington, DC 20001-2144.

The form—along with useful information and news of interest to veterans—also is available on our website at [nalc.org/veterans](http://nalc.org/veterans).

**The following pages list new members of the NALC Veterans Group from Oct. 14 to Dec. 11. They are listed by state and branch number. Anyone who joins after that date will be listed in *The Postal Record* in November.**

Neal A. Perdue, Decatur, AL Br. 1314  
Tim E. Love, Fort Payne, AL Br. 3359  
William A. Cook, Anchorage, AK Br. 4319  
Ann M. Holbrook, Anchorage, AK Br. 576  
Troy M. Carolan, Phoenix, AZ Br. 576  
Michael Griner, Tucson, AZ Br. 704  
Jennifer Lavelle, Tucson, AZ Br. 704  
Charles T. McDonald Jr., Tucson, AZ Br. 704  
Jerome A. Nathanson, Tucson, AZ Br. 704  
Sergio A. Ojedavalles, Tucson, AZ Br. 704  
Belinda L. Scott, Tucson, AZ Br. 704  
Ronald L. Cloud, Little Rock, AR Br. 35  
Anthony C. Martin, Fort Smith, AR Br. 399  
Theodore R. Wampach, Fort Smith, AR Br. 399  
Michael Horton, Jonesboro, AR Br. 1131  
Johnny Egas, Los Angeles, CA Br. 24  
Karl O. Fretlon, Los Angeles, CA Br. 24  
Donald R. Boatright, Sacramento, CA Br. 133  
Stephen F. Vonbima, Sacramento, CA Br. 133  
Aaron M. Malek, Santa Rosa, CA Br. 183  
Steven C. Mazman, San Jose, CA Br. 193  
Jesus M. Garcia, Stockton, CA Br. 213  
Richard R. Gardner Jr., Stockton, CA Br. 213  
Michael A. Gosciniaik, Stockton, CA Br. 213  
Michael A. Guerrero, Stockton, CA Br. 213  
Michael L. Hutchings, Stockton, CA Br. 213  
Anthony P. Talamantes, Stockton, CA Br. 213  
Alex M. Trinidad, Stockton, CA Br. 213  
Pedro Brache Jr., San Bernardino, CA Br. 411  
Rigoberto Bugarin, San Bernardino, CA Br. 411  
Ernest J. Medina, San Bernardino, CA Br. 411  
William H. Perry, San Bernardino, CA Br. 411  
Michael E. Beaudette, Garden Grove, CA Br. 1100  
Emmanuel Carreon, Garden Grove, CA Br. 1100  
Jose L. Cortez, Garden Grove, CA Br. 1100  
John F. Lalonde, Garden Grove, CA Br. 1100  
Richard P. Spindler, Garden Grove, CA Br. 1100  
Lancelot A. Thomas, Garden Grove, CA Br. 1100  
Richard A. Grimes, Greater East Bay, CA Br. 1111  
Neil W. Davis, Modesto, CA Br. 1291

Samuel U. Cabarloc, Santa Clara, CA Br. 1427  
Casey J. McGeorge, Pasadena, CA Br. 2200  
Anthony R. Cicero, San Fernando, CA Br. 2902  
Elizabeth C. Lepak, Palm Springs, CA Br. 4149  
Gary J. Salmansohn, Lancaster, CA Br. 4430  
Janice T. Dennis, Denver, CO Br. 47  
Wayne L. Parrington, Denver, CO Br. 47  
Tori L. Simmons, Denver, CO Br. 47  
Todd C. Akers, Colorado Springs, CO Br. 204  
Steven R. Bedia, Colorado Springs, CO Br. 204  
Tristan Betha, Colorado Springs, CO Br. 204  
Michael B. Champagne, Colorado Springs, CO Br. 204  
David D. Claypool, Colorado Springs, CO Br. 204  
Honorene S. Davis, Colorado Springs, CO Br. 204  
Anthony S. Duenas, Colorado Springs, CO Br. 204  
Louisa Ferraro, Colorado Springs, CO Br. 204  
Raymond Gutierrez, Colorado Springs, CO Br. 204  
Byron E. Harris, Colorado Springs, CO Br. 204  
Robert W. Hernandez, Colorado Springs, CO Br. 204  
Jeffrey R. Hopkins, Colorado Springs, CO Br. 204  
Rick McCullough, Colorado Springs, CO Br. 204  
Joshua A. Potts, Colorado Springs, CO Br. 204  
Warren C. Roth, Colorado Springs, CO Br. 204  
Eric F. Sandoval, Colorado Springs, CO Br. 204  
Jodawn Session, Colorado Springs, CO Br. 204  
Howard D. Sheley, Colorado Springs, CO Br. 204  
Ronald L. Snook, Colorado Springs, CO Br. 204  
Leslie J. Toney, Colorado Springs, CO Br. 204  
Corey J. Walker, Colorado Springs, CO Br. 204  
Anthony D. Williams, Colorado Springs, CO Br. 204  
David E. Wissinger, Colorado Springs, CO Br. 204  
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# ECOMP filing claim update



Assistant to the President  
for Workers' Compensation  
Kevin Card

**T**he Postal Service has been slowly rolling out electronic claim filing around the country. The initial rollout in the DC metro area began in late July and early August. Electronic claim filing became available in the Pacific Area at the end of September, and the Western Area in early November.

The Postal Service's scheduled rollout for the rest of the nation is:

Northeast Area	12/11/19
Great Lakes Area	01/23/20
Eastern Area	02/12/20
Southern Area	03/16/20

**The Postal Service provided NALC with a mandatory service talk that explains the Employees Compensation and Management Portal (ECOMP) claim filing portal and offers guides for filing CA-1, CA-2 and CA-7 forms. Reports of the ECOMP mandatory service talks have been spotty at best. There's probably a good reason for that.**

In some districts where ECOMP claim filing has been rolled out, some postal managers are telling injured workers that claims can only be filed online. While that is not true—claims can still be filed using a paper form—the advantages of filing a claim electronically far outweigh the benefits of filing a paper claim.

Reporting an injury has been problematic for many letter carriers. For one, we are a proud craft. The “walk it off” ethos runs strong in our craft. In my years of carrying mail, many of my co-workers wore all sorts of braces for wrists, knees and ankles. They were good letter carriers who were hesitant to file a claim for injuries that were clearly work-related. It may have been personal pride that motivated them, but it's also likely that they were hesitant to report injuries due to the potential for confrontation with their supervisor or manager. Such confrontations are not just wrong, they may violate federal law and postal regulations.

**Filing a claim electronically should eliminate such confrontations** because the injured worker is in the driver's seat when filing a claim. You can register and file a claim without having to ask for a form. In traumatic injury cases, you still will need to notify the Postal Service, but you do not have to beg for a form.

Injured workers can register and fill out the claim form from their home computer, tablet or smart phone. The Office of Workers' Compensation Programs (OWCP) designed the ECOMP system to make filing a claim easier than filling out the forms. You can register in ECOMP and file a claim from your phone while sitting in a doctor's office; it's that easy.

**Another benefit of filing a claim electronically is the injured letter's ability carrier to track the progress of the claim.**

When you register and file using ECOMP, the system creates an employee dashboard that lists all of your claims and allows you to track the status of claim forms directly. The dashboard displays the claim number and the status of the claim form. You no longer have to rely on an OWCP claims examiner or Postal Service injury comp office to find out the status of your claim.

This is important because the Postal Service has 10 working days to fill out its section of the claim form and send it to OWCP. Injured workers should check their dashboard regularly to check on the status of the claim. If your claim form has not been processed in time, you should take a picture or screenshot of your dashboard and contact your shop steward, branch OWCP officer or national business agent.

Once OWCP gives you your claim number, ECOMP allows you to upload your medical documentation directly into your file. Postal Service instructions for using ECOMP encourage injured workers to give management privacy-protected medical documentation. Do not do so! You should give your manager a completed CA-17 duty status report. However, your management is not entitled to all of your medical reports.

**To upload documents, you will have to enter your claim number, name, date of birth and date of injury.** Once that

**“If your claim has not been processed in time, take a picture or screenshot of your dashboard and contact your shop steward, branch OWCP officer or national business agent.”**

information is entered, you may upload a variety of forms and requests including EFT (direct deposit) forms, address changes, case file/document requests, representative designations, general inquiries (non-medical), reconsideration requests, requests for authorization for medical treatment or procedures, requests for hearing/review of the written record, and medical documents.

You can upload documents in a variety of files types, including .jpg, .jpeg, .gif, .png, .tif, .txt, .rtf, .pdf, .doc and .docx. A maximum of 10 pages can be uploaded at a time. It is best to separate documents by date and upload each individually.

If you already have an OWCP claim, you can register on ECOMP and file CA-7 claims for compensation.

The “Injured on the Job” page at [nalc.org](http://nalc.org) has links to the ECOMP website and user guides for registering and filing claims.

# Back to the future



Director of Education  
Jamie Lumm

Up until about 50 years ago, letter carrier salaries were established by Congress. But as a result of the 1970 postal strike, carriers gained collective-bargaining rights and NALC was able to negotiate contracts directly with the new United States Postal Service. Every National Agreement (some more than others) has brought changes for the better to carrier salaries, benefits and working conditions, but few of the contracts had a greater impact on working conditions than the 1984-1987 Agreement. So, let's travel back 35 years to see how this agreement came to be, what was in it and how it affected the future of overtime for letter carriers.

In 1981, the Postal Service and NALC narrowly averted a second nationwide strike when they reached an agreement following contentious negotiations. The Postal Service sought to capitalize on the hardline approach the Reagan Administration was taking with the PATCO air traffic controllers (see my three previous *Postal Record* articles) so they wanted to impose a wage freeze and put a cap on cost-of-living increases (COLA). Because the early 1980s was a time of high inflation (10 percent per year) with prime interest rates hovering around 20 percent, a wage freeze and a capped COLA would have been devastating to letter carriers.

Fortunately, in the wee hours of July 21, 1981, NALC was able to reach an agreement with the Postal Service and a strike was avoided. Had the contract expired just two weeks later, after Reagan fired the air traffic controllers for conducting an illegal strike, things may have turned out very differently. But NALC President Sombrotto was able to get the Postal Service to agree to an uncapped COLA as well as wage increases, so a deal was reached.

Another NALC accomplishment in 1981 was the elimination of regular route inspections. Many carriers found this annual exercise burdensome and stressful, so their elimination was a long-sought goal of NALC. In 1978, the parties had agreed to go from annual counts to just one during that contract. In 1981, they eliminated any mandatory requirement for inspections, except when the regular carrier requested one under the criteria of Section 271.G of the *M-39*. Unfortunately, once the requirement for regular inspections ended, the law of unintended consequences kicked in and as a result, many carriers found things far worse than they had been before.

The 1970s and 1980s were a period of rapid growth in mail volume and delivery points and as bothersome and difficult as regular count and inspections were, they did tend to keep routes somewhat in check and close to eight hours. But once they were no longer required, many routes quickly be-

came overburdened, causing massive amounts of overtime. OT rates as high as 20 percent were not uncommon.

The assignment of overtime was a different world back then. Because Article 8.5.C.2.D states that "recourse to the overtime desired list is not necessary in the case of a letter carrier working on the employee's own route on one of the employee's regularly scheduled days" and because there was no contract language requiring management to use a PTF or casual to provide auxiliary assistance, many non-ODL carriers found themselves working overtime nearly every day. Rather than hiring carriers to help with the increased workload, management took the position that it was cheaper to pay someone time and a half than hire a new employee given the added costs of leave, insurance, pension and other benefits. This made reducing mandatory overtime an important NALC goal in the 1984 negotiations.

The main sticking points in labor negotiations are almost always the wage issues, and it was no different in 1984. In keeping with the anti-worker atmosphere of the post-PATCO economy, the Postal Service sought to reduce labor costs by imposing a permanent two-tier wage system with new employees starting at a lower rate and never reaching parity with those hired before them. The NALC bargaining team vigorously opposed this. When no agreement was reached by the July 20 deadline, the contract went to arbitration. In a national interest arbitration, there are multiple arbitrators; one is selected by each party, and there is a neutral one who is selected by the parties alternately striking names off a list until they reach the last person standing. In 1984, that was Clark Kerr, a well-known labor arbitrator who had been blacklisted as a communist by J. Edgar Hoover for opposing the McCarthyite "loyalty oath" policies of the 1950s. He also was fired from his position as president of the University of California in 1967 by then-Gov. Ronald Reagan for not cracking down hard enough on the campus's free speech and anti-Vietnam war movements.

The arbitration hearings were held Dec. 11 to 17, and Arbitrator Kerr's final and binding award was issued on Dec. 24, 1984, giving letter carriers a mixed-bag Christmas present. Some changes were great; others, not so much. In other words, what you usually get in an arbitrated agreement.

Up until that time there was a 12-step pay scale for letter carriers noted as Steps 1-12. Rather than creating a separate lower tier scale for new hires as the Postal Service had wanted, Kerr compromised and instead created two new steps at lower rates than the previous Step 1. Under this new scale, the 14 steps were designated as Steps B-O with the old Step 1 becoming Step D. While this was not what NALC wanted, it was far better than what the Postal Service had sought.

The Kerr award also incorporated changes that parties had agreed to in order to reduce mandatory overtime, which was running rampant. I will cover these in next month's article. Stay tuned.



# CLUW convention highlights

**T**he Coalition of Labor Union Women's (CLUW) 20th biennial convention was held in Las Vegas, NV, from Oct. 16-18. We attended as delegates representing NALC along with Myra Warren, NALC's former director of life insurance. Warren is a national vice president for CLUW and has been an active member of the organization for many years.

CLUW, first formed in 1974, is an organization made up primarily of women who are like-minded in promoting solidarity, strength and education within the labor movement, as indicated in its mission statement: "The primary mission of CLUW is to unify all union women in a viable organization to determine our common problems and concerns and to develop action programs within the framework of our unions to deal effectively with our objectives."

The theme of the convention was "Sisters Not Afraid of Power: Coming Together to Change the World." The women's movement and the labor movement are facing some of the biggest challenges in our history. This convention sought to engage the labor movement to form strong coalitions and develop strategies to fight against the forces trying to diminish our power and eliminate the gains we struggled to achieve—both as women and as union members. The majority of the attendees were union members from various labor organizations. Among the professions represented were steel workers, flight attendants, teachers, mine workers, bricklayers, stage and television production workers, and transportation workers.

**The convention began with a day dedicated to a variety of day-long workshops.** Workshop topics included constitution and finance rules, the history of the labor and women's movements, meeting management and sexual harassment. McQuality attended the workshop "None of Us Are Free: The Impact of Race, Class, and Gender Bias." This workshop explained how labor history has intersected with other social movements and included exercises designed to challenge participants to take a self-inventory and recognize their own biases. The workshop revealed how these biases can potentially affect interaction with union sisters and brothers.

Feldman-Wiencek attended the workshop "Healthy Lives/Healthy Sisters." This training encouraged women in the labor movement to pay attention to the effect our work has on our personal well-being and taught us techniques to address negative effects on our well-being so we can be better advocates.

The convention, as with NALC conventions, included the debate and passage of resolutions and constitutional amendments. CLUW delegates approved 25 resolutions on topics including climate change, gun violence, supporting home



Holly Feldman-Wiencek, Myra Warren and Michelle McQuality (l to r) attend the 20th biennial convention for the Coalition of Labor Union Women.

healthcare workers, protection for immigrant children, sexual harassment and collective-bargaining rights for public sector employees.

**The convention also included a** number of guest speakers and several panel discussions with union members and activists. Liz Shuler, secretary-treasurer of the AFL-CIO, spoke about the importance of women in the labor movement; Linda Chavez-Thompson, executive vice-president emerita of the AFL-CIO, spoke about the importance of women getting involved in politics—both as voters and as politicians; Sara Nelson, international president of the Association of Flight Attendants, spoke about fighting sexual harassment in the

workplace; and Dolores Huerta, co-founder of the United Farm Workers and founder and president of the Dolores Huerta Foundation, spoke about her six decades lobbying passionately on behalf of farm workers for fair wages, equal treatment and better working conditions.

