

The Postal Record

Volume 138/Number 8

August 2025

The monthly journal of the NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF LETTER CARRIERS

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INSTEAD OF THE CURRENT HIGH 3~~

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COLLECTIVE BARGAINING RIGHTS~~

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When lawmakers come after our
295,000 members' jobs, retirements
and futures, we say

—NALC President
Brian L. Renfroe

HELL
NO!

”

—PAGES 4-8

**FIGHT
LIKE HELL!**



Tell Congress to support our priority legislation

NALC's Legislative Action Center is where letter carriers can access the information and tools necessary to educate lawmakers on our issues and priority legislation. You can find out who your representative and senators are, what bills are most pressing, and useful background information.

- Join together with thousands of other letter carriers to take action on the issues that matter most to us
- Find your representatives and senators, and contact them
- Learn more about the bills in the House and Senate that are being monitored by NALC
- Access NALC's fact sheets on our priority issues and legislation



Scan the QR code to go to the NALC
Legislative Action Center or go to [nalc.org/
government-affairs/legislative-action-center](http://nalc.org/government-affairs/legislative-action-center)



You are our strongest asset



Brian L. Renfro

The cover story of this month's magazine details NALC's intense and ultimately successful battle in the budget reconciliation process that unfolded over the last several months. Though last month's enactment of the One Big Beautiful Bill Act, which prioritizes corporations and the wealthiest Americans while gutting working families, is not something to celebrate, the accomplishment of letter carriers in fending off numerous attacks from every angle is historic and noteworthy.

From severe threats to our retirement benefits and contribution rates to proposals to slow

down the much-needed modernization of the Postal Service's vehicle fleet and general anti-labor measures, threats to our futures, safety and security were on the line.

Each time a new threat emerged, NALC issued a call to action, and every time, our members overwhelmingly answered the call. Thousands of NALC members wrote to or called their members of Congress, asking them to oppose and remove every provision targeting letter carriers. When you send a letter, email or make a call to your representatives, it can feel like it goes into a void where your voice isn't heard.

But rest assured, Capitol Hill heard letter carriers. Together, NALC achieved what almost no other union or special interest group could—coming out of this process unscathed with everything intact.

Our members' consistent action, coupled with our strong bipartisan relationships in Washington, made this possible. I would like to sincerely thank every NALC member who reached out to their lawmakers. You were part of our fight, and you are part of our success.

On page 4, you can read more about all that we protected our members from. Our success is nothing short of remarkable, and I am incredibly proud of our members for uniting and fighting like hell until the very end.

With this year's reconciliation battle behind us, now is not the time to let up. The process is set to start again later this year for Fiscal Year 2026, and we expect to see many of the same misguided ideas that aim to cut our benefits, reduce our take-home pay, and weaken our rights as a union.

All the while, NALC still has a robust legislative agenda that we are constantly working to build support for and advance.

A major piece of that agenda is the Protect Our Letter Carriers Act (H.R. 1065/S. 463). Introduced for the first time last Congress, this bipartisan bill would deter the violent assaults and crimes increasingly being committed against letter carriers on the job. The bill would address the root of the problem by providing funding for modernized locks, keys and collection boxes; by directing district attorneys to prioritize cases involving the assault of a postal employee; and by standardizing sentencing guidelines for those found guilty of committing these crimes.

The safety of letter carriers always comes first. Even an assault of a single letter carrier is one too many. These abhorrent, violent crimes used to be rare, but in the last five years, they have increased by a shocking amount.

“While we successfully shielded ourselves from unprecedented attacks in budget reconciliation, there is still more to do.”

I am writing this article a week before I am scheduled to testify before the House Committee on Oversight and Government Reform at a hearing focused on mail theft and crime. While I cannot predict how the hearing will unfold, NALC's message will be clear: Protecting America's mail starts with protecting the letter carriers who deliver it. The Postal Service's universal service obligation and the security and safe delivery of America's mail are great responsibilities that we proudly bear. But we can't succeed if we aren't protected. We will continue to urge Congress to pass the Protect Our Letter Carriers Act. Check nalc.org and the next issue of the magazine for more details about the hearing.