Panel discussions were offered on a variety of topics, including "Sisters of the Next Generation" (young women aged 17-22 sharing their ongoing efforts in addressing injustice on multiple fronts), "Teacher Power Rising" (a wave of teachers strikes that began in 2017 and the women who lead them), and "In Our Hands We Hold the Power" (women instrumental in spreading awareness related to women's voting rights 100 years after the 19th Amendment). All of the guest speakers and panelists were awe-inspiring women. The young women on the "Sisters of the Next Generation" panel were particularly impressive and made us hopeful for future generations of female leaders.

The week concluded Friday evening with a "SNAP with Hattitude" gala reception. Convention organizers encouraged participants to wear hats of all kinds to represent the many different hats women wear in their lives.

**Overall, the convention was empowering, promoting** growth in the labor movement as well as encouraging women to address societal issues like oppression and injustice. We were inspired by the variety of labor unions and diversity of the delegates who participated in the convention. All of the organizations were well-represented by strong, assertive and knowledgeable women and we were honored to be considered a part of this very special group. We returned from the convention full of ideas we hope to implement in our work with NALC. For more information on CLUW, its mission, and how to join, visit [cluw.org](http://cluw.org).

Submitted by Research Assistant Holly Feldman-Wiencek and Assistant to the President for City Delivery Michelle McQuality

## Annuity Estimates

# Monthly CSRS annuity payments for letter carriers who retire on April 1, 2020

The table below provides monthly basic annuity, survivor reduction and reduced annuity amount estimates for letter carriers covered by the Civil Service Retirement System (CSRS) who plan to take optional retirement on April 1, 2020. Estimates are computed by using the given high-3 aver-

ages, which are based on the basic pay earned by full-time Step 0 carriers and vary by length of postal/federal/military service.

Reduced annuity amounts reflect the difference between the given basic annuity and survivor reduction figures.

Years of Service <sup>2</sup>	CC Grade 1 / High-3 Average <sup>1</sup> : \$63,167			CC Grade 2 / High-3 Average <sup>1</sup> : \$ 64,473		
	Basic Annuity	Max. Survivor Deduction <sup>3</sup>	Max. Survivor Reduced Annuity <sup>4</sup>	Basic Annuity	Max. Survivor Deduction <sup>3</sup>	Max. Survivor Reduced Annuity <sup>4</sup>
20	\$1,908	\$168	\$1,740	\$1,948	\$172	\$1,775
21	2,013	179	1,835	2,055	183	1,872
22	2,119	189	1,929	2,163	194	1,969
23	2,224	200	2,024	2,270	204	2,065
24	2,329	210	2,119	2,377	215	2,162
25	2,435	221	2,214	2,485	226	2,259
26	2,540	231	2,308	2,592	237	2,356
27	2,645	242	2,403	2,700	247	2,452
28	2,750	253	2,498	2,807	258	2,549
29	2,856	263	2,593	2,915	269	2,646
30	2,961	274	2,687	3,022	280	2,742
31	3,066	284	2,782	3,130	290	2,839
32	3,172	295	2,877	3,237	301	2,936
33	3,277	305	2,972	3,345	312	3,033
34	3,382	316	3,066	3,452	323	3,129
35	3,487	326	3,161	3,559	333	3,226
36	3,593	337	3,256	3,667	344	3,323
37	3,698	347	3,351	3,774	355	3,419
38	3,803	358	3,445	3,882	366	3,516
39	3,908	368	3,540	3,989	376	3,613
40	4,014	379	3,635	4,097	387	3,710
41	4,119	389	3,730	4,204	398	3,806
41+11 months & over <sup>5</sup>	4,211	399	3,813	4,298	407	3,891

1. High-3 averages for both grades (formerly levels) are for carriers who have worked full-time on a continuous basis between April 1, 2017, and April 1, 2020, at Step 0 (formerly Step 12).

2. Years of service includes any unused sick leave.

3. The reduction for a survivor's annuity is the amount necessary to provide maximum benefits (55% of basic annuity) to a surviving spouse.

4. If covered by the NALC Health Benefit Plan, a further deduction of either \$473.01 per month if for self plus one (code 323), \$408.94 if for self and family (code 322), or \$196.82 if for self only (code 321) will be made. In addition, premiums for any coverage under the Federal Employees' Group Life Insurance Program will reduce the net annuity further.

5. Under FERS rules, there is no maximum allowable yearly annuity. However, given the FERS formula of 1% per year, it is highly unlikely that any FERS employee will ever exceed the 80% maximum limit under CSRS.

6. FERS employees who retire at age 62 or later with at least 20 years of service receive an additional 10% - their annuities are calculated at 1.1% times years of service times high-three average salary.

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# Monthly FERS annuity payments for letter carriers who retire on April 1, 2020

**T**he Federal Employees Retirement System (FERS) covers federal and postal employees hired on or after Jan. 1, 1984. FERS employees earn retirement benefits from three sources: the FERS Basic Annuity, Social Security and the Thrift Savings Plan.

An additional Special Annuity Supplement is paid to FERS annuitants who retire at Minimum Retirement Age (MRA) plus 30 years or more, or at age 60 plus 20 years or more. It is approximately calculated by taking an individual's Social Security age 62 benefit estimate, multiplied by the number of years of

FERS coverage, divided by 40. It is payable to age 62 and then ends. Social Security benefits are payable beginning at age 62.

The table below provides monthly basic annuity, survivor deduction and net annuity amount estimates for letter carriers who plan to take optional retirement on April 1, 2020. Estimates are computed by using the given high-3 averages, which are based on the basic pay earned by full-time Step O carriers and vary by length of postal/military/federal service. Reduced annuity amounts reflect the difference between the given basic annuity and survivor reduction figures.

Years of Service <sup>2</sup>	CC Grade 1 / High-3 Average <sup>1</sup> : \$63,167			CC Grade 2 / High-3 Average <sup>1</sup> : \$64,473		
	Basic Annuity	Max. Survivor Deduction <sup>3</sup>	Max. Survivor Reduced Annuity <sup>4</sup>	Basic Annuity	Max. Survivor Deduction <sup>3</sup>	Max. Survivor Reduced Annuity <sup>4</sup>
20	\$1,053	\$105	948	1,075	\$107	\$967
21	1,105	111	995	1,128	113	1,015
22	1,158	116	1,042	1,182	118	1,064
23	1,211	121	1,090	1,236	124	1,112
24	1,263	126	1,137	1,289	129	1,161
25	1,316	132	1,184	1,343	134	1,209
26	1,369	137	1,232	1,397	140	1,257
27	1,421	142	1,279	1,451	145	1,306
28	1,474	147	1,327	1,504	150	1,354
29	1,527	153	1,374	1,558	156	1,402
30	1,579	158	1,421	1,612	161	1,451
31	1,632	163	1,469	1,666	167	1,499
32	1,684	168	1,516	1,719	172	1,547
33	1,737	174	1,563	1,773	177	1,596
34	1,790	179	1,611	1,827	183	1,644
35	1,842	184	1,658	1,880	188	1,692
36	1,895	190	1,706	1,934	193	1,741
37	1,948	195	1,753	1,988	199	1,789
38	2,000	200	1,800	2,042	204	1,837
39	2,053	205	1,848	2,095	210	1,886
40	2,106	211	1,895	2,149	215	1,934
Each additional year <sup>5</sup>	52.64	5.26	47.38	53.73	5.37	48.35

1. High-three averages for both grades (formerly levels) are for carriers who have worked full-time on a continuous basis between April 1, 2017, and April 1, 2020, at Step O (formerly Step 12).

2. Years of service includes any unused sick leave.

3. The reduction for survivor's annuity is the amount necessary to provide maximum benefits (50% of basic annuity) to a surviving spouse.

4. If covered by the NALC Health Benefit Plan, a further deduction of either \$473.01 per month if for self plus one (code 323), \$408.94 if for self and family (code 322), or \$196.82 if for self only (code 321) will be made. In addition, premiums for any coverage under the Federal Employees' Group Life Insurance Program will reduce the net annuity further.

5. Under FERS rules, there is no maximum allowable yearly annuity. However, given the FERS formula of 1% per year, it is highly unlikely that any FERS employee will ever exceed the 80% maximum limit under CSRS.

6. FERS employees who retire at age 62 or later with at least 20 years of service receive an additional 10% - their annuities are calculated at 1.1% times years of service times high-three average salary.

# State Summaries

## Florida

The following is a continuation of the history of the FSALC.

Throughout NALC's history, legislation has been an important function of state associations. Prior to the Postal Reorganization Act, the FSALC spent time, resources and efforts lobbying Congress for wages, working conditions, Annual Leave, Sick Leave, Overtime pay and widows' annuities.

In 1948, the state associations met at NALC Headquarters to form a program to lobby Congress concerning pay and working conditions. At the 1949 FSALC convention, there were bills pending to give postal workers 26 days of AL, 15 days of SL, provide a \$100 clothing allowance, make starting pay \$2,950 per annum, and provide widows' annuities.

In 1953, these same issues were still pending. In 1954, state associations began a campaign urging carriers to contact their representatives urging support for those issues. At a meeting in St. Petersburg in 1954, NALC President Doherty noted that 79.66 percent of carriers had second jobs, or that their wives were employed. In 1957, state associations held rallies urging Congress against implementation of a threatened pay freeze. Again in 1958 and 1959, state associations lobbied Congress for a reasonable pay increase.

Legislative agendas have always been of great importance for state associations. In early years, recognition of NALC was paramount. During the '40s and '50s, our concerns were for decent wages, OT pay, guaranteed hours, clothing allowances, spouses' annuities, AL, SL, etc. After obtaining bargaining rights, the concern was to repeal the Hatch Act.

Throughout our history, legislative efforts have been to get members to contact their representatives to support or oppose legislation relative to our interests. At the 2008 NALC convention, the Constitution of the Government of State Associations was changed, making activities relating to legislation the sole mission of state associations. In 2016, the FSALC had a vote-by-mail bill passed in the Florida state legislature.

*O.D. Elliott*

## Kentucky

Your Kentucky State Association is happy that our new governor, Andy Beshear, has certainly been a friend of labor unions. The 2020 federal elections are just on the horizon, with S.2965 Postal Fairness Act needing cosponsors in the U.S. Senate. Congrats to all who called House members to get 295 cosponsors for HB 2382!

We are also excited about our district meeting from Feb. 22 to 23, at Embassy Suites, Lexington Green in Lexington. Rooms are \$112.00 per night, and registration cut-off is Jan. 31. The code for our group is "NAL." The phone number is 1-855-744-3589. Registration is \$50 per member. Make checks payable to NALC Br. 361. Mail to Cindi Lindsay, c/o Central KY Br. 361, P.O. Box 911203, Lexington, KY 40591. Any questions: Steve Terry, KYALC State Secretary, 502-681-4512 or ltrcrr1978@twc.com, or you can contact Cindi Lindsay or this scribe. Happy new year, and hope to see you in Lexington in

February; camaraderie is guaranteed!

*Bob McNulty*

## Michigan

Greetings and happy New Year from the Michigan State Association of Letter Carriers. I hope everybody had a wonderful and safe holiday season. The holidays are always a busy time of year for letter carriers. Our national leaders have been busy as well. Contract negotiations are still in the forefront of everyone's mind. The 60-day mediation period ended in late November with both parties still at an impasse. This means that our contract will now go to interest arbitration. The parties are in the process of choosing arbitrators and by the time you read this, the hearings may have already begun.

Another hot topic still ongoing is the caser/streeter initiative. In early December, the Postal Service put NALC on notice that, pending an arbitrator's decision, they intend to continue this test and will be bringing more sites online in January. NALC has hundreds of observers in place and is prepared to go into new sites to keep an eye on these tests. Extensive reports are being filed every week from every site, and Director of City Delivery Chris Jackson and his staff are working hard to compile statistics on contractual violations that are occurring because of this process. A national-level grievance has been filed and, as of the submission of this article, we've had one hearing before an arbitrator, with more expected. I was amazed to read that a Postal Service representative in another state told the press that this test has no customer impact!

I am happy to announce that Michigan has had two more congressional representatives sign on as cosponsors of HS 2382. The Honorable Brenda Lawrence and the Honorable Fred Upton have put their names down to support our cause. That makes eight out of 14. Keep up the good work, let's go get the rest!

*Tom Minshall*

## Tennessee

The Tennessee State Association of Letter Carriers awards two \$500 scholarships each year. Applicants must be the son or daughter of an active, retired or deceased letter carrier who is a member of the NALC.

To receive a copy of the rules for the 2019-2020 competition, submit a written request by Feb. 1 to: Attn: Scholarship Committee, Tennessee State Association of Letter Carriers, P.O. Box 80241, Chattanooga, TN 37414.

*Laurie McLemore*

## Texas

On behalf of the Texas State Association of Letter Carriers, happy New Year. The senate has introduced S. 2965, the USPS Fairness Act, companion bill to H.R. 2382 in the House. Call Senator Cruz and Cornyn's offices and ask them to support S. 2965.

I was privileged to install the officers of Laredo Branch 354 in December. Congratulations to all officers elected, in particular Ignacio "Na-

cho" Flores as president. Branch 354 showed how much they appreciated Anacleto De Luna, president emeritus, for his many years of hard work. Also, a big congratulations to Luis Palacios, vice president of Laredo Branch 354, on his retirement from the Postal Service. He will have more time to visit branches in District 5.

The year is starting off with a bang and we are racing. National Business Agent Javier Bernal will be hosting the spring training at Embassy Suites by Hilton Dallas DFW North, 2401 Bass Pro Dr., Grapevine on February 14 to 17 (registration cut-off Jan. 24). Call 972-724-5143 for reservations and mention NALC Region 10 Spring School (group code: NRM).

Since we've reached our goal of 290 co-sponsors, H.R. 2382 can get to the floor. Now let's work on the S. 2965, the USPS Fairness Act. We can make this happen! We look forward to seeing y'all in Grapevine.

If you have questions, give me a call or text at 956-455-2540 or send emails to carlos.TSALC@gmail.com.

Happy New Year, and God bless.

*Carlos Rodriguez*

## Wisconsin

The annual state chairs meeting was held in mid-November, and I met with NALC leadership at headquarters in DC. The purpose of the meeting was to inform the states in LPO Brent Fjerestad's orbit of the NALC's legislative agenda and where each state is within that framework. The primary focus was on getting H.R. 2382, the House bill to fix the pre-funding problem, over the finish line of 290 co-sponsors.

In Wisconsin, Mark Pocan, Gwen Moore and Ron Kind are signed on and did so immediately after the legislation dropped (DC speak for legislation being introduced). Glenn Grothman has indicated a desire to sign on but has not at the time this article was submitted. That is not for a lack of trying by LCCL Mike Streeter. He and branch members have been to see Rep. Grothman repeatedly, and I was able to meet with him in DC in February and November. We would welcome his co-sponsorship.

The other main topic was the Letter Carrier Political Fund. Wisconsin has an 8.35 percent giving rate among its 5,434 members. Imagine if only 8 percent of drivers on the road had auto insurance. That is the job insurance rate Wisconsin carriers are carrying.

I applaud these branches for getting it: Kenosha Branch 574, 21.49 percent; Beloit Branch 715, 19.04 percent; Sheboygan Branch 102,18.48 percent; Superior Branch 337, 16.39 percent; Stevens Point Branch 381, 15.90 percent; Janesville Branch 572, 15.44 percent; Eau Claire Branch 728, 15.15 percent; Manitowoc Branch 490, 13.51 percent; Rapids Branch 1081 and Marshfield Branch 978, 13.04 percent; Fond du Lac Branch 125, 12.98 percent; Brookfield Branch 4811, 11.45 percent; Green Bay Branch 619, 11.31 percent; Racine Branch 436, 10.68 percent; La Crosse Branch 59, 10.21 percent; and Appleton Branch 822, 10.10 percent.