Now is the time to build on our momentum. While we successfully shielded ourselves from unprecedented attacks in budget reconciliation, there is still more to do. Please stay engaged and continue to answer NALC's calls to action as they come. During this month's congressional recess, schedule district meetings with your representatives and senators to ask for their support. Thank those who support us and continue building those strong relationships. Our members are our strongest asset on Capitol Hill, so please make sure your legislators hear from you and understand everything that's at stake.

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read 'Brian Renfro'.



National Association of Letter Carriers, AFL-CIO

Since 1889, representing city letter carriers employed by the United States Postal Service.

100 Indiana Ave. NW
Washington, DC 20001-2144
202-393-4695 | nalc.org

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South Carolina)
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Marietta, GA 30067
678-942-5295

Region 10: SHAWN BOYD
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281-540-5627

Region 11: MARK CAMILLI
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2500 W. Erie Ave.
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440-282-4340

Region 12: BRIAN THOMPSON
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New Jersey)
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Region 13: VADA E. PRESTON
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SW Connecticut, Puerto Rico,
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347 W. 41st St., Suite 102
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212-868-0284

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Light notes from the postal beat



Philip Dine

Since you'll read this in August, typically the year's hottest month, no heavy fare here in the form of theory, analysis or grammatical tips to weigh you down. Rather, a trio of simple tales that perhaps reflect something about you, our union, this magazine and labor history.

Philip Whitman of Newport News, VA Branch 609 called to ask whether he'd missed any recent magazines, an inquiry that took on added meaning as we spoke. A devotee of postal history, he's made it a mission to ensure that the branch is well-stocked with back issues of *The Postal Record*—even building shelves in the union office to house them.

Between the office and his home, he has magazines dating to the early 1900s, and some from the 1800s. If an officer needs to know, for example, how a postal matter was handled in March 1925, he wants that information to be readily accessible to them.

Phil, who spent seven years in the Army, divided between Virginia, South Korea and West Germany, before joining the Postal Service in 1978 and carrying mail for 28 years, folded the above-mentioned tasks into his service as branch treasurer and on the newsletter under the presidency of Tommy Moore, who gave Phil "free range" to pursue postal history.

"He was like an historian for us," current Branch 609 President Quetcy Aviles says. "When new people would come in, he would talk to them about the history of the Post Office."

A decade ago, concerned about gaps in the collection, Philip reached out to carriers through the Branch Items, asking that anyone with extra *Postal Record* copies send them to him, and offering to reimburse them for the postage.

The response astonished him.

"I got a few hundred from around the country, and do you know that nobody would accept reimbursement? They just put them in a box and sent them," he recalls. "But that's the NALC for you. It's a fantastic organization."

Alerting us to media reports that merit attention helps us in many ways, including keeping journalists in line. Chris Paige of Racine, WI Branch 436 did just that, mailing us a commentary piece in a local publication. "It screams [out for] some type of response," Chris wrote.

Indeed, while such columns typically extol the virtue of a robust Postal Service in keeping local newspapers and magazines afloat and residents thereby informed, this publisher focused on cost-cutting, asking readers, "[Would] you

be amenable to getting your mail on Tuesdays, Thursdays and Saturdays, and I'll get mine on Monday, Wednesday and Friday?"

In a subsequent call, Chris said, "I get kind of irritated when I see articles that put down the Post Office or say it isn't needed anymore. Well, it is!" Let's just say that we're in contact with this publisher.

The call also provided some breaking news. After 35 years delivering mail and a stint as vice president, Chris recently retired. Thankfully, he remains branch scribe, with his interest in writing reflected in other ways as well. In January 2021, we cited Chris's letter to the editor about Santa's "busy crew standing by" to answer children's letters, adding that "a merry band of elves will always take stragglers up until Christmas!"

By letter, David Lasley, a retired carrier from Abraham Lincoln Merged Branch 80 in Springfield, IL, discussed the annual Mother Jones Dinner set for October. David, I learned, is secretary of the Springfield-based Mother Jones Foundation—which honors the fearless woman who fought for coal miners nationwide, and which also raises money to buy labor history books for Illinois school libraries.

"On behalf of the foundation and myself," David added, "I thank you for the article on Mother Jones in *The Postal Record*, June 2025." (Kudos to staff writer Rick, whose story initiated our monthly series on historic labor leaders.)