LCPF is our voice, and we need you to pipe up!

*Scott A. Van Derven*



## Retiree Reports

### Hartford, Connecticut

Active and retired letter carriers from the Naugatuck Post Office got together at the Southington movie complex the last Tuesday of November to see the movie *Midway*. It is good to socialize outside of work, which is quite hectic with the holiday season and winter storms this December.

Lots of holiday festivities to report: Branch 86 had their annual Christmas party at the Ponte Club in Waterbury. The NARFE organization, which has several retired letter carriers active in it, had their Christmas party at the Dakota Steakhouses on Dec. 11. I joined that organization, which lobbies on behalf of all government and postal workers in the U.S. That is an afternoon luncheon. Later that evening is our last branch meeting of 2019. They often have a buffet and soft drinks after the December meeting. Bad weather hit the northern U.S. on Dec. 1.

Lots of wet and snow-covered roads to deal with for the long Thanksgiving weekend and our return to work after the holidays. I appreciate being retired in weather like this, and I admire the letter carriers who persevere and deliver our mail in such difficult wintry conditions on a weekly basis. Sadly, a foolish arbitrator ruled it is not unsafe to deliver in the darkness. You, not that fool arbitrator, are the one out there delivering mail in the darkness. Be safe and check for road visibility and slippery conditions that can make it nearly impossible to deliver. Bring the mail back for safety's sake.

Best wishes to all of the letter carriers over

the new year. 2019 went by quickly. Last Nov. 1 marked the 10th anniversary of my retirement from the Naugatuck post office. Time does fly by, does it not?

*Ed Mulrenan, Branch 86*

### New Orleans, Louisiana

**P**ray for the dead and fight like hell for the living—Mother Jones, labor activist.

In 2020, we will celebrate the passage of the 19th amendment guaranteeing women the right to vote. This amendment was ratified on Aug. 18, 1920. It is notable that the 100th anniversary will occur during the 72nd convention of NALC. Our country and union were founded on the principle of letting everyone succeed on merit; sometimes we excel, sometimes not. Our country and union are far from perfect—however, we still strive to be the best. Alexis de Tocqueville wrote about this in *Democracy in America*.

As a veteran and letter carrier, we took an oath; as part of that requirement of our employment is the duty to uphold the “sanctity of the mail.” If one does this faithfully, the rewards are great—retirement with benefits! However, these benefits did not spring out of thin air, but were secured in 1889 and enhanced in 1970 when NALC bargained for wages and benefits. These benefits can be taken in retirement with a stroke of a pen—one group is hell bent on weakening these rights and benefits (hint: the party that starts with the 18th letter of the alphabet).

So, let's celebrate the passage of the 19th amendment and recognize some NALC pio-

neers: Jane Broendel, Myra Warren, Judy Wilmoughby, Cynthia Barnes, Cheryl Davis, Darleen Torregano and all female carriers past, present and future—job well done!

From “Unbought and Unbossed” Shirley Chisholm to “Don't mess with me” Nancy Pelosi!

*Stanley Taylor, Branch 124*

### Paterson, New Jersey

As time passes, it becomes more evident that participation in our union events (informational picket lines, retirement breakfasts that honor our past retirees, etc.) becomes smaller in the amount of union members coming to our events. Is this a trend? Are most people satisfied with our leadership that they do not feel the need to attend social gatherings, events and completely trust the Branch 120 administration and staff, or are we becoming less interested in attending social events? This union serves its members best when there are volumes in events that show a strong solidarity in union participation.

Becoming a strong union advocate not only involves becoming a member of this great union, belonging to our health plan and participating in our letter carrier political action fund, but also helping and assisting our union officials in gatherings that reinforce the idea that we speak in numbers and volumes in many different areas.

*Joseph Murone, Branch 120*

## In Memoriam

### NALC offers deepest sympathies to the families and friends of departed brothers and sisters

James D. Rabren	Br. 1630	Dothan, AL
William E. Cox	Br. 1111	Greater East Bay, CA
Gary Bergal	Br. 1100	Garden Grove, CA
Frank Jaime	Br. 1100	Garden Grove, CA
Alfred H. Sagner	Br. 1100	Garden Grove, CA
Duane L. Woodburn	Br. 1100	Garden Grove, CA
Henry D. Ford Jr.	Br. 24	Los Angeles, CA
Jerome Roberts	Br. 193	San Jose, CA
Franklin D. Kemp Jr.	Br. 5996	Centennial, CO
John E. Hill	Br. 47	Denver, CO
Harold L. Harris	Br. 191	Wilmington, DE
Bernard R. Canoro	Br. 2008	Clearwater, FL
Edward K. Joyner	Br. 1477	West Coast Florida
Robert J. Keller	Br. 1477	West Coast Florida
Eugene T. Jingles	Br. 73	Atlanta, GA
Luis M. Rosa	Br. 263	Augusta, GA
Harold B. Buckhoy	Br. 11	Chicago, IL
Henry V. Pajor	Br. 11	Chicago, IL
Patricia Reynolds	Br. 11	Chicago, IL
Luz Torres	Br. 11	Chicago, IL
James E. Wade	Br. 31	Peoria, IL
Robert E. Travis	Br. 1326	Gary, IN
Alex J. Porubysanski	Br. 1689	Whiting, IN
A. J. Wayman	Br. 374	Northern Kentucky
Truman O. Lancaster	Br. 176	Baltimore, MD
Carl R. Netzer	Br. 176	Baltimore, MD
John M. Neville	Br. 176	Baltimore, MD
Edward A. Pettaway	Br. 176	Baltimore, MD
Michael P. Ruth	Br. 176	Baltimore, MD

Eugene J. Stacharowski	Br. 176	Baltimore, MD
Rayfield F. Wimbish	Br. 176	Baltimore, MD
Karol E. Zepp	Br. 176	Baltimore, MD
Oscar A. Hilbert	Br. 46	Western MA
Carlton A. Schafer	Br. 262	Battle Creek, MI
Fred D. Gillmer Jr.	Br. 13	Muskegon, MI
Thomas P. Cronin	Br. 9	Minneapolis, MN
Charles L. Lenzen	Br. 9	Minneapolis, MN
John P. McPartlan	Br. 9	Minneapolis, MN
Gerald L. Galleano	Br. 343	St. Louis, MO
Carmen J. Conti	Br. 38	New Jersey Mgd.
Chester Guzik	Br. 38	New Jersey Mgd.
Michael J. Mundell	Br. 38	New Jersey Mgd.
E. W. Romanowski	Br. 38	New Jersey Mgd.
John R. Gondola	Br. 120	Paterson, NJ
Linda L. Miller	Br. 1908	Riverside, NJ
John F. Rigby	Br. 908	South Jersey, NJ
Frank Gschwentner	Br. 3	Buffalo-Western NY
Frederick A. Beyer	Br. 137	Hudson Valley Mgd., NY
Donald Tarzia	Br. 562	Jamaica, NY
Jeremiah T. Verdi	Br. 6000	Long Island Mgd., NY
Robert L. Carter	Br. 36	New York, NY
Victor A. Papapietro	Br. 36	New York, NY
Hubert E. Stokes	Br. 693	Westchester Mgd., NY
Bruce Logan Jr.	Br. 934	Salisbury, NC
Leroy Nelson	Br. 461	Winston-Salem, NC
Henry B. Sandlin	Br. 43	Cincinnati, OH
Charles W. Jaite	Br. 40	Cleveland, OH
Donald R. Varian	Br. 40	Cleveland, OH

Garland M. Roberts	Br. 78	Columbus, OH
Resden S. Talbert Jr.	Br. 78	Columbus, OH
Wayne J. Clark	Br. 182	Dayton, OH
Robert J. Naughton	Br. 385	Youngstown, OH
Michele L. Cole	Br. 458	Oklahoma City, OK
Gene C. Hayes	Br. 458	Oklahoma City, OK
James D. Byers	Br. 1358	Tulsa, OK
Jack C. Williams	Br. 916	Eugene, OR
Donald H. Thom	Br. 82	Portland, OR
Nicholas T. Comerford	Br. 920	Bux-Mont, PA
David L. Keller	Br. 920	Bux-Mont, PA
James J. Fiolek	Br. 284	Erie, PA
B. C. Long II	Br. 500	Harrisburg, PA
Philip F. Knoll	Br. 157	Philadelphia, PA
James P. Lynagh	Br. 157	Philadelphia, PA
Dominic Salvio	Br. 84	Pittsburgh, PA
John E. Faria Jr.	Br. 55	Pawtucket, RI
Albert L. Lehman	Br. 491	Sioux Falls, SD
Albert Mendez Jr.	Br. 505	El Paso, TX
Harold N. Augbon	Br. 283	Houston, TX
Fred A. Howell	Br. 2279	Lufkin, TX
Fred E. Robinson	Br. 456	Norfolk, VA
Wilbert A. Zacharias	Br. 450	North Sound, WA
Beverly L. Cook	Br. 79	Seattle, WA
Michael A. Haller	Br. 507	Madison, WI
Robert N. Howard	Br. 2	Milwaukee, WI
Robert J. Weisrock	Br. 2	Milwaukee, WI
Ricky A. Georg	Br. 173	Oshkosh, WI

# Honor Roll

## NALC recognizes its brothers and sisters for their long-term membership

NALC members who have completed 50 years of membership in NALC are awarded a Life Membership Gold Card that entitles them to all privileges of membership in NALC without payment of dues. To receive a gold card and 50-year lapel pin, the branch secretary must write to the NALC secretary-treasurer and request the award for the member. This is in accordance with Article 2, Section 5 (a) of the *NALC Constitution*.



Additionally, the national secretary-treasurer's office handles

branch requests for lapel pins. Accordingly, the secretary-treasurer's office can only provide suitable lapel pins "when receiving proper notification by the Branch Secretary" in the year when a member is to complete the following number of years as a member: 25 years, 30 years, 35 years, 40 years, 45 years, 50 years, 55 years, 60 years and 65 years. Special plaques are available for members who complete 70 years and 75 years. This is also per Article 2 of the *NALC Constitution*.



**All requests must come from the branch secretary.** Longtime members are encouraged to inform their branches when they reach a longevity benchmark.

## Below is a list of those NALC members who have received an award in the past month:

### 65-year pins

Eugene R. Alber	Ann Arbor, MI	Br. 434
Ruben Fontes	Clarksville, TN	Br. 364
Cecil B. Picard	Clarksville, TN	Br. 364

### 60-year pins

Harvey M. Bullion	Mobile, AL	Br. 469
Bruce E. Davis	Tuscaloosa, AL	Br. 1096
Clois R. Dansby	Central CA	Br. 231
James E. Espinosa	Central CA	Br. 231
Abel M. Estrada	Central CA	Br. 231
Logan L. Howard	Central CA	Br. 231
Henry F. Kirkland Jr.	Central CA	Br. 231
Jackie J. Warinner	Central CA	Br. 231
Ellison A. Williams Jr.	Central CA	Br. 231
Jesse M. Zamora	Central CA	Br. 231
James K. Daley	Greater East Bay, CA	Br. 1111
Harvey P. Neville	Ontario, CA	Br. 1439
Eugene T. Blackston	Augusta, GA	Br. 263
Charles R. Koss	Augusta, GA	Br. 263
Frank L. Melton	Augusta, GA	Br. 263
Furman J. Padgett Jr.	Augusta, GA	Br. 263
Eugene R. Alber	Ann Arbor, MI	Br. 434
C. E. Herrington	Meridian, MS	Br. 487
Alvin C. Hyder	St. Joseph, MO	Br. 195
Lawrence L. Hale	Springfield, MO	Br. 203
Ben A. Donnamaria	Morristown, NJ	Br. 272
Thomas J. Cowhig	Staten Island, NY	Br. 99
Roger R. Scocco	Staten Island, NY	Br. 99
Degno Valenti	York, PA	Br. 509
Ruben Fontes	Clarksville, TN	Br. 364
Cecil B. Picard	Clarksville, TN	Br. 364

### 55-year pins and gold cards

Harvey M. Bullion	Mobile, AL	Br. 469
Jene A. McKissack	Mobile, AL	Br. 469
Herbert B. Neal	Mobile, AL	Br. 469
William B. Norris	Mobile, AL	Br. 469
Lee E. Portis	Mobile, AL	Br. 469
Abel M. Estrada	Central CA	Br. 231
Leonard R. Garber	Central CA	Br. 231
Daniel J. Givens	Central CA	Br. 231
Richard Maldonado	Central CA	Br. 231
Salvador V. Salcido	Central CA	Br. 231
Thomas S. Sanders	Central CA	Br. 231
James K. Daley	Greater East Bay, CA	Br. 1111
William C. Haggard	Greater East Bay, CA	Br. 1111
Joseph L. Johnson	Greater East Bay, CA	Br. 1111
Peter G. Katsifolis	Greater East Bay, CA	Br. 1111
James C. Riker	Greater East Bay, CA	Br. 1111
Richard A. Segraves	Greater East Bay, CA	Br. 1111
Frank A. Swezey	Greater East Bay, CA	Br. 1111
Bobbie R. Henson	Los Angeles, CA	Br. 24
R. F. Shiver	Lakeland, FL	Br. 1779

Ralph H. Friedhofer	Naples, FL	Br. 4716
Bradley L. Will	Naples, FL	Br. 4716
Charles D. Kennedy	Augusta, GA	Br. 263
Robert E. Sanders	Augusta, GA	Br. 263
Franklin D. Ehresman	Lafayette, IN	Br. 466
Robert M. Skinner	Lafayette, IN	Br. 466
Charles E. Davis	Baton Rouge, LA	Br. 129
Alexander Jackson Jr.	Baton Rouge, LA	Br. 129
Lee A. Jones Jr.	Baton Rouge, LA	Br. 129
Eugene R. Alber	Ann Arbor, MI	Br. 434
Alvin C. Hyder	St. Joseph, MO	Br. 0195
Ben A. Donnamaria	Morristown, NJ	Br. 272
John M. Vaccaro	New Jersey Mgd.	Br. 38
Thomas J. Cowhig	Staten Island, NY	Br. 99
Joseph E. Monico	Staten Island, NY	Br. 99
Roger R. Scocco	Staten Island, NY	Br. 99
Claude L. Redick	Eugene, OR	Br. 916
Angelo Pennacchia	Pittsburgh, PA	Br. 84
Paul B. Crass	Clarksville, TN	Br. 364
Ruben Fontes	Clarksville, TN	Br. 364
Cecil B. Picard	Clarksville, TN	Br. 364
Lucius F. Talley Jr.	Nashville, TN	Br. 4
Carlos R. Martinez	Laredo, TX	Br. 354
Jack G. Raymond	Salt Lake City, UT	Br. 111
Don S. Taylor	Salt Lake City, UT	Br. 111
Richard E. Dubuque	Racine, WI	Br. 436
Robert J. Hansen	Racine, WI	Br. 436

### 50-year pins and gold cards

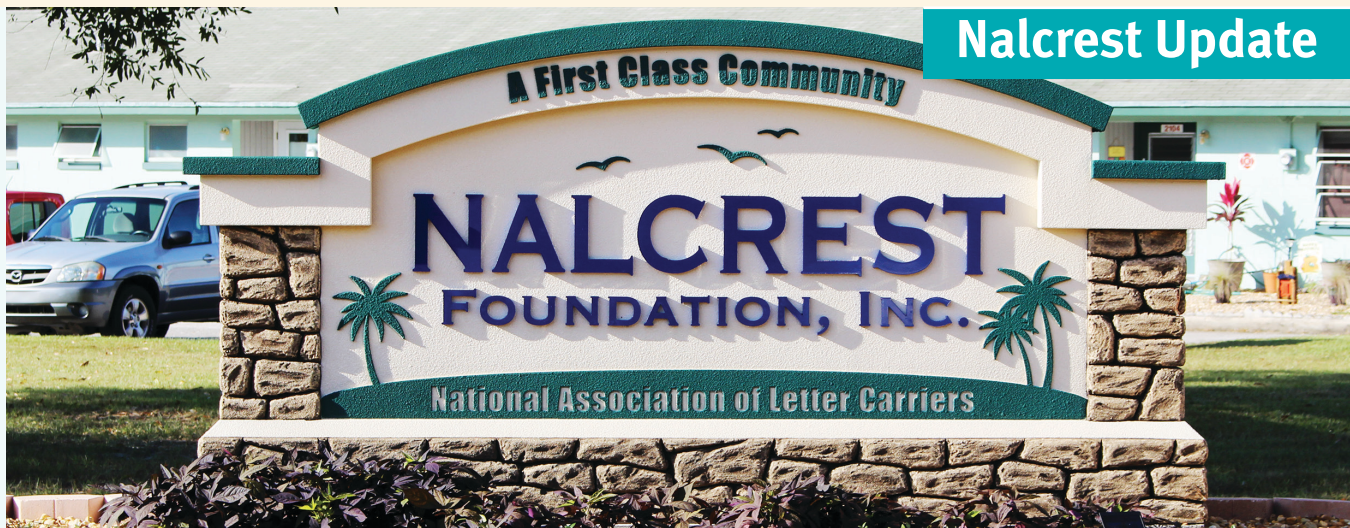
Jene A. McKissack	Mobile, AL	Br. 469
Herbert B. Neal	Mobile, AL	Br. 469
Lee E. Portis	Mobile, AL	Br. 469
Abel M. Estrada	Central CA	Br. 231
Carl G. Burton	Central CA	Br. 231
Robert L. Hill	Central CA	Br. 231
Howard R. Knight	Central CA	Br. 231
Richard Maldonado	Central CA	Br. 231
Clifford R. Maxwell	Central CA	Br. 231
Donald L. Miller	Central CA	Br. 231
Donald G. Nonast	Central CA	Br. 231
Alfonso B. Perez	Central CA	Br. 231
Ray Ramirez	Central CA	Br. 231
Thomas S. Sanders	Central CA	Br. 231
Federico A. Torres	Central CA	Br. 231
Olen L. Wheeler	Central CA	Br. 231
Nicholas A. Formella	Greater East Bay, CA	Br. 1111
Bobby J. Lewis	Greater East Bay, CA	Br. 1111
Yvonne Tanner	Greater East Bay, CA	Br. 1111
Edward Rooney Jr.	Pasadena, CA	Br. 2200
Bennie Kirtman	San Francisco, CA	Br. 214
Gerald K. Lee	San Francisco, CA	Br. 214
Herbert P. Mitchell	San Francisco, CA	Br. 214
Frank J. Marulo Jr.	Sacramento, CA	Br. 133
Michael A. Acevedo	South Florida	Br. 1071
Larry N. Deshazior	South Florida	Br. 1071
Daniel J. Gorham	South Florida	Br. 1071

Kenneth G. Sawyer	South Florida	Br. 1071
James J. Culotta	West Coast Florida	Br. 1477
Joseph S. Vermette	West Coast Florida	Br. 1477
William M. Moreland	Atlanta, GA	Br. 73
Henry T. Ballard	Augusta, GA	Br. 263
Ronald E. Brack	Augusta, GA	Br. 263
Russell V. Dye	Augusta, GA	Br. 263
Lewis M. English	Augusta, GA	Br. 263
George L. Heath	Augusta, GA	Br. 263
Isaac Jackson Jr.	Augusta, GA	Br. 263
Ronald F. Kucera	Augusta, GA	Br. 263
John K. Moody	Augusta, GA	Br. 263
Ralph M. Moxley	Augusta, GA	Br. 263
Charlie J. Price	Augusta, GA	Br. 263
Julian P. Rachels Jr.	Augusta, GA	Br. 263
Joe T. Romero	Augusta, GA	Br. 263
Douglas R. Strakosch	Augusta, GA	Br. 263
Hector R. Torres Jr.	Augusta, GA	Br. 263
George M. Webb	Augusta, GA	Br. 263
Robert D. Wilkerson	Augusta, GA	Br. 263
Ralph H. Jackson Jr.	Roswell, GA	Br. 4862
Donald L. Ray	Roswell, GA	Br. 4862
Joanne Easden	Pekin, IL	Br. 209
Elizabeth Harr	Pekin, IL	Br. 209
Robert L. Strack	Pekin, IL	Br. 209
Earnest R. Barnett Jr.	Indianapolis, IN	Br. 39
Robert L. Jones	Central Iowa Mgd.	Br. 352
Wayne R. Rockwell	Central Iowa Mgd.	Br. 352
Richard F. Hutt	Boston, MA	Br. 34
Harry E. Turner	Boston, MA	Br. 34
Thomas E. Oliver	Worcester, MA	Br. 12
Rhea K. McGregor	Saginaw, MI	Br. 74
Donald J. Noel	Saginaw, MI	Br. 74
James F. Priebe	Saginaw, MI	Br. 74
George F. Wolf Jr.	Saginaw, MI	Br. 74
Kenneth W. Breamer	Albert Lea, MN	Br. 718
Andrew O. Dyrdal	Albert Lea, MN	Br. 718
Roland H. Green	Albert Lea, MN	Br. 718
Alvin C. Hyder	St. Joseph, MO	Br. 195
Ronnie S. Dean	Springfield, MO	Br. 203
Jim L. Hanafin	Springfield, MO	Br. 203
Michael L. Rothermel	Springfield, MO	Br. 203
James H. Ward	Springfield, MO	Br. 203
David W. Bisbee	Nashua, NH	Br. 230
Edward R. Jean	Nashua, NH	Br. 230
Gerard E. Levesque	Nashua, NH	Br. 230
Frank R. Mooney	Nashua, NH	Br. 230
Lucien C. Rioux	Nashua, NH	Br. 230
Richard H. Rolfe	Nashua, NH	Br. 230
John R. Soubosky	Nashua, NH	Br. 230
Frank D. Allen	Mays Landing, NJ	Br. 903
A. G. Smalley Jr.	Morristown, NJ	Br. 272
Donald Fecko	New Jersey Mgd.	Br. 38
Joseph E. Monico	Staten Island, NY	Br. 99
Herman A. Scott	Hannibal, MO	Br. 291
Charles E. Wade	Hannibal, MO	Br. 291



**Below is a list of those NALC members who have received an award in the past month:**

Edward T. Amici	Binghamton, NY	Br. 333	Paul G. Kollinger	Pittsburgh, PA	Br. 84	Glen V. Grorud	Eau Claire, WI	Br. 728
Michael A. Babish	Binghamton, NY	Br. 333	Ronald D. Mumford	York, PA	Br. 509	Carl H. Hatlestad	Eau Claire, WI	Br. 728
Joseph V. Charpinsky	Binghamton, NY	Br. 333	Michike Kimura	Nashville, TN	Br. 4	Lloyd E. Holten	Eau Claire, WI	Br. 728
Thomas G. Ribble	Binghamton, NY	Br. 333	Gwen Pardin	Nashville, TN	Br. 4	Roderick A. Lein	Eau Claire, WI	Br. 728
James R. Sherman	Binghamton, NY	Br. 333	Johnny W. Yates	Nashville, TN	Br. 4	Gerald J. Malak	Eau Claire, WI	Br. 728
Louis Bastone Jr.	Long Island Mgd., NY	Br. 6000	Martin L. Hernandez	Laredo, TX	Br. 354	Maynard A. Moe	Eau Claire, WI	Br. 728
Murdo Mackay	Long Island Mgd., NY	Br. 6000	Keith E. Jensen	Salt Lake City, UT	Br. 111	Harold G. Robarge	Eau Claire, WI	Br. 728
Norman R. Blanton	Kings Mountain, NC	Br. 3145	John D. McGowan	Salt Lake City, UT	Br. 111	Merlin J. Stratton	Eau Claire, WI	Br. 728
Dean K. Lewi	Columbus, OH	Br. 78	Ruben A. Vargas	Salt Lake City, UT	Br. 111	Eldon C. Odekirk	Fond du Lake, WI	Br. 125
Mary Etzinger	Fostoria, OH	Br. 279	Tommy Drayton	Richmond, VA	Br. 496	James A. Wolff II	Madison, WI	Br. 507
Larry J. Lucius	Fostoria, OH	Br. 279	Joshua L. Nash Jr.	Richmond, VA	Br. 496	Henry A. Andersen	Racine, WI	Br. 436
Oliver A. Overmier	Fostoria, OH	Br. 279	William E. Booth	Roanoke, VA	Br. 524	Eugene F. Haluska	Racine, WI	Br. 436
John H. Lewey	Eugene, OR	Br. 916	Ronald J. Brantner	Eau Claire, WI	Br. 728	David N. Willing	Racine, WI	Br. 436
Thomas J. Logan Jr.	Levittown, PA	Br. 4973	Loren J. Dascher	Eau Claire, WI	Br. 728			



## Nalcrest Update

### From the Trustees

Once again the generosity of Nalcrest's residents has been put on display. As our annual toy collection kicked off after Thanksgiving, and before the first week in December was over, more than 50 toys had been donated. History shows that many more toys will be part of a collection that will brighten Christmas for kids in the area. Friday the 13th was a lucky one at Nalcrest. Our annual Christmas tree lighting and parade took place, providing a great time for all. The spirit exuded during the gathering left everyone full of the holiday spirit and ready to continue the celebration through New Year's. What fun and what a place to live.

December was also a chance to say "thank you" to the wonderful, dedicated employees of Nalcrest. Each and every one contributes to making this unique, retirement community such a great place to call home. We are blessed to have them. Again, *thank you*.

As a reminder, we continue to have a waiting list and, if you wish to become part of the Nalcrest community, contact the office and begin the process.

From all the letter carriers at Nalcrest and the Nalcrest, have a happy, healthy New Year.

*Tom Young*

### Apply to live at Nalcrest

For an application to live at Nalcrest, visit [nalc.org/nalcrest](http://nalc.org/nalcrest), or call 863-696-1121.

### Nalcrest Trustees

NALC President Fredric Rolando

NALC Secretary-Treasurer Nicole Rhine

NALC Director of Retired Members Dan Toth

NALC Trustee Mike Gill

Nalcrest Trustees President Matty Rose

Nalcrest Trustees Vice President Tom Young

Nalcrest Trustees Vice President Don Southern

# Nalcrest



**The retirement community created by letter carriers, for letter carriers**



## Branch Items

### Albany, New York

Congratulations to our newest career letter carrier in Branch 29, Zaid Ijaz. Zaid works out of the East Greenbush installation. We wish you all the best as you begin your career as a regular letter carrier.

The branch sends our congratulations to Scott DeLong, who retired on Nov. 29. Scott retired after 35 years of service. He will be missed by his customers, especially the elderly people he delivered to and took great care of. I had the pleasure to work with Scott for many years and I was the best floater he ever had, without a doubt. Enjoy Scott, we wish you the best!

*Jay Jackson, Branch 29*

### Anchorage, Alaska

The elections of officers results are as follows: Jim Raymond re-elected as president, Crystal Higgins reelected as sergeant-at-arms, Jennifer Atwood and Jospier Villegas reelected and Marie Azevedo elected to her first full term as trustees. Other officers winning by acclamation were James Frankford, vice president, Thomas Devros, recording secretary, Chris Crutchfield, secretary-treasurer and Lyal Hanson, health benefits representative. I'd like to thank the membership for the continual support as your president and for these fine men and women.

The installation of officers and the retiree recognition banquet will be held on Feb. 15 at the American Legion, Post 28. In 2019, we set a record for grievances filed in branch history with more than 2,000 grievances. That is nearly six grievances per member as an average and three times the national average. We continue to be successful in getting carriers their job back from unjust terminations. In over 40 years, the branch has only lost two removal cases. That is an impressive success rate and is all begins with the stewards who do a great job representing carriers.

Even with all of our successes, management is still violating the same issues that many of you probably dealt with. I can't explain why a supervisor who continually loses grievance after grievance still has a job. But I will try: accountability. While management will go the extra mile and hold carriers accountable for their actions, you will see nothing from the management side of the house, at least from my experience in the Alaska District. If Santa had any say in whether management has been naughty or nice, he would fill their stocking with enough coal to heat Alaska. But no need for that, Santa, the hot air coming out of this district more than makes up for that.

*Jim Raymond, Branch 4319*

### Bergen County Merged, New Jersey

Welcome to 2020, and I would like to congratulate all the new retirees who have decided to join us and live in a non-DPS, no-more-scanners, no-more-pivot world.

Thank you for your many years of service. You are appreciated, even though the Postal Service would never admit that—you were just a body to it.

A few days after we had our branch retirement luncheon, I attended and enjoyed a retiree breakfast, where there are anywhere from 10 to 20 retirees who twice a month meet at a local diner and talk about almost anything.

Please save the date Sunday, Oct. 18 for our next retiree luncheon.

*Dennis Spoto, Branch 425*

**Please note:**  
**There will be no Branch Items, State Summaries or Retiree Reports in the February 2020 Postal Record. That edition will be the special annual tribute issue honoring contributors to LCPF during 2019.**

### Boston, Massachusetts

Another holiday season has passed, and now it is time to take a deep breath and look forward to the new year. In Boston we currently have more than 260 CCAs awaiting conversion to career. We have stations that have numerous fulltime vacancies that could be filled by a one-time conversion and stop the scurrying around every day to find enough help to get the job done. Management does not seem to have any long-term plans for the business and simply wants just to plan ahead as far as tomorrow. Carriers working 10 to 12 hours is a recipe for disaster, as the human body also needs some down time.

Congratulations to the 17 CCAs who were converted to career on Dec. 7—well-deserved after 30 months as a CCA. Management is currently conducting job fairs to hire new employees as retention seems to be a major issue, since \$17 per hour just doesn't seem to cut it with the cost of living in this area.

Congratulations go out to recent retirees Ray Cipolletti, Rolfe Gatchell, Chris Lyons and Mike Wallace. Enjoy your well-deserved retirement. Thoughts and prayers going out to Alejandro Morales from the JFK station, who was hit by an auto on his way to work and is recuperating in the hospital.

*Jerry McCarthy, Branch 34*

### Carmel, Indiana

My postmaster in Carmel is like the gift that keeps on giving. I was struggling to think of something to write about this month, and my

good ol' postmaster bailed me out with another one of his wonderful decisions. I just have to take you back in time a month or so ago when I was sent a certified letter with a return receipt from "the" Carmel postmaster about a safety inspection on Dec. 2. Lordy, I thought this must be super important, since he couldn't just hand me the letter since I see him every single day and I know how much he enjoys my presence and our conversations.

I assumed it was an invitation letter, or if it wasn't, I have no idea why it would have been sent to me in the first place. I could not be there because I was scheduled for an arbitration in Gary. I designated my treasurer and former steward Mike Coy to attend as my designee. I knew this safety inspection had to be very important since he took the time to send me a certified letter.

The disturbing part is when 10 a.m. came on Monday, Dec. 2, they told Mike that he could not participate and sent him out to deliver his route. I guess safety wasn't that important or NALC wasn't welcome or something like that. So you know me—I kindly sent an email to the district safety manager and human resources manager to voice my displeasure. I told them, as well, that in the future, please tell Carmel management not to send me a certified letter about any safety inspections in the Carmel onstallation. It looks like this was just a check-the-box thing to say that a letter was sent.

Knowledge is power!

*Ronnie Roush, Branch 888*

### Cincinnati, Ohio

Greetings from Cincinnati, where our professional sports teams enjoy being in last place.

I recently had a CCA on his shadow day ride along with me and, at the end of the evening as we were walking to our cars, he thanked me for being so positive that day. With the national retention rate at 55 percent for our CCAs, a little positivity may help in a career long known amongst our members as not always glamorous, especially in the first couple years.

I had a trainer who gave me an idea of the hardships I would face but remained positive and chose to highlight the positive side of our job instead. I chose to do the same. There is enough stress and negativity this time of year, let alone trying to learn our job in the first week of December.