By phone, I learned that David delivered mail from 1976 to 2015, served as branch president and was "Dick Durbin's mailman," referring to the Senate's No. 2 Democrat. Small world: David, who's been involved with the Mother Jones Foundation for nearly its entire four decades, reminded me that I spoke at the 2009 annual event.

Branch officer Susie Jackson cited David's "awesome" work with local youngsters, including as longtime Santa Claus at the union's Kids' Christmas Party (our second winter mention; maybe a wishful counter to DC's stifling heat). "He talks to them by name, asks them questions, mentions their brothers and sisters," she says. "They are just in awe. They believe he is the real thing." Susie would know; as branch treasurer the past 30 years, she's run the children's party that whole time.

EDITORIAL STAFF:
Director of Communications and Media Relations Philip Dine
Managing Editor Mike Shea
Writer/Editor Rick Hodges
Writer/Editor Jenessa Wagner
Editorial Assistant Sarah Eccleston

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News from Washington

Budget reconciliation package signed into law; NALC activism removes threats to letter carriers from the bill

On July 4, President Trump signed the One Big Beautiful Bill Act into law. In a legislative process that spanned months, the enactment marked the culmination of a lengthy fight in the budget-reconciliation process, where letter carriers remained focused, united and on message—and ultimately emerged victorious.

Under a trifecta (single-party control of the White House, House and Senate), lawmakers used a process known as budget reconciliation. This allowed Republican lawmakers to bypass Democratic opposition to advance President Trump's comprehensive tax, immigration, energy and health care agenda.

The One Big Beautiful Bill Act is estimated to increase the deficit by \$3.3 trillion over 10 years and cost \$507.6 billion over the same time. While the measure claims to cut government spending, it allocates billions of dollars for border security, immigration enforcement and defense, and makes permanent President Trump's 2017 tax cuts while extending corporate tax breaks. Additionally, it limits eligibility and funding for Medicaid, student loan repayments and clean energy tax credits.

This massive piece of legislation was more than 800 pages. Throughout the process, it went through many iterations. Meanwhile, buried in the package were massive threats to letter carriers. These attacks would have had severe consequences for current and future letter carriers. NALC identified these threats from the outset and made it clear that we would not accept anything that harmed our members.

For letter carriers, the fight began in April when the Republican-supported House budget resolution, which passed earlier this year, tasked the House Committee on Oversight and Government Reform with cutting \$50 billion in spending. As anticipated, the committee immediately focused on federal employees' retirement benefits to identify potential savings.

On April 30, the committee advanced a package that included three provisions attacking letter carriers' retirement benefits and pay. The committee called for:

- increasing the Federal Employees Retirement System (FERS) contribution rate for existing employees,
- eliminating the FERS Special Annuity Supplement, and
- calculating annuities based on a high-5 average salary instead of a high-3.

Combined, these provisions would have had devastating effects on letter carrier retirement benefits and take-home pay.

All committee members voted with their party, except Rep. Mike Turner (R-OH), who joined Democrats in opposing the measure. "I believe that making changes to pension retirement benefits in the middle of someone's employment is wrong," he said. "Employee benefits are not a gift. They are earned," he said at the markup.

NALC members quickly answered the call to action, and thousands of letter carriers contacted their representatives, telling them to remove these provisions. At the same time, NALC President Brian L. Renfroe participated in a Capitol Hill roundtable to emphasize the severity of these attacks.

"Our members are public servants who provide an essential service for every single American household and business," Renfroe said at the event. "Our members go into public service because it's a good, stable job with reliable benefits. Cutting retirement benefits and increasing what we have to pay for is unconscionable, and let's call it what it is—a pay cut."

Renfroe then emphasized that taxpayers do not fund letter carrier retirement benefits or the Postal Service: "The agency is off budget. Lawmakers are trying to use hardworking letter carriers and postal employees to offset federal spending, even though taxpayers' dollars have nothing to do with us."

NALC members' activism, coupled with our union's efforts in Washington, DC, resulted in the removal of two of these provisions from the first House-passed package. While the blanket FERS contribution increase and the high-5 annuity calculation were removed, a sweeping House package passed in the House by one vote that included the elimination of the FERS Special Annuity Supplement, a crucial benefit for FERS-covered employees who retire before becoming Social Security eligible at age 62. Other anti-labor provisions, which would not have directly affected letter carriers but set a dangerous precedent, also passed in the House. These included forcing new federal hires to choose between at-will employment or an increased FERS contribution and imposing a fee for Merit Systems Protection Board claims and appeals.

Immediately after House passage on May 22, all eyes turned to the Senate. NALC utilized every possible resource

to ensure that the Senate would not eliminate the FERS Special Annuity Supplement. In this process, Republicans were the only lawmakers with any say or control, so NALC's strong bipartisan relationships became as important as ever.

First, NALC worked with Rep. Brian Fitzpatrick (R-PA), a longtime friend of letter carriers. Rep. Fitzpatrick helped produce a letter to Majority Leader John Thune (R-SD) and Senate Committee on Finance Chairman Mike Crapo (R-ID) urging the Senate not to decrease postal employee retirement benefits.

With Rep. Fitzpatrick leading, 16 other House Republicans signed the letter. Reps. Pete Stauber (R-MN), Don Bacon (R-NE), Nick Langworthy (R-NY), Nick LaLota (R-NY), Nicole Malliotakis (R-NY), Jack Bergman (R-MI), Young Kim (R-CA), Rob Bresnahan (R-PA), Michael Lawler (R-NY), Andrew Garbarino (R-NY), Mike Bost (R-IL), Thomas Kean (R-NJ), David Valadao (R-CA), Maria Elvira Salazar (R-FL), Christopher Smith (R-NJ) and Jeff Van Drew (R-NJ) stood with letter carriers at this critical time.

Simultaneously, President Renfro was meeting with House and Senate Republican leaders to make it clear that we opposed this provision and any measure that targeted letter carriers. He cautioned that any package that harmed letter carriers in any way would not be tolerated.

These tactics, along with NALC members continuing to contact their senators, were successful. The Senate never included in any proposal the elimination of the FERS Special Annuity Supplement. However, new attacks were on the horizon.

As Senate committees began the same process that took place in the House and sought their route to spending cuts, Senate Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs Committee Chairman Rand Paul (R-KY) decided to target electric postal vehicles. He proposed rescinding any unspent funds designated for USPS electric vehicles (EVs) and requiring the agency to sell all its EVs and associated infrastructure. This ridiculous idea was dead on arrival. NALC immediately shut it down, and it was quickly removed.

With this victory behind us, the fight was still far from over. Next, Chairman Paul called for increasing the FERS contribution rate to a staggering 15.6 percent for all postal employees hired after Jan. 1, 2026. This percentage contribution would have significantly reduced the take-home pay of future letter carriers. For the last time in this months-long battle, NALC members activated and contacted their senators. Before the Senate voted on its final package, this attack was removed.

Once the bill passed in the Senate on July 1, the House passed the same bill 48 hours later, sending it to President Trump's desk by his self-imposed July 4 deadline.

While the fight was long, difficult and unpredictable, NALC ultimately had all threats directly targeting letter carriers removed from the final bill.

"Letter carriers' activism and NALC's strong bipartisan relationships helped us defeat devastating provisions for current and future letter carriers," President Renfro said. "We successfully delivered a powerful message to Capitol Hill. When lawmakers come

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**HELL
NO!**

after our 295,000 members' jobs, retirements and futures, we say 'Hell no!'

"While the White House and some in Congress may claim victory following the law's enactment, the real victory is NALC fending off innumerable attacks on our retirement benefits, the postal vehicles we desperately need, and anti-labor measures in a massive bill that guts working families," Renfroe said.

While the law undoubtedly has harmful provisions, the fact that letter carriers emerge largely unscathed is a significant accomplishment that would not have been possible without the dedicated activism of our members.

"The final results are a powerful reminder of what's possible when our union comes together and fights like hell for what is best for every letter carrier," Renfroe added.

Even as NALC celebrates the success of our activism, congressional leadership has indicated that they expect to restart the reconciliation process in the fall for the upcoming fiscal year. As always, NALC knows that budget hawks tend to look for cost savings first in federal employee benefits. Even though we collectively shut down these backward ideas, it does not mean we will not see them again. Unfortunately, putting budget savings on the backs of federal and postal employees is not a new idea, and it is one that will almost certainly resurface.