With the calendar flipping into its final month, the purchases of what seem to be a yearly volume increase from cyber-Monday shoppers start rolling into our offices. Mountains of boxes with the famous A-to-Z printed tape come rolling in every morning hovering over the carriers like Mount Everest towering over Edmund Hillary. Somehow, every year we get it done. Millions of scans made; hundreds of pounds lifted. And yet, we persevere. That is a testament to you, my fellow brothers and sisters, and to your professionalism and your steadfastness.

From me and the rest of Branch 43, merry Christmas and happy holidays.

*Jacob Bingham, Branch 43*



## Cleveland, Ohio

New Year's resolutions again! But let's take a peek at what happened back in 2019. We wrapped up the year with our annual Christmas Party. (I do love our parties.) But it has been a busy year with many other happenings. Let's remember together....

We had our retirees breakfast, which was well-attended. Everyone had great stories about delivering the mail in the "good ol' days." We recognized our veterans in October. It was an honor to be part of that group. Do we officially have a "Space Force?" Just asking.

Moving back to summer, we had a Branch 40 Day at Cedar Point Amusement Park, a great day and lots of rides to go on. Roller coaster heaven. We had our 69th state convention in Cincinnati. It was productive, and it was stressed to us all how we need to support the people who support us in Congress. We want to do this at all levels of government—local, state, and national. In other words, vote for people who support your checks and pensions, and donate to LCPF.

Yes, it was a very busy year—and this was only a small portion of the events. Were you part of the action? Don't forget about attending monthly membership meetings. Your union officers are always here for you.

Now, if you would like to set some goals for 2020, why not start by just picking up where you left off? It's never too late to start again.

Factoid: Depending on who you talk to, it may or may not be a new decade. The Farmers' Almanac says, "no," it is 2021. Other say, "yes," 2020. And if you are a Cleveland sports fan, that's a whole different calendar of wishing, hoping and resolutions. Hang in there, Cleveland!

*Bob Murphy, Branch 40*

## East Lansing, Michigan

Long-life vehicles have certainly lived up to their name. Now, 33 years after they were first introduced in 1987, it's long overdue that these rolling accidents-waiting-to-happen be retired. The LLV should more properly be known as RIP, as in "rust in pieces." Unfortunately, USPS doesn't make decisions lightly; it has been trying to make this one since 2015 and has only managed to narrow down a list of possible replacements to four candidates: Workhorse, Karsan, Malindra and Oshkosh, none of which is a major manufacturer. Of these, Workhorse is the only pure electric vehicle. Karsan and Malindra are hybrids and Oshkosh is (of all things) a gas-mobile. Meanwhile, Amazon has ordered 100,000 electric trucks from Rivian, and UPS is also fully committed to switching to electric vehicles.

The Post Office has said it will finally make a decision sometime next year. They need to maybe pick up the pace a bit. Aging LLVs get only 10 m.p.g., are very high maintenance and are catching fire and burning up at the rate of five per day. It seems ancient gas lines and poorly placed brake lines are leaking onto hot exhaust pipes, causing fires. Compounding these safety concerns is the fact that LLVs have no airbags.

A reader poll favored the Workhorse or other EV at 68 percent, while the hybrid Karsan or

Malindra each got 12 percent. Only 8 percent want an internal combustion relic of the past. All these vehicles are made in the good ole U.S.-of-A.

For some odd reason, USPS prefers to deal with smaller companies and did not solicit a bid from Ford, which is coming out with an electric truck; or Tesla, which I understand is also in the electric vehicle business. For once, let's look to the future and not be stuck with obsolete technology.

*Mark Woodbury, Branch 2555*



**Cadillac, MI Br. 794 President Ruth Reddy presented a 50-year gold card and pin to Dallas Ashbay.**

## Fargo, North Dakota

We are in the middle of the holiday peak season, the busiest I have experienced in my 17 years as a carrier. The number of parcels flooding the system is quite overwhelming, not to mention we have had to deal with many full coverages. At the end of this season, I'm confident we will have provided our customers with the service they expect and deserve, as we do year after year.

When delivering mail, please remember that there are cameras everywhere. Treat all packages with care—a package that you know has clothes in it still does not look good to the public being tossed on to a porch.

As a former steward, I know what a challenging job it can be without many thank yous. I want to take some time to share my appreciation and gratitude for all the hard-working stewards. Without the dedication of our local stewards, the daily struggle with management would be much more difficult. On behalf of all carriers in the branch, thank you Wayne, Rachel, Cory, Rich, Cassandra and any other carrier who has stepped up to protect and defend our members. New carriers, if you have any issues, questions, or concerns, please don't hesitate to talk with a union official, because they have your best interest in mind.

Thank you to everyone that contacted Rep. Kelly Armstrong—he co-sponsored H.R. 2382, the bill that repeals the requirement that the U.S. Postal Service annually prepay future retirement health benefits.

I hope everyone had a chance to spend time with family and friends during the holiday season. Congratulations to Wayne Hotchkiss on reaching the milestone of receiving his 50-year

pin and Peter Antoine on converting from CCA to regular.

*Brian Priszano, Branch 205*

## Fresno, California

Yup! Every level of the NALC should not and does not endorse any candidate running for public office who does not support 6-day mail delivery and door-to-door mail delivery. These two are often being attacked by Republicans. There are some that do support us on these issues. That is a good thing. But, historically, attacks on these issues are Republican-bred. George W. Bush and the pinhead in the White House now have expressed interest in privatizing our Postal Service. All attempts to do so have and will be met with opposition from NALC, APWU and other postal unions, as well as from our allies, such as the mailing industry, our friends in Congress and many, many businesses, big and small. Anybody against our Postal Service is not a friend of ours. They do not deserve our votes during election time, or any time. So do the right thing and vote for candidates who support a strong future for us, our jobs and our mail delivery service across the country.

I hope everyone had a merry Christmas and happy New Year. You know what comes next. "Have you got my W-2s?" Yes, that time has come again. That never bothered me. I was always glad to deliver what my patrons were waiting for. I do, as all of you should be proud of the work you do. It is difficult at times, as you know. You will retire someday, then proudly look back on the service you provided.

Stand united as union members. Never support people that do not have our best interest in mind

*Jesse Dominguez, Branch 231*

## Greensboro, North Carolina

At our Branch 630 election meeting in November, in a healthy sign of growth in branch union involvement, several new stewards and alternates were nominated and elected. At our January branch meeting, our branch officers will be installed to serve for the next two years. Three candidates running as a team defeated the incumbent officers for president and vice president, as well as sergeant-at-arms. Because all three votes were extremely close, even more than usual when new top officers are installed, local postal management undoubtedly will intensify its ongoing attack on our union and our membership. Management will be probing for weaknesses in our unity and solidarity.

It is very good that President-elect Debbie Matyga, supported by incoming Vice President Tracy Roberts and Sergeant-at-Arms Daryl Johnson, is committed to having regular branch executive board meetings and regular branch stewards training/stewards council meetings. We already have a solid newsletter committee led by Kim Hartsfeld, a food drive committee led by Theresa Franklin, MDA with active roles by Mary Rich and Crystal Morehead and other ways for members to become more involved. Such increased activism will help strengthen

## Branch Items

our branch organization in the face of management challenges.

Many incumbent officers have already pledged to work cooperatively with President Matyga's administration. And all branch officers, stewards and members should encourage a spirit of maximum cooperation and solidarity among us all.

For we are the union! And in our unity lies our strength!

*Richard A. Koritz, Branch 630*

### Hagerstown, Maryland

I hope the New Year finds everyone happy and healthy. Looking ahead, we as a union will have some challenges and some milestones to mark this year. To start, this year will mark the 50th anniversary of the Great Postal Strike of 1970. One cannot overstate the impact it made on our livelihoods. Also we will have a new postmaster general appointed this year. With the political climate as it is, a new postmaster general could be more focused on downsizing and privatizing the Postal Service. And finally, we could see the results of a new arbitrated contract. The last contract that resulted from binding arbitration gave us CCAs and a second pay scale. It is important for all of us to remain engaged.

I would like to thank Jeremy Kessel and Joe Bertrand for their new roles in our branch. Jeremy has stepped up to be the new shop steward in the downtown office, and Joe has volunteered to be a trustee for our branch. A branch is only as strong as its members. Without the determination and efforts of our members we would have nothing. Thanks, Jeremy and Joe!

It is with sadness that I report that last month we lost an icon of our branch. William "Bubby" Owens passed away on Dec. 6 at the age of 89. Bubby was a veteran of the Army and served in the Korean war. He was a member of this branch for more than 50 years and an active member for 44 years; serving his customers well into his seventies. Bubby always looked out for others and would take time to help the newer carriers. He was a great union brother who stood up for himself and never gave management an inch. Rest in peace, brother; you will be greatly missed.

*Larry Wellborn, Branch 443*

### Harrisburg, Pennsylvania

One of the best ways to thank NALC retirees for years of faithful union service is to celebrate with a luncheon at a casino! Allen L. Stuart Branch 500 throws a "party" every other year to honor our retirees. This is a great way to thank these individuals for helping to build such a strong branch and union presence. As everyone knows, it isn't the executive board or current union members delivering mail today that put us in a position of having the power to enjoy excellent pay, benefits, and fight the injustices that occur in the Postal Service—it is our retirees.

There were almost 140 total in attendance, consisting of retirees and family members to enjoy food, drink, fellowship and catching up

on friend's activities. Veterans were recognized, including the retirees who participated in the NALC strike. The meal was awesome and I didn't think old letter carriers could jump up and run that fast to smash the dessert table. Jim Weaver, branch health benefits rep, talked a bit on our plan and William Carey, treasurer and now-retired member provided an update about where the branch is financially. The branch then honored 50-plus retirees who have reached huge milestones consisting of 25-, 30-, 35-, 40-, 45-, 50- and (one) 55-year membership.

Thanks go to Region 12 RAA Brian Thompson for stepping in and helping to present awards. I have yet to hear of anyone "hitting it big" at the tables or slot machines, but if I hit a big jackpot, I'd probably be quiet, too. Once again, I would like to thank everyone who helped out and to all retirees nationally for the benefits you helped provide carriers today.

Sincerely in unionism—

*Richard Wilson, Branch 500*

### Hartford, Connecticut

Initiated in conjunction with Workers' Memorial Day, 2012, a memorial was established at NALC Headquarters to commit those names of NALC members who died in the performance of their postal duties. As had been nationally reported, Branch 86 member Daniel Nacin was killed on Aug. 22 by another driver being pursued by local police officers.

On Tuesday, Nov. 19, NALC President Fredric Rolando visited the Enfield post office for purposes of remembering Dan and officially memorializing him at NALC Headquarters.

Upon our arrival, President Rolando spent 30-40 minutes privately with members of Dan's family; his wife Tina, sons Andy and Alex, Tina's parents, his sister Cathy and her husband (Branch 294 President Tony Paolilo), and Dan's ex-wife and mother of their sons, Donna Mesina.

We then all moved outside for a wonderful, emotional ceremony in which President Rolando spoke of the job hazards of a city letter carrier, the (sometimes) unavoidable risks faced on a daily basis, and then presenting Dan's wife and sons with a plaque commemorating Dan. Next, a fitting and wonderful carved plaque from San Diego, CA Branch 70's Brenda Johnson and her co-workers was read and presented to Dan's family. Tina Nacin then spoke from the heart of all the emotions since Dan's death and her appreciation for his postal family.

Finally, two street signs were unveiled naming the driveway in front of the Enfield Post Office "Daniel J. Nacin Blvd."—a gift from the Manchester, CT, postal employees. The crowd then moved inside to share light refreshments and an abundance of fellowship.

Daniel Nacin became the third Branch 86 member enshrined at NALC Headquarters following Hartford's Robert Budusky (Jan. 1, 1996, shot and killed) and Manchester's Seymour Ballos (Sept. 6, 2004, killed by a drunk driver).

*Michael L. Willadsen, Branch 86*

### Jackson, Michigan

Made a big boo-boo last Branch Item. Kymm Neal did *not* retire as our Secretary. She is a member of the last punch bunch, but *still* our secretary. As soon as it was brought my attention, I fixed my mistake.

I am a little disappointed our kidney donor, Martha Olsen, was not selected hero of the year or Midwest hero. Then I realized why she was not chosen—small branch. In my humble opinion, and that all it is, you're in a small branch, upward mobility union-wise is not in the cards for you.

Management is crying poverty again. We lose a couple of billion dollars and it is the greedy carriers who are to blame. Yes, those \$100,000 lazy good-for-nothing carriers at fault. USPS is losing money. We are going broke by 2024. Meanwhile, these captains of chaos, barren of brains, masters of mayhem gave themselves hundreds of thousands of dollars in blood money. We call that chutzpah, asking for mercy in court after you killed your parents and telling the judge you're an orphan.

Here is hoping your Christmas was a memorable one and great things happen to you in a happy new year. My dear carriers, dress warmly against the winter weather. Now I am gonna take my broken body to the fridge, get the shrimp, go on YouTube and sing along with the groups I was brought up on.

Cut and roll.

*Bob Czartoryski, Branch 232*

### Kansas City, Missouri

It's not hard to imagine the party started during the Branch 30 cookout could be put on pause; and re-started for the Branch 30 Christmas party held at the union hall. But that's exactly what happened. Robert Brown's Family Catering (that brisket is still off the chain) while Djgeleven continued to prove when you bring the groove, people will jam.

From my perch near the entrance, the place was packed. Undoubtedly, due to the organizational skills of Terry Myers with assistance from the members of the entertainment committee, another successful event was enjoyed by the branch members. RUMor CONTROL (RUMCON) hasn't confirmed reports that Terry is considering resignation. Whether or not he will promote touring Christian plays or the Eagles Hotel California Tour has yet to be determined. I'm thinking in the event of his stepping down, he shall be worthy of the title "Party King."

My Christmas wish was for *half* of those attending the Christmas party to attend monthly meetings in 2020.

While I'm thrilled to see new activists preparing for the future, the question is, it too little, too late? Surely, a quick glance at the turmoil going on in the nation's capital should make every NALC member have his/her congressional representatives office number on speed dial. Will the retirement of Postmaster General Brennan play a part in contract negotiations? With the PMG position being a political appointment, what are the chances of the PMG readily responding to the presidents bidding?



The party's over; now it's time to put in the work necessary for a better future. The carriers from the 1970 strike made their stand. Now (2020) is the time for the rest of us to stand up. Start by becoming active in your branch. Have an expectation, not an excuse.

*Calvin Davis, Branch 30*

## Knoxville, Tennessee

**H**ello, sisters and brothers. I would like to start off this article by mourning the passing away of Brother Ben Barbee. Ben was 97 years old and the oldest member of our branch. R.I.P., brother!

The November *Postal Record* had an article on veterans. About this article, I received calls from fellow brothers and sisters on how to enroll into this program. One can call me, and I can do it over the phone. See your steward or Ralph Davis, director of retirees, and they'll give you my phone number. The second option is to go to [nalc.org](http://nalc.org) and click on member benefits. Click on Military Veterans, go the paragraph 7, and click and download a version of the card that allows you to print and fill out by hand and mail to NALC Veterans Group, 100 Indiana Ave., NW, Washington DC 20001.

My second issue concerns our recent election and having election ballots returned because the carrier did not submit a change of address or they did not notify National Headquarters of their address change. Once again, one can call me, and I can accept the address change over the phone (see your steward or Ralph Davis for my phone number). The second option is to go to [nalc.org](http://nalc.org) and click on members benefits, but before doing this, you will need your *Postal Record* number, which is found on the *Postal Record* mailing label. Click on create account and fill out the required information. National maintains an election roster, which is used to create the ballot mail labels for the Election Commission. Another example of voter registration, union style!

*Tony Rodriguez, Branch 419*

## Lakewood, New Jersey

**"S**olidarity" is a word often heard within the labor movement. It is defined as unity based on community of interests, objectives, or standards. But what does it really mean to have solidarity within a branch or a union?