"We have a blueprint in place, know our unified strength, and we won't back down," Renfroe said. "NALC members are prepared to fight like hell to protect each other every day."

Reading the tea leaves on recent federal employee attacks

NALC has closely monitored the unprecedented attacks on our fellow federal unions, which started this winter with an executive order from the White House that revoked collective-bargaining rights at more than 22 federal agencies. Federal unions affected by this action fought it, and last month, the Supreme Court issued a decision upholding the administration's authority to this executive order.

An attack on one is an attack on all. While we stand in solidarity with other federal employees affected by this attack, we must also stand ready. These blatant attacks could be replicated at other federal agencies, including the Postal Service, posing serious threats to our union's right to exist.

Below is a timeline of the American Federation of Government Employees' fight over Executive Order 14210, which uses reductions in force (better known as RIF) to shrink the size of federal agencies. **PR**

Feb. 11	President Trump issues Executive Order 14210
May 1	AFGE filed a motion for a TRO and preliminary injunction requesting the Administration be blocked from implementing EO 14210
May 7	Administration filed an opposition to AFGE's request for a TRO and preliminary injunction
May 9	Judge grants a temporary restraining order to pause the implementation of EO 14210
May 22	Judge grants AFGE's request for a preliminary injunction, stopping the Administration's RIFs and reorganization across 22 federal agencies. The administration would need Congressional approval to carry out the changes, and neither the president nor the agencies have the statutory authority presently.
May 23	Administration filed a notice of appeal (later dismissed when the 9 th circuit denied the stay)
May 30	9th Circuit denied administration's request to stay the injunction
June 2	Administration applied for Supreme Court to stay the injunction
June 13	Judge included the State Department's RIFs in the injunction
July 8	The Supreme Court issued a stay on a preliminary injunction which barred the administration from implementing Executive Order 14210. This permits the administration to execute widespread RIFs impacting 22 agencies while the litigation proceeds on the merits. SCOTUS' very brief opinion did not comment on whether the RIFs are lawful but did note EO 14210 is likely to be lawful. It was an 8-1 decision with Judge Jackson dissenting and Judge Sotomayor concurring in the majority.

Stay engaged as members of Congress head home for August recess

Attacks on letter carriers, other federal workers, unions and the Postal Service have come from all angles this year. Whether from the White House dangling an executive order to restructure the Postal Service, Congress coming after our retirement benefits, private shippers' influence on the postmaster general selection, or other forces, serious threats have been a constant this year. Despite what may feel like infinite attacks, NALC members have repeatedly risen to the moment and united to fight like hell.

While many battles have been waged in Washington, DC, such as our recent fight in budget reconciliation (see page 4), this month the struggle heads home as members of Congress return to their states and districts during the August congressional recess. Many will hold town hall meetings or other events, or will be available to meet with constituents in person.

Now is the time for letter carriers to tell them, face to face, why they must support a strong, public Postal Service that protects letter carriers and all postal employees.

As our union continues confronting the challenges from a hostile administration, a Congress eagerly following its lead and a new postmaster general handpicked by postal competitors, it's never been more necessary for every carrier to be informed and involved.

"As members of Congress head home for recess this month, they need to hear from you," NALC President Brian L. Renfroe said. "Your job, retirement, benefits and union rights depend on it. Our union is no stranger to struggles, and we are undoubtedly facing some of the most significant ones in our history."



Photo by Cade Martin, Dawn Arlotta, USDCDP

Everything you need to get started is in NALC's Legislative Action Center at nalc.org/action. Use the "Legislator Look Up" tab to enter your ZIP Code and find your members of Congress. Once you have identified your lawmakers, call, email or write to their district office to schedule a meeting. Also, be on the lookout for local information to see if your members of Congress are hosting town halls or other public events in August.

Next, navigate to the "Home" tab on the website, where you can scroll to find NALC's fact sheets. There, you will find more information about all of NALC's priority bills and resolutions.

NALC's legislative agenda includes:

- **H.Res. 70/S.Res. 147**, a resolution in the House and Senate that calls for not privatizing USPS. While it doesn't have the force of law, gathering co-sponsors sends a strong message that privatization efforts would face vigorous opposition. Thanks to the efforts of letter carriers con-

Take advantage of town hall meetings or other events to interact with your members of Congress.

tacting their members, H.Res. 70 currently has 218 co-sponsors (a majority of House members), and S. Res. 147 has seven co-sponsors.