To answer the question, union members must first identify that we share important common interests. It doesn't mean we always see eye-to-eye. It doesn't mean we agree on every issue. Solidarity means none of us touches mail, parcels or equipment before we clock in or after we clock out. We don't inspect our vehicles off the clock; we take our lunch and breaks; we fill out our 3996; we attend the occasional union meeting; we keep abreast of issues that directly affect our wages and benefits; we register to vote and then vote for labor-friendly candidates; we donate to the Letter Carrier Political Fund. We write statements when the carrier next us is being abused or another craft is doing car-

rier work. If every carrier did the same things, the right things, that is solidarity.

These are small examples of solidarity. No one is being asked to perform large examples of solidarity. No one is being asked to risk their careers or freedom to go on strike. No one is advocating for reprisal against non-union members. Solidarity means we stick together.

A quick word on safety: Please familiarize yourself with the safety rules and regulations we are required to follow. It is our responsibility to know them. Go to [nalc.org/workplace/issues/resources/usps/handbooks](http://nalc.org/workplace/issues/resources/usps/handbooks) and manuals. Read the *M-41*, the *EL-801*, *804* and *814*. USPS philosophy is very simple: Punish carriers for honest, human mistakes.

Branch 1089 offers condolences to the family and friends of retired member Michael Kinsella, who passed away last November.

Fuhgetaboutit—

*David J. Picconi, Branch 1089*

## Las Vegas, Nevada

**C**arrying mail in Las Vegas is an endless source for scribe topics. Being a senior carrier is not a guarantee for "been there, done that." Certainly the words, "this is the worst it's ever been" should never be spoken, because it seems to create a challenge. During our record-breaking Christmas season, local management, in its infinite wisdom, didn't hire the holiday help needed to get the work done. There was no planning for the extra equipment we would need. "What's this? A new holiday? We had no idea this was going to happen!" The overtime desired list and work assignment carriers loved the extra hours but it got old real fast. There were literally mountains of parcels.

In addition, Northern Nevada sent an emergency solicitation for carriers to work as temporary help because of their desperate personnel shortage. The dreaded Christmas hiring amnesia struck again! So volunteers were shipped up north to help, leaving their already stretched stations even more shorthanded. Are there going to be other holidays next year? Las Vegas management never seems to know.

On a different subject: marijuana is now legal here. How many times have we smelled it while delivering on the street? Now it's everywhere but not everyone is used to the freedom of it yet. During a recent delivery to a residence, a smiling young woman stepped out of a half-open garage to receive her parcel. She apparently hit the opener because the door began rising. In the garage were four very elderly people sitting at a card table smoking pot. They appeared to be horrified at being "caught" by the letter carrier. Their innocence of apparently thinking what they were doing was naughty was hilarious and sweet. It's just another Las Vegas letter carrier story to tell. Happy New Year!

*Leslie Hammett, Branch 2502*

## Massachusetts Northeast Merged

**T**here are many duties that union reps perform. By the nature of the grievance procedure, it isn't "fun" to file a grievance. I mean, it's fun to win a grievance, but if you have to file

a grievance, it means that someone has been wronged. That's not fun.

Educating new members and bringing people into the fold can be fun. But there is one duty that is *really* fun—visiting a retired member to present a gold card or service pin. The week before Thanksgiving, I had the honor/pleasure to



**Massachusetts Northeast Merged Br. 25 honored 70-year member Ovila Cote with a plaque and pin.**

present a 70-year plaque and pin to Ovila Cote.

Branch Health Benefits Representative Ken Dusombre and I went to chat with Ovila at his home. Ovila is a spry 97-year-old letter carrier who has been retired since 1981. He told us that his retirement value has tripled in that time thanks to retiree COLAs. He also reminisced about his days as a union activist when he and other carriers walked the halls of Congress with John F. Kennedy.

It was an awe-inspiring visit for me. Ovila made his voice, and the voice of all letter carriers heard more than a half-century ago. How many of today's letter carriers will be able to claim the same legacy when their careers are over?

After visiting Ovila, I came away realizing that the importance of being actively involved in politics can't be overstated. Fortunately for today's letter carriers, it is much easier to do. All we have to do is pay attention to a notification that we receive on our smartphone and respond appropriately by contacting our representatives in Congress. It is also simple to contribute to our political action fund so our union representatives can make our voices heard.

Be like Ovila—make your voice heard.

Stay informed!

*Dave Barbuzzi, Branch 25*

## Minneapolis, Minnesota

**A**s I'm writing this article in December, Minnesota is experiencing its first deep freeze of the season. It was pointed out at our last general membership meeting that we have many CCAs who are experiencing delivering mail in the winter for the first time. Unless they are an avid outdoorsman/woman, they have no idea what they are about to endure working outside in below-zero temperatures for hours.

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Seasoned carriers have learned over the years the best winter weather gear to wear. We've found the magic combination that works for us to avoid frostbite, how to stay relatively warm and safely deal with the ups and downs of a Minnesota winter.

Branch 9's motto is "An injury to one is an injury to all." We should all be cognizant that this motto applies not only to contractual violations, but also to our physical well-being. Those of us who have been around for a while understand the dangers of frostbite, the peril of ice and hidden snow-covered hazards.

Please take the time to reach out to CCAs to make sure that they are adequately prepared to survive the winter. Show them what works for you. Give them the names of stores that carry what they need. We're all in this together, so let's do what we can to make sure we all go home in the same condition that we came to work.

In solidarity—

*JoAnn Gilbaugh, Branch 9*

### Monterey, California

To one and all, happy holidays and a wonderful 2020. I know that each of you will be exhausted when this is all over. I wish routes had been adjusted to as close to eight hours as possible, but the adjustment crew had a different opinion. We will see what happens in the grievance procedure. The only excuse I can fathom is management must be using "new math."

The unnecessary overtime, mandatory overtime, mandatory overtime on your non-scheduled day is taking a toll, and I'm sure sorry. You are all strong carriers and know the rules. If you don't, you should be at the monthly union meeting to learn your rights. The best offense is a good defense.

It seems there were problems with the leave bidding. The local is clear, and there should have been no issues. If you don't have a local agreement because you are new, talk to your union representative. Everything in the contract has been there for over 23 years, so it's sound.

As we reflect over the past year, may we remember those we lost. The passing of our "Dock Guy" Sonny was devastating. I really thought he was going to beat the cancer, but God had another plan. I've met a lot of people in my life, and Sonny was one in a million. He had no enemies and was loved by all who came across his path. Rest in peace, my friend.

May our hearts remember those who are serving in the armed forces and were unable to be with their families this holiday season. Be kind when you see a homeless person just trying to get by. There was a "60 Minutes" program on and a Seattle letter carrier was homeless.

United we bargain; divided we beg.

*Patty Cramer, Branch 1310*

### New Jersey Merged

This year marks the 50th anniversary of the Great Postal Strike of 1970. I want to thank

President Rolando and the Executive Council for organizing a dinner on March 21, 2020 to commemorate this historic event in the history of NALC and the Postal Service. There simply is no other single moment that was more critical to



**Harrisburg, PA Br. 50 honored its retired members at its biennial retirement luncheon.**

the advancement of letter carriers and the NALC.

The city letter carriers who walked off the job in 1970 in pursuit of fair wages and benefits, and the opportunity to collectively-bargained wages, benefits, and working conditions for our members into the future, risked everything. The strike was illegal. The carriers who participated knew that they could have lost their jobs and could have been prosecuted. Their bravery has positively impacted thousands of letter carriers over several generations. They have changed the lives of all of us who have followed in their footsteps. They deserve our utmost gratitude and respect, and it is right that we honor them on the 50th anniversary of the strike.

Branch 38 has invited all of our members who participated in the strike to attend the event at the Manhattan Center in New York City, and will present a commemorative jacket to each of them, whether they are able to attend or not. If you are one of those courageous men or women, and have not yet responded to your invitation, please do so as soon as possible.

It has been my personal privilege and joy to speak with many who have already responded to the invitation. They are all properly proud to have been a part of that incredibly momentous movement. They are also appreciative to be recognized by their fellow NALC brothers and sisters. God bless them for what they did and their continued support.

*Michael J. O'Neill, Branch 38*

### New Orleans, Louisiana

My fellow letter carriers, I hope you guys enjoyed your Thanksgiving. We definitely have plenty to be thankful for. The gift of life, good health, sound mind, and the ability to pursue happiness as well as employment—these are things that we consider a joy and a blessing. Those things being acknowledged, we are in contract mode. Hopefully, we can iron out differences and come to an agreement or binding arbitration will be favorable. We shall see and await the outcome.

May your days be sunny and bright.

We must do our due diligence to keep vigilant as we go about our jobs. Keep your head up, for we have miles to go before we sleep. Let

the watchmen watch. We are at the threshold of our journey; never give up! As we look forward to the new year, many will make resolutions that are realistic and can be attained. Whatever you resolve, stick to your goal.

Remember to keep up with your inoculations. Those 65 or older, the pneumonia shot is available. Remember the shingles shot and your flu shot. Good health to you. Continue attending meetings; seek knowledge and understanding. CCAs, be in attendance on your job and on time, prepared to work. Remember to give to LCPF. I wish each and every one a happy New Year!

Yours in unionism—

*Marshall Wayne Smith, Branch 124*

### Norristown, Pennsylvania

Wanna hear something funny? The Post Office still doesn't know that Christmas is Dec. 25. They hire CCAs right before the package madness and wonder why they quit. A smart and organized upper management would know that hiring way before the madness would be smarter. They would be into a groove and have the job somewhat down and not be in a panic. If they do make it through then it's a good thing, but most don't. Right now we are working 12-hour days almost every day.

We had our Christmas party, and the turnout was good, but could have been better. Our management decided to force the ODL to work on Sunday, so that hurt a little. So what we may do is evolve and have our Xmas party in January so everyone gets to come. Now that's looking to the future and knowing what to do, unlike... never mind.

We are on the schedule to be inspected in the spring. It's been a while, and ya knew it was gonna come sooner or later. So now is the time (even though you should be doing your route professionally everyday) to do your route like you are being inspected. Don't skip lunch or breaks, take comfort breaks, stop at stop signs, ring doorbells when delivering packages and give directly to customers—all the things that make you a professional. So when the time comes that the (experts) go with you, you will be in a groove.

The one thing I always say is be safe. My prayers go out to the UPS driver Frank Ordenez, a 27-year-old who won't be home for Christmas this year. We are all in the same boat of delivery, so be aware of your surroundings and look out for suspicious people.

Be safe!

*Joel Stimmler, Branch 542*

### Northeastern, New York

I have been a case consolidation observer along with three other NALC officers for the Niskayuna Post Office test since the end of September. This test at this station has had abysmal results, commencing with horrible customer service, since routes have been restructured with business routes being delivered late in the day. Carrier morale, fatigue, and management not having the resources to deal with this unrealistic situation have all contributed to this program failure.



Niskayuna Post Office is one of the heaviest volume offices in the Albany District. It is a non-FSS office. How did the Postal Service rationalize that casers could set up two routes by 8 o'clock in the morning when the mail is not there by 4:30 a.m. when the casers start? There have been numerous times when letter carriers are put on waiting time. Where are the savings to this program?

What I have observed is numerous safety violations for which grievances have been filed, and mismanagement of the whole operation. It is comparable to putting a square peg in a round hole. Letter carriers have had no input in this process, and they no idea what time they will finish their day. Shortage of letter carriers' vehicles have also added to the failure of this test.

My concern is that upstate New York, where this test is being implemented, is a difficult area to deliver mail. Snow and frigid temperatures are a reality. What will happen when the temperature plummets, and letter carriers are working 12 plus hours a day? I have spoken to every letter carrier in this office, and I have not heard one positive comment. It seems to me NALC is fighting for the survival of this organization, yet there are elements in the Postal Service that are destroying it. Hopefully, NALC will win the case in arbitration, and letter carriers can deliver mail the sensible way.

Frank P. Maresca, Branch 358

## Oklahoma City, Oklahoma

As we begin a new year, we are again facing interest arbitration for a new contract, although our national officers are still negotiating in good faith and hopefully we can reach an agreement sooner than later. We are gaining more co-sponsors on the USPS Fairness Act seeking to overturn the onerous prefunding burden placed on the Postal Service by the 2006 lame-duck Congress.

This year is a presidential election year and one that has a lot of possibilities for workers and their families. With the huge losses suffered by the Postal Service, we face a lot of problems and getting the right people elected to further our cause will be an important step in helping to solve the service's financial woes. There are still ongoing efforts by this administration to cut our pension systems and do away with our COLAs and cut the Service's active workforce in half.

We must continue to work with our representatives in Congress to prevent those things from happening. Destroying the government's most productive workforce and only cash cow makes no sense except that outside entities wish to siphon off the profitable parts of the Service for their own self interests. The Postal Service still performs well despite all its problems when stacked up against the private delivery service, and it performs a public service that those services cannot provide.

It is in the best interests of letter carriers active and retired to work with our congress-creatures and in concert with our national officers to make sure that we keep the Postal Service a viable entity that continues to serve the public good. Privatization makes no sense and does nothing to serve the public good!

Bob Bearden, Branch 458

## Philadelphia, Pennsylvania

Happy New Year, everyone. I hope you enjoyed a wonderful holiday season with family and friends. The year 2020 will undoubtedly prove to be one of the busiest years in recent memory. Branch 157 will begin the new year by installing your officers on Jan. 20. I want to thank each member for choosing to support all the activists that ran for office on the Rodgers-Mulvenna slate. I assure you we will continue to work diligently to promote the general welfare of every member we have the privilege to represent. Once again, thank you for your trust and encouragement.

On March 26, the Pennsylvania State Association will host our congressional breakfast in Washington, DC. The branch will provide transportation to and from Washington as well as sponsoring the breakfast itself. Save the date for this very important endeavor. The breakfast offers a unique opportunity for the members to hear from our elected government officials, but more importantly for our elected officials to hear from us. Please consider attending.

The national convention will take place Aug. 17 through Aug. 21 in Honolulu, HI. Currently, we have more than 100 branch members who have signed up to be potential delegates to the convention. Remember, to become a delegate, you must attend six of the 10 regular general membership meetings to qualify. Good luck, and keep in mind that our meetings are every third Tuesday of the month. I hope to see you there.

Finally, the presidential election will take place in November. Without any equivocation, this election will prove to be the most crucial of our times. The branch will work hard to support the candidate who not only supports the longevity of the Postal Service as an organization, but also recognizes the essential interests of letter carriers. Stay tuned and stay involved!

In closing, I want to wish everyone a healthy, happy, prosperous and safe 2020.

Joe Rodgers, Branch 157

## Phoenix, Arizona

Best wishes to all for a safe and prosperous New Year.

A prosperous New Year could rely heavily upon how successful we are in the fight to get the USPS Fairness Act (H.R. 2382) passed. That means the members have to get their congressional representatives to co-sponsor the bill and then to vote for it.

Contact them today!

This also means raising the funds needed to support those in Congress that can help us. That depends upon our political action fund, which relies upon voluntary contributions from members.

On average; we are lucky to get 10 percent of our members to donate. That is not the best we can do to fight for our futures. Just \$5 a pay period, or \$10 a month from an annuitant, can make a big difference if 20 percent donated.

This is a serious fight we cannot afford to lose. It doesn't make sense that such a small percentage of the membership is waging the battle. If you don't want to sign up for payroll deduction; please send a check every three months for \$32.50.

Dues money can't be used for political purposes. Voluntary donations are the only way. It's not a condition of membership in your union, but without it, you may not have a union, or a job.

Al Linde, Branch 576

## Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania

So, how does one take a torch passed to them "gracefully"? Maybe they don't. Perhaps they simply do the best they can. I have huge shoes to fill, so time will tell if I can live up to the standard set by Bob Valenti. I do know two things: it takes a lot of people for the NALC to function, and every job within it is important.

As I write this, Branch 84 is coming off of the installation of officers. We were fortunate enough to be joined by not only Region 12 NBA Dave Napadano and State President Paul Rozzi, but also Director of City Delivery Chris Jackson. After hearing Jackson speak, there is no doubt

## COLA: Cost-of-living adjustment

- ▶ Following the release of the July consumer price index (CPI), the cost-of-living adjustment (COLA) under the 2016-2019 National Agreement is **\$624 annually**. This COLA is based on the change in the CPI from the base index month to July 2019, with the previous six COLAs subtracted.
  - ▶ The 2021 projected COLAs for CSRS and FERS, which are based on the CPI's increase between the third quarter of 2019 and third quarter of 2020, is **0.2 percent** and will be finalized with the publication of the September 2020 CPI in October 2020.
  - ▶ The projected 2020 COLA under the Federal Employees' Compensation Act (FECA) is **2.4 percent** following the release of the October CPI. This COLA is based on the change in the CPI between December 2018 and December 2019.
- Visit [nalc.org](http://nalc.org) for the latest updates.

## Branch Items

that he has taken the torch gracefully that was handed to him by Brian Renfroe. Dave and Paul have as well. They all have the same passion for letter carriers and it is apparent.

I looked up toward the stage as the officers (some new, some not-so-new) were sworn in. I realized that the group consisted of people that were mentors or who I look up to and even call friends (sometimes a combination of the three). There's no doubt that their jobs in NALC are important and, at some stage, each one has taken their own torch gracefully.

Then, there's you. Yeah, I'm talking to you. Being a letter carrier isn't always the easiest job. Some days, you simply do the best you can. But, every day that you work safely, contractually and professionally, you take your torch gracefully. Without you, there's no membership to represent. Do the best you can, because it takes a lot of people for the NALC to function and every job within it is important. Now, who will you pass your torch to?

Happy New Year!

*John Conger II, Branch 84*

### Racine, Wisconsin

My definition of anarchy and chaos would be the complete meltdown of common sense at four-way stop signs. My definition of frustration would be my postal vehicle not starting in the morning only to be told by my co-worker I'm in the wrong vehicle. Ugghh, true story. Most days, the workroom floor is sanctioned organized mayhem. Some days it's complete confusion and lawlessness.

A recent stand-up talk alluded to an issue with our "arrival at unit" scans not meeting district expectations. After an extensive and thorough investigation to correct this deficiency, something not out of the ordinary happened. Management traced the issue to the carriers. Of course they did. Fell right into our laps.

The issue stems from a few unscanned, bar-coded flats in our loose flats tub that are not scanned as "arrival at unit." Once again, letter carriers to the rescue. If we come across any of these flats, we set them aside so the clerks can scan them "arrival at unit" when they come around with the dues cage. One would think that management would inform the clerks to bring a scanner with them. I say go to the source. Get on the phone with the processing plant and tell *their* clerks to separate them for *our* clerks to scan. Not a carrier problem. While management's got 'em on the horn, they can ask why our DPS is upside down. You can explain to me all day long until the cows come home why the DPS is upside down. I'm not buying it. Technology is supposed to get better, not regress. Perhaps I'm looking at this all wrong. Maybe it's not the machine operators. Could it be the people "in charge" of the machines? Now the cows can come home.

*Chris Paige, Branch 436*

### St. Louis, Missouri

Happy New Year to all! As we divert our attention away from the hustle and bustle the holidays bring, we can now direct our attention

to the gym and our efforts to lose what we've overindulged in.

I hope you had the patience to stay professional throughout the day. So much pressure to perform, to stay focused and to not lose your cool is a daunting task when every day challenges you both mentally and physically.

I hope you were able to disregard the abusive rantings of your supervisors, who have no clue what a physical toll delivering over a hundred parcels a day to the door takes on your body and doing so, in many cases, in inclement weather.

I hope you got some rest. I hope you were able to decompress for an evening and enjoy some family time. I hope you were able to find the time to appreciate the meaning of the holiday season for yourself.

I hope everyone found quality time to spend with family and loved ones. The lead-up to Christmas can be so nerve racking it hardly seems fair that we only have a day or maybe just hours before we have to return to work. Such is the curse of the public servant. Perhaps we gained some satisfaction in knowing our efforts brought joy to a lot of families and, more importantly some of your patrons recognized your dedication and rewarded you in some fashion.

I remember how small almost insignificant gestures would make my day, a plate of homemade cookies in the mailbox or a greeting card. It's knowing that someone appreciated your efforts, that they took the time to show some measure of gratitude. I wish you all the best in the coming new year.

*Tom Schulte, Branch 343*

### Saint Paul, Minnesota

The first Branch 28 member I ever met was Clarence "Smoky" Smekofski. It was the spring of 2016 and I had just nearly high-centered a rental car trying to cross from the side to the front of a building that appeared, from the signage, to be a defunct bowling alley, but bore the address of NALC Branch 28. My wife and I had decided to transfer from Anchorage, Alaska (Branch 4319) to the Twin Cities to be closer to her family. I figured that it was my due diligence to check in at both the Branch 9 (Minneapolis) and Branch 28 (Saint Paul) halls.

I never made it to Minneapolis.

Inside, I found Smoky holding court. It was my intention to just poke my head in, maybe sign up for the local newsletter. Smoky would have none of that. He was proud of Saint Paul, and Branch 28. He insisted on buying me tickets to the upcoming retirees' banquet. He let me know that the place for me was definitely on the Saint Paul side of the river.

Though our tenure on the Executive Board overlapped, his impact on this union and this local predates my birth by decades. There is not enough space in these pages to catalog his work and contributions, both pre- and post-retirement. It was always explained to me that, as union members, we are always standing on the shoulders of giants. Smoky is undoubtedly one of those giants. We strive to do you proud.

Thank you for all your years, and thank you to your family for sharing you with us.

From one Navy vet carrier to another: Fair winds and following seas, Clarence "Smoky" Smekofski.

*Colin Walker, Branch 28*

### San Antonio, Texas

Happy New Year 2020. The big news is we'll be moving into our new building at 6218 Krempen Ave. some time this month. Extensive remodeling will be going on to create our union hall (which will take several months), but we'll be open for business. Stay tuned for building updates.

The new year also brings new stewards to the contract enforcement arena. New stewards, please take this job seriously. A good steward has to spend some time off the clock educating themselves on the contract, learning how to write grievances, and how to effectively represent the members. Educating yourself off the clock is necessary so you can be effective when you are *on the clock*. It is the toughest job in NALC and it takes work to get good at it. Invest the time and effort to do your members proud. We will be providing training throughout the month (and the remainder of the year), so please make every effort to attend. These training sessions are open to all of our members.

On a different note, I would like to thank to Kathy Ruffo, Cory Daniels, Charles Calhoun, Erin McLaughlin, Margaret Garza, Jillian Salazar, Nancy Feldt, Frank Santos, Joseph Blancarte, Richard Gould, Mary Pardo, and Louise and Phil Jordan for their hard work in decorating the union hall for our Christmas party and all the volunteers and donors (too numerous to mention by name) who participated in ensuring this event was a success. It was a wonderful evening for our members and guests. Heritage Station represented! Thanks also to everyone who donated a toy for our annual adopt-a-child Christmas toy drive. Your generosity put smiles on the faces of children that may not have otherwise received a Christmas gift.

*Tony Boyd, Branch 421*

### Seattle, Washington

In the scullery-speak of diner lingo, one might hear: "Burn the British!"—meaning a toasted English muffin, or possibly, "Burn one, drag it through the garden and pin a rose on it," that's a designation for a burger with lettuce and tomato, garnished with an onion. The diner is where your cackleberries get wrecked, bread gets cremated, bossy's in a bowl, there's chicks in a raft, and you can wash it all down with a tasty cup of mud.

Now, you wouldn't want to eat all that, but I served it up to make a point. With the advent of consolidated casing and the overabundance of grievances it has spawned, our shop stewards are less like union officials and must perform more like short-order cooks. Here's how grievances procedures might be translated for today's shop steward: "Hey, sheriff (code for shop steward)! Got a Siamese twin (simultaneous scheduling violation)—8.5.G—with several wannabes (ODL-ers) running on less than a full tank (failure to maximize)." Or something akin to this for ODL equability issues? "Sheriff, we need eyes out. 8.5.C The man is not slicing the pie properly." An improper mando may sound like, "Sheriff, 8.5.D. Being 'mandoe'd' while Junior is getting stiffed." (When ODL personnel are maximized management is to assign overtime to ju-



nior employees first.) Here's one for a violation of Article 8.5.G.2 (working over 12 hrs. in a day, and/or over 60 hrs. in a week): "Got me going into darktime, Sheriff."

Now the shop steward barely has to move. If he has a template printed out, all he has to do is provide the date and the name of the managerial knucklehead, and he can walk up and present the grievance before the supervisor even makes it back to their kiosk. "Here's your job performance evaluation. You need to work on these issues!"

*Don Nokes, Branch 79*

## Silver Spring, Maryland

**H**appy New Year! What a great time to make life-improving resolutions and try hard to fulfill them.

If you don't have one or have room for one more, I have a resolution suggestion: Try to be in the moment with your work (and life) by noticing and eliminating Obsessive Compulsive Disorders (OCDs). OCDs are actions we take unconsciously and addictively that negatively impact our quality of life and, most definitely, our work. Work done in an office environment seems to be a contagious breeding ground for OCDs, and carriers are by no means immune. It seems like the longer the exposure to the contagion, the worse the symptoms.

The most frequent symptom in carriers seems to be the OCD of working off the clock. This symptom seems silly and ridiculous, but try to get otherwise intelligent carriers to stop. Good luck. It usually takes several grievances by a competent shop steward to inoculate this illness. Not only does this behavior demonstrate that the carrier does not believe their labor to be valuable, it destroys the station by infecting other carriers, especially new ones. Pretty soon a cancer-like plague is ravaging the office and the infected carriers are zombie-like in their addiction and denial of reality, and, since it seems the office doesn't really need the budgeted hours, a red flag is sent to operation/support to inspect the station.

Another OCD symptom is the development of an unnatural jealous affection for a piece of postal equipment. I call it "discartisminetoeous" but it doesn't have to involve a cart; it could be a truck, trays, rubber bands or anything else that carriers are supposed to share, not hoard.

I've witnessed infected carriers ready to fight each other because of this illness.

Let's make it our resolution to triage OCDs!

*Lee Taylor, Branch 2611*

## Southeast Pennsylvania Merged

**H**appy New Year! The Executive Board and I wish you and your families good health and prosperity in the coming year.

For those of you who have not heard, Rhonda Massari retired as branch president effective Dec. 31. So it gives me great pleasure to address the membership in this first scribe article for the year.

I would like to thank Rhonda for all that she has not only done for the branch but what she has done for me personally. She has served this branch as president for the last four years but also served NALC for more than 30 years. While I'll be sad to see her go, life must go on for the branch. Fortunately, we planned for this day. We

have trained our next generation of leaders well. And now it's time for them to step up. But again, thank you, Rhonda! I always said, "you are the big sister I never had," and you said, "You are the little brother I never wanted." (LOL). Thanks again for making this transition somewhat seamless for the branch.



**Chicago, IL Br. 11 raised more than \$20,000 for the American Cancer Society and Making Strides for Breast Cancer with its seventh annual Walk for Breast Cancer in October.**

I also would like to thank two other board members who retired during this past year, Bill Mellon and Gerry Gallagher. Your many years of dedication to this branch will be missed.

I have appointed Eric Jackson as my vice president. Colleen Haynes will be moving into Eric's former position as branch treasurer. Also, Ed Donahue will be filling Colleen's former position as branch trustee. With this newly formed executive board, I'm confident we will move into the future with the strength and stability that the membership deserves.

I am aware of all the challenges that we face as a branch. But together, we move without fear!

Great things happen when people work together.

*Les Dillman, Branch 725*

## Springfield, Ohio

**I**f you stop by the steward office, you will see approximately 30 stacks of paper covering one table, two desks, and three file cabinets. Each stack of paper varies from three to several hundred sheets of paper. Each stack is a grievance being filed by President DeWell and Steward Rob Green.

The District Manager (DM) tells us there are 3.3 million fewer parcels this year than last year, but cannot tell us why we often wait for late parcel trucks.

The DM knows we are short seven CCAs, the fewest CCAs in Springfield since the position was created. Overtime Desired List carriers have been forced to work up to 77 hours a week.

The DM knows our postmaster changed out starting time to 8:30 a.m. (due to the late parcel trucks), forcing carriers to work unsafely in the dark.

The DM lets our postmaster have two 204-b's, while carriers work 77-hour work weeks.

The DM hand-picked our postmaster over a more qualified individual who wanted the job.

Even though our starting time is now 8:30, our postmaster is allowing ODL carriers to start early and then sending them home early, while forcing non-ODL carriers to work late (in the dark).

There was an intervention meeting recently to try and resolve these problems. Our NBA, Mark Camilli, sent Regional Administrative Assistant John Collins to support us. Thanks, Mark and John.

I hope the DM retires soon. I'm not sure how much more of his management style Springfield can take. In the meantime, if you see Brian DeWell or Rob Green, thank them for their hard work.

Branch meetings are the second Thursday of each month in Room 221. Pizza at 6:15 p.m.; meeting at 6:30. Show up. Listen. Ask questions. Knowledge is power.

*Brian Gourilis, Branch 45*

## Staten Island, New York

**L**oyalty—some believe it means to agree with whatever they are thinking. To me, it means to give me your honest opinion. A different opinion stimulates the mind, and if you have an open mind, you can learn from it. Once the decision is made though, loyalty means carrying out that decision like you made it yourself. As branch president, I've had to make decisions that aren't always comfortable. I believe we can unite people under a common goal. We can all perform our jobs based on the same principles.

The Postal Service has become so dysfunctional. Many people supervising are in charge of workers that performed their duties better than when they were in craft themselves. Some of these people in charge try to take what I say and twist it in an effort to turn carriers away from the union, and as I've said so many times, the union is only as strong as their members. I believe carriers in Branch 99 are among the hardest working, unappreciated bunch ever to walk into a post office. Some no longer recognize the fact they are abused and just move on. Carriers injured on the job have to fight for what they should be getting, and it's a damn shame. Coming to work shouldn't hurt, and getting hurt at work shouldn't make you a second-class citizen. Coming to work and being misled or mistreated in unacceptable.

Not everyone in management is bad, and as a branch, we have a good relationship with many in management. But wouldn't it be great if each carrier learned what they could about their job and worked the way they should—professionally and safely?

*Rich Ray, Branch 99*

## Syracuse, New York

**I**want to thank all of Branch 134 for the great year we have had. We have once again racked up an impressive win rate on all levels of the grievance process. Well more than half a million dollars has been paid out for violations throughout the year. Our arbitration record for the year was seven wins out of eight cases moving forward. In the past four years, we have gone 22 wins and 5 losses at arbitration. This is an outstanding win rate. This is due to the hard work at the local level with all the stewards requesting information and putting together solid cases. I want to thank all the officers who give up their personal time night after night and weekend after weekend to develop the cases as they move through the grievance/arbitration process.

For the year, we have hired more than 140 new members across the branch. Sadly, we still only keep half of them. Through the route inspection/joint process, we have added more than 20

## Branch Items

routes in the branch this year. We hope to continue this process into the new year so long as we have a willing partner in management.

We had a very successful retirement breakfast with more than 100 people in attendance. This year marked a milestone for close to 150 people who have been members of this union for 25 years or longer. We had 48 people recognized for 50 years of union membership this year alone.

We have lost the following brothers and sisters in the branch this year: Joe Miller, Gerald Robinson, Mike Graziano, Sherri Goodenough, John Anderson, Pete Harhay, Paul Lambrych and Roy Henry.

I hope you all had a great holiday season and I am looking forward to another successful year in 2020. Thank you for your support in leading this great branch.

*Tom Dlugolenski, Branch 134*

### Toledo, Ohio

The results of our branch election were announced at our December meeting. Mike Hayden will be serving another term as branch president. Tammy Kelley will be moving from trustee to sergeant-at-arms. By acclamation, Ciana Duran will be moving to recording secretary and Alexandra (AI) Reynolds will join the trustees.