- **Protect Our Letter Carriers Act (H.R. 1065/S. 463)**, a bill that would take concrete steps to protect carriers from assaults and other crimes while on their routes. At press time, the House version had 133 co-sponsors; the Senate version had seven co-sponsors.
- **Federal Retirement Fairness Act (H.R. 1522)**, a bill that would give credit toward retirement benefits for the years a career carrier worked as a city carrier assistant (CCA), transitional employee (TE), casual or other non-career status. The bill had 102 co-sponsors at press time.

No one can explain the vital role of letter carriers better than NALC members. When meeting with members of Congress, make sure they know who we are. There is so much to highlight.

Remind them that almost a quarter of letter carriers are veterans. Explain that we do much more than deliver the mail. We serve as eyes and ears of American communities, keeping them safer and often being the first to step in and help when something is wrong. Mention that we are community leaders, leading the Stamp Out Hunger Food Drive, the largest one-day food drive in the country, for more than 30 years.

Regardless of whom you meet with and what state or district they represent, their constituents undoubtedly rely on the universal service letter carriers dutifully provide. Remind them that we are the ones who uphold this mission by getting the job done every day, whatever the challenges. Putting a face and personal con-

nection to the work and critical service letter carriers provide is invaluable.

When members of Congress hear directly from you about your work, who we are, what issues matter to letter carriers, and why a strong Postal Service is essential, our impact grows.

NALC's activism is important because we know that it works. Recent victories are evidence. Our collective action led to the historic enactment of the Postal Service Reform Act in 2022 and the Social Security Fairness Act earlier this year. Fending off numerous attacks in this year's reconciliation process would not have been possible without letter carriers coming together and contacting their lawmakers. And while we were successful this time, we know we will have to fight this battle again.

Congressional leaders have indicated that they plan to start the reconciliation process again this fall for the upcoming fiscal year. While we cannot predict what ideas will surface, threats to letter carriers in some form will almost certainly be proposed. While lawmakers are home this month, now is the time to remind them that spending cuts cannot be made at the expense of letter carriers' benefits, pay and rights.

That is why this August is one of the most important summer recesses in a generation.

"Ask your members of Congress to oppose proposals that harm letter carriers or the Postal Service," Renfroe said. "Ask them to support our agenda. And don't forget to thank the legislators who already support us.

"Whether it's attending a town hall, contacting your members of Congress about our priorities, or contributing to the Letter Carrier Political Fund, I urge every letter carrier to stand together and fight like hell!" **PR**

By making a contribution to the Letter Carrier Political Fund, you are doing so voluntarily with the understanding that your contribution is not a condition of membership in the National Association of Letter Carriers or of employment by the Postal Service, nor is it part of union dues. You have a right to refuse to contribute without any reprisal. Any guideline amounts are merely suggestions, and you may contribute more or less than the guidelines suggest and the union will not favor or disadvantage you by reason of the amount of your contribution or your decision not to contribute. The Letter Carrier Political Fund will use the money it receives to contribute to candidates for federal office and undertake other political spending as permitted by law. Your selection shall remain in full force and effect until canceled. Contributions to the Letter Carrier Political Fund are not deductible for federal income tax purposes. Federal law prohibits the Letter Carrier Political Fund from soliciting contributions from individuals who are not NALC members, executive and administrative staff or their families. Any contribution received from such an individual will be refunded to that contributor. Federal law requires us to use our best efforts to collect and report the name, mailing address, name of employer and occupation of individuals whose contributions exceed \$200 in a calendar year.

Understanding branch elections

NALC is a democratic union, meaning that the members are the ones who vote to decide who leads them.

While every NALC branch must hold an election to vote on the officers of the branch, it can be difficult, especially for new officers or new members, to understand exactly how a branch must run an election.

“There are a lot of rules and regulations that branch officers and/or members of the election committee who conduct branch elections must follow,” NALC Executive Vice President Paul Barner said. He regularly teaches branch officers training courses that include sections on conducting branch elections to help make branch officers aware of the requirements.

“NALC has put together comprehensive and easy-to-follow materials to help make this process a little easier,” Barner said. The main resource is the *NALC Regulations Governing Branch Election Procedures (RGBEP)*. It is available for download at nalc.org/union-administration/secretary-treasurer/election-information and for order through the NALC Supply Department.

“Please use this handbook as a reference guide when holding your next branch election,” Barner said. “It has the detailed information to make sure you do your election the right way.”

The following article touches on some of the basic rules and regulations from that guide, but it is not comprehensive and should not be used in place of that guide.

What governs the election?

The *NALC Constitution*, in line with the Labor Management Reporting and

Disclosure Act (LMRDA) of 1959, has provisions governing how a branch must conduct an election. Those provisions are contained in Article 5 of the *Constitution for the Government of Subordinate and Federal Branches (CGSFB)*, which is available at nalc.org/constitution.

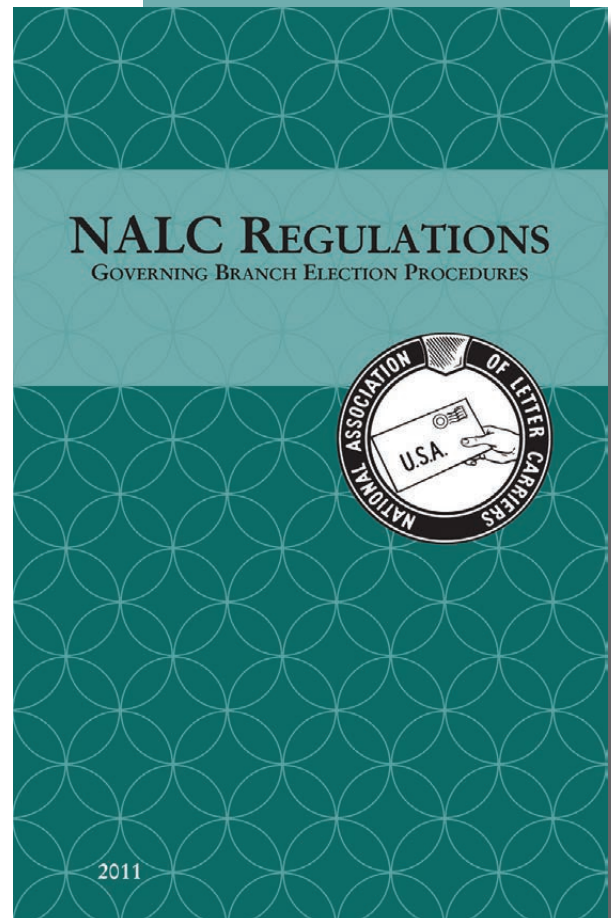
Who gets elected?

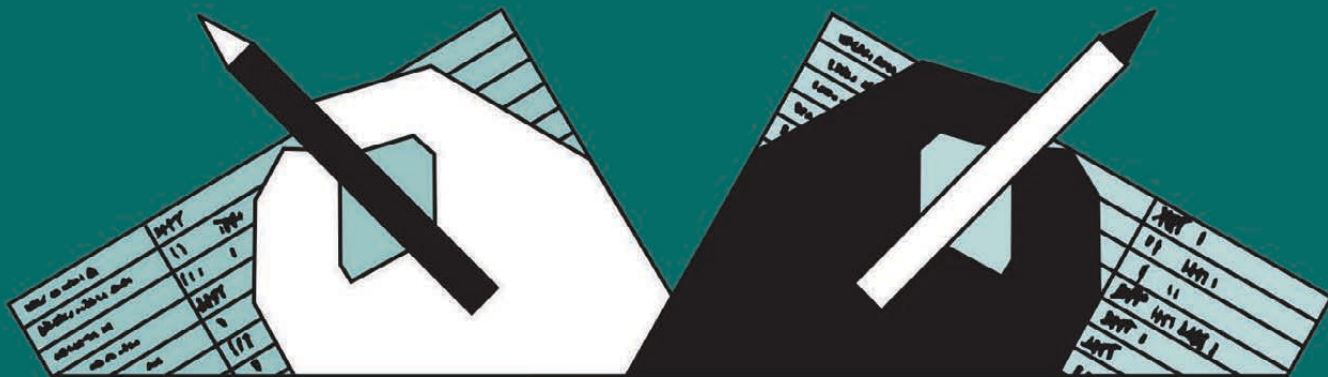
The LMRDA states that all local union officers must be elected, including the branch president, vice president, secretary, treasurer and trustees. It can sometimes mean stewards and other positions, such as newsletter editor, but not always. That being said, Article 4 of the *CGSFB* lists the minimally required positions that branches must elect. It notes that branches can combine positions, provided it is specified in the branch bylaws.