As we have done the past few years, Branch 100 is hosting an evening at the Toledo Zoo's "Lights Before Christmas," and a buffet and beverages at the Museum of Science at the Great Hall. We also have reserved a banquet room at Table Forty 4, for an over-21 gathering for the membership.

We received two more successful arbitration awards. For one, the Postal Service attempted to negate the arbitration by issuing payment the day of the hearing. This did not please the arbitrator, who ordered the carriers be paid again and the union receive \$1,000 as compensation for their time and expense. The second award also involved non-compliance of payment, asking for \$25 for four carriers and approximately \$100 for another. The arbitrator paid the original amounts plus \$100, with an additional \$100 to each. Branch 100 was compensated \$10,000. The Postal Service sure saved a bundle by not settling the grievance at the lowest step!

In November, the post office allegedly paid out \$93,000 to carriers in the city, much of that due to their refusal to settle grievances at the lowest level. I hope that amount gets the attention of Eastern Area. It is imperative that the Postal Service has management personnel who can manage within the bounds of the contract and manuals. Otherwise, it will continue to pay.

*Ray Bricker, Branch 100*

### Tri-Valley, California

At times it feels weird being the old guy, but that's me now. After I turned 40, many moons ago, I started getting very comfortable with the aging process. Fast forward several years and I am now really comfortable with getting old, perhaps a bit too comfortable. As I contemplate my eventual retirement, I think about our branch and the next wave of officers who will take over leadership roles. We represent 16 postal Installations, stretching geographically from Studio City, located in the eastern San Fernando Valley, to Ojai, located 71 miles northwest in the beautiful Santa Ynez mountain range.

Our grievance workload keeps us gainfully employed at all times at the branch office and ensures that our days, weeks and years fly by quickly. EVP James Perryman is doing outstanding work and we have a couple of officers who are definitely ready to step up and represent the branch. My main worry regarding the future is the fact that most of our younger Branch 2902 brothers and sisters have shown no interest in stepping up to represent their fellow carriers and to uphold our contract unselfishly, for all of the right reasons, and not for the wrong reasons, i.e. in order to learn the "loopholes" or to be vindictive and punitive towards management. That's not to say that management isn't often deserving of punishment; that's just not an acceptable reason to be a steward. Stewards must follow the rules so they do not spend an inordinate amount of their union time defending themselves in the grievance procedure. Stewards often get flak from both sides of the fence, craft and management alike. Sounds great, doesn't it? Take a moment to thank your stewards for fighting the good fight and unselfishly representing all letter carriers. And Happy New Year to all!

*Ray Hill, Branch 2902*

### West Coast Florida

Late November, St. Petersburg City Letter Carrier Gloria Davis was killed in her Southside St. Petersburg home. It's not how Gloria died that will stay with me, how she was celebrated by her co-workers will.

As has happened more times that I care to think of, when something like this happens, I accompany an EAP counselor to the workroom floor. The talks start pretty much the same way: "What will you remember about Gloria?" "What type of a person was she?"

Never have I participated in such a genuine out-pouring of affection for a co-worker. Nearly all of the 60-plus carriers in one office had something to share.

The comments started out with "her uniform, she was proud of it and always looked amazing."

"Gloria had a mirror on the dashboard of her LLV and she checked her appearance before she dismounted to see a customer - When I'd carry her route - that mirror made me smile."

"She was a hard worker, but always took time to encourage and help me when I started." one CCA said.

"She always had a smile."

"Her laughter would light up the room."

"She was the organizer of the office."

"She was just beautiful inside and out."

Some comments made by her customers included:

"This lovely lady was my letter carrier. She worked hard, always had smile on her face and kind words for others. Unbelievable...God bless her."

"I wish I were more like her."

Gloria was a person who had an effect on many. She was loved by her customers and, as you can read above, respected by her peers. Its



**Gloria Davis**

not often that we get to share time with a person like Gloria. She took pride in the uniform, the job, and she took time to mentor less experienced carriers. She also had the ability to straighten out that carrier he/she thinks they "know it all."

My wish for Branch 1477 members as we heal from this loss is that we choose to be more like Gloria.

*Joseph Henschen, Branch 1477*

### Western Wayne County, Michigan

Our calendars have turned to a new year, which promises to be a momentous one for NALC and for America's public postal service; a year full of consequential events and issues. There will be a contract arbitration award, decisions on other crucial issues and disputes, important legislative initiatives, our union's 72nd biennial convention in August and a critical national election in November. That's just some of what awaits us this year, and as always, there will be the unexpected.

For letter carriers doing the day to day work of the USPS, their tireless dedication as the couriers of our nation's business is much more focused and personal. While the maelstrom of events both national and local as well as large and small in scope continually swirls around them, they simply just take care of business. Moreover, they do so not because of the direction of Postal Service management; instead, they do so in spite of its often feckless and misguided leadership.

A letter carrier dealing with daily management nonsense on the post office workflow does not have time to focus much on the larger picture. He or she just wants to do their job, go home, and focus on what actually matters in life. Whatever the results are of the forthcoming contract arbitration, the toxic workflow environment created and maintained by Postal Service management for decades remains an issue that must be effectively addressed once and for all.

*Joe Golonka, Branch 2184*

### Yakima, Washington

Today (as I write this) is the anniversary of the attack on Pearl Harbor. All of us should say a prayer of thanks every day to those who sacrificed to protect our freedom.

Postal workers are under a continuous attack by an incompetent managerial system. The blame lies squarely at the top. So long, Megan. You weren't the worst, but you weren't that good.

Here in Yakima, we've been informed that regular carriers can expect to be mandated on their N.S. days off so CCAs can have at least one day off a week. Sorry, this is not acceptable. Stop trying to fix your blunder on the back end.

I predict this will lead to an increase in documentation limiting how much an individual can work. There appears to be no other recourse, since management refuses to do its job properly.

Personally, this is my last winter and will do my best to soldier onward. So looking forward to Nalcrest in the winter months. To heck with snow.

Peace—

*J.S. Bohlinger, Branch 852*



# Auxiliary Update



Crystal Bragg  
Secretary

## National Auxiliary Board

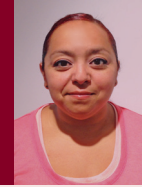
News and updates from the officers



Cythensis Lang  
President



Cynthia Martinez  
Vice President



Linda Davis  
Asst. Secretary



Pam Fore  
Treasurer

### From the Secretary

Gerome Gnome arrived in Dayton, OH, just in time to attend Branch 182's "Family Fun Day," where he visited with Auxiliary 138 members Hazel Young, Sandi Williams and Lil Bauer (picture 1). While at the Family Fun Day, Gerome visited the putt-putt golf games and the MDA raffle table. During his stay in Dayton, Gerome attended Auxiliary 138's meeting (picture 2),

Branch 182's meeting and the retirees meeting (picture 3). Gerome spent one day helping the branch put together their newsletter. Before Gerome left Dayton, he visited one of the Memorial Day tornado sites (picture 4); there were 19 tornados reported that day. Gerome also visited the site of the July 4 shootings at Ned Pepper's Bar; the pole is dedicated to those who lost their lives that day (picture 5).

Gerome then packed up and headed on to

his next adventure.

The National Auxiliary Board members have been working hard planning for our 2020 convention in Hawaii. We have some fun things planned for you and your family but I'm not letting the secret out yet. More information will be coming soon. I also want to remind you to keep working on your crafts and collecting items for the general store. Keep up the good work.

*Crystal Bragg*



## NALC Member App

Available for free in the Apple App Store and the Google Play Store

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## Mutual Exchanges

**CA: Cypress (11/94) to Yorba Linda, Rancho Cucamonga, Chino, Chino Hills, Norco or Sun City, CA.** Overtime available if desired. Close to beaches. Regular carriers only. Randy, 657-266-7747 or randy0217@yahoo.com.

**San Diego (Poway) (4/19) to Las Vegas, NV.** County office. Beautiful weather and area. 30 minutes from the beach. Regular carriers only. Roger, mi2vg@yahoo.com.

**CO: Denver (10/94) to Northeast FL—Jacksonville to Titusville or surrounding areas.** 26 offices for bidding. Close to downtown Denver and mountains. Alan, 303-522-5545 (call, text or voice message).

**FL: Fort Meyers (8/18) to SD.** Great area

and close to beaches. Relocating to care for a loved one. Toni, 651-233-0616 or tbenzt12@comcast.net.

**FL: Saint Petersburg (3/18) to Fort Meyers, FL or surrounding areas.** Citywide bidding, 10 offices. Plenty of OT available. Sabrina, 239-565-1533.

**FL: Winter Garden (6/16) to Glenville, Schenectady, Mechanicville or Clifton Park.** Within the next three months or sooner. Susan, 352-999-1765.

**WA: Kent (10/98) to Las Vegas, Henderson, NV or surrounding areas.** Great parks, trails and schools. 25 miles from Seattle. Plenty of OT available. Aylan, 253-486-2568 or aylanboughlief@yahoo.com.

## How to place a Mutual Exchange ad

The cost of Mutual Exchange ads is \$15 for up to 30 words and \$25 for 31-50 words per month.

Ads must be received by the 5th of the month preceding the month in which the ad will appear, e.g., December's deadline is for the January publication. Mail ad with check (payable to NALC) to: Mutual Exchange Ads, Postal Record, 100 Indiana Ave. NW, Washington, DC 20001-2144.

Ads are published for NALC members only. A branch officer or steward must endorse the ad to certify membership. Ads without endorsements will be returned.

Include your name, address and branch number. Ads must be received in the same format and wording as they will appear in the magazine. Begin each ad with your state

abbreviation, city and seniority date.

Ads should be typed in upper/lower case (or, if this is not possible, printed clearly) on a full sheet of 8.5 x 11" paper. Make certain the numerals 0 (zero) and 1 (one) can be distinguished from the letters O and I in e-mail addresses.

Note: Specific route information or mention of three-way transfers will not be published, nor any wording that offers cash or property to facilitate an exchange. Mutual exchanges must be approved by both postmasters involved. Seniority of carriers involved shall be governed by Article 41, Sec. 2E of the National Agreement. Carriers may not exchange assignments, since vacated positions must be posted for bids in accordance with local and national agreements.

## Election Notices

### Palm Springs, California

On Jan. 16 at 7 p.m., the branch shall elect delegates to the 2020 state/national conventions, in accordance with branch bylaws:

Section 11: The election of delegates to the convention shall be by a plurality of the vote from the membership present at the regular branch membership meeting six months prior to the convention being attended.

Section 12: The candidates for delegates shall be listed according to the number of votes received beginning with the recipient of the highest vote and ending with the lowest. Counting from the top, a number equal to twice the delegates shall be the list of delegates and alternates to which we are entitled under the Constitution. The top two delegates elected to attend conventions by the membership must attend nine meetings in the 12 months, six months prior to the date of the convention to receive per diem, transportation and lodging cost from the branch for attending. In the event the branch opts to cancel any membership meeting during the year, the number of meetings elected delegates must attend will be adjusted accordingly to eight meetings in the 11 months prior if one membership meeting is cancelled, or seven meetings in the 10 months prior if two meetings are cancelled.

*Charles Bonner, Pres., Br. 4149*

### Providence, Rhode Island

This is the official notice that the nominations for Branch 15 president, vice president, recording secretary, treasurer, sergeant-at-arms, NALC health benefits representative, postal scribe, director of retirees, RI state association representative and two branch trustees for the May 2020 to May 2023 term will take place Monday, March 2, at the regular branch meeting at 7 p.m., and will be held at the Providence APWU 387 hall, at 1192 Plainfield St., Johnston.

Those nominated must be present to accept the nomination or have submitted prior to the meeting in writing their

willingness to accept the nomination. All members in good standing are eligible to be nominated except that any regular member who voluntarily or otherwise holds, accepts or applies for a supervisory position in the Postal Service for any period of time, whether for one day or any fraction thereof, either detail, acting, probationary or permanently, shall immediately vacate any office held and shall be ineligible to run for any office for a period of two years after termination of such supervisory status. Upon nomination, the candidate must certify that they have not served in a supervisory capacity for the 24 months prior to the nomination.

The election will be conducted, if necessary, by secret ballot on Monday, April 6. Voting will take place from 2 p.m. to 7 p.m. prior to the Branch 15 union meeting at 7 p.m. located at the Providence APWU 387 hall, 1192 Plainfield St., Johnston. All working carriers will be given the opportunity to vote.

*John J. Barbery Jr., Rec. Sec., Br. 15*

## Election Notices

**Election Notices** must be submitted to *The Postal Record*, not to other offices at NALC. *The Constitution for Government of Federal and Subordinate Branches* requires that notice be mailed to members no fewer than **45 days before the election** (Article 5, Section 4). Branch secretaries must remember the time difference between deadline for submission of notices—the 10th of the month—and publication of the subsequent issue of the magazine, e.g., November's deadline is for the December publication.

## MISSING

HELP BRING ME HOME

NCMEC: 1375968

### Vanessa Morales



Missing Since: Nov 29, 2019  
Missing From: Ansonia, CT  
DOB: Sep 7, 2018  
Age Now: 1  
Sex: Female  
Race: White  
Hair Color: Brown  
Eye Color: Brown  
Height: 2'0"  
Weight: 17 lbs

Vanessa was last seen November 29, 2019.

## DON'T HESITATE!

ANYONE HAVING INFORMATION SHOULD CONTACT

## CALL 911 OR

1-800-8435678 (1-800-THE-LOST®)  
Ansonia Police Department (Connecticut) 1-203-735-1885

## MISSING

HELP BRING ME HOME

NCMEC: 1374055

### Jonathon Barker



Missing Since: Nov 7, 2019  
Missing From: Toledo, OH  
DOB: Feb 21, 2004  
Age Now: 15  
Sex: Male  
Race: White  
Hair Color: Blonde  
Eye Color: Blue  
Height: 5'3"  
Weight: 120 lbs

Jonathon was last seen on November 7, 2019.

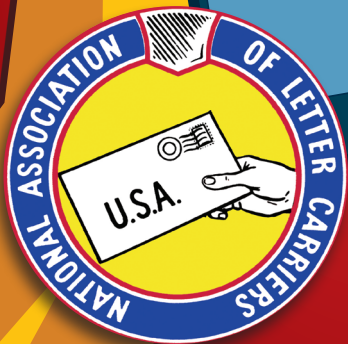
## DON'T HESITATE!

ANYONE HAVING INFORMATION SHOULD CONTACT

## CALL 911 OR

1-800-8435678 (1-800-THE-LOST®)  
Toledo Police Department (Ohio) 1-419-245-3111





# social media

## Join the conversation!

Follow NALC HQ's social media accounts to get the latest letter carrier news and updates straight from the source. Follow our pages; interact with us by liking, commenting and sharing content and encourage others to do the same. For suggestions and photo/video submissions, please use [social@nalc.org](mailto:social@nalc.org).



@*nalc.national*



@*NALC\_National*



@*lettercarriers*

LinkedIn

*National  
Association of  
Letter Carriers  
(NALC)*

YouTube

@*ThePostalRecord*



**NALC Member App**  
(iTunes, Google Play)

# Help your NALC family affected by natural disasters

The **NALC Disaster Relief Foundation** provides hands-on relief for carriers affected by natural disasters, such as wildfires, hurricanes, floods and tornados. It receives donations to be used to assist regular NALC members affected by natural disasters.

NALC response teams throughout the country are activated to go to disaster locations and offer assistance to NALC members and their families who live in the same household. Basic supplies, including uniforms and food, are available for those who need assistance.

Financial support may be available depending on the availability of funding and qualifying criterias. Any regular member of NALC who has faced hardship as a result of a natural disaster will be able to apply for assistance.

**Make a donation by sending a check or money order to:**

**NALC Disaster Relief Foundation  
100 Indiana Ave. NW  
Washington, DC 20001-2144**

*The foundation is a 501(c)(3). Your contribution to the NALC Disaster Relief Foundation may be eligible for a tax deduction. It is recommended you seek further advice from your tax advisor.*



**NALC  
Disaster  
Relief  
Foundation**