So how can a branch know whether an office is an elected position?

The Department of Labor states that any person who has executive or policymaking authority or responsibility must be elected by the entire branch membership.

As for stewards, the *CGSFB* in Article 6 provides that they can be elected by the entire branch membership, elected at the station they represent, or appointed by the branch president. Only





stewards who have been elected by the entire branch membership can serve in a policymaking role for the branch.

Delegates to national and state conventions are decided by branch election, too.

When do elections take place?

An NALC branch must hold elections for officers at least every three years but can hold them every year or every other year, as specified by the branch bylaws.

How do branches notify the members?

The branch's recording secretary must notify all members of the branch in writing by mail as to when and where the nominations and election will be held. The notice must be mailed to each member at least 10 days before nominations and at least 45 days before the election. This ensures that all regular members have enough time to nominate candidates of their choice.

The branch can do this by mailing a notice to all members; sending it to *The Postal Record* for publication in the Election Notices section; or publishing it on the front page of the branch's newsletter or other state or branch publication that is mailed to each member.

To fulfill the 45-day time requirement, branches should send the notice to *The Postal Record* office at least four months prior to the election date.

Posting the notice on station bulletin boards does not satisfy the requirement, but can be a good additional

way to inform members about the elections.

The notice must state:

- The offices to be filled and length of term for each office.
- The date, time, place and methods for submitting nominations.
- The date, time, place and methods for the election.
- Who can request an absentee ballot, where such requests must be received, and when requests must be made. Absentee ballots must be requested after nominations have been closed, but at least two weeks before the election.
- If branch bylaws provide that certain officers will be convention delegates by virtue of their office, the notice must inform the membership of this provision.

What is the nomination procedure?

Nominations should be held at least four weeks before the election and at least 10 days after the notice of nominations and elections has been sent out.

Each regular member has the right to nominate a candidate for any office or position to be filled. All nominations must be made at a regular or special meeting of the branch, unless branch bylaws provide that nominations may be made in writing. A branch may provide in its bylaws that nominations may be made in writing, with the nominations to be received by the secretary not less than 30 days before the date of the election.

If the nominations are made at a branch meeting, nominations should

be a separate order of business, with each member present having the opportunity to make nominations before nominations for each office are closed.

Branches, at their option, may require all candidates for office or delegate to be present at the meeting when nominated or signify in writing their willingness to serve if elected. If a nominee is not present at the meeting, written acceptance is permissible, provided the branch bylaws include such a provision. However, branches are cautioned that nominees who are unavoidably detained must be given a reasonable amount of time to accept the nomination, even if the bylaws don't provide for written acceptance.

Self-nomination is permissible. No one can accept nomination for more than one office. Upon nomination, every nominee must certify that they have not applied for a supervisory position or served in such capacity (including as a 204-b) in the 24 months prior to being nominated.

If there is only one nominee for any office, the president may declare that person elected.

What is the election committee?

The election committee is a group of members appointed by the branch president (or other body if specified in the branch bylaws) that conducts and supervises all aspects of the election.

The recording secretary gives the election committee a list of all the nominees for all offices. The committee must determine the eligibility of these nominees. Meanwhile, the financial secretary must make all records available to the committee.

The financial secretary also must prepare an alphabetical list of all regular members eligible to vote. If voting is both at stations and a branch meeting, the list(s) should be prepared alphabetically by the stations where members will be voting.

The election committee prepares the ballots and can list candidates on the ballot using any method, provided that no candidate is unfairly promoted or disadvantaged.

The election must be by secret ballot.

According to the *RGBEP*, “A secret ballot election is one of the most—if not the most—important provisions of LMRDA. Branches must make any and all necessary arrangements to guarantee that no one can observe members voting.”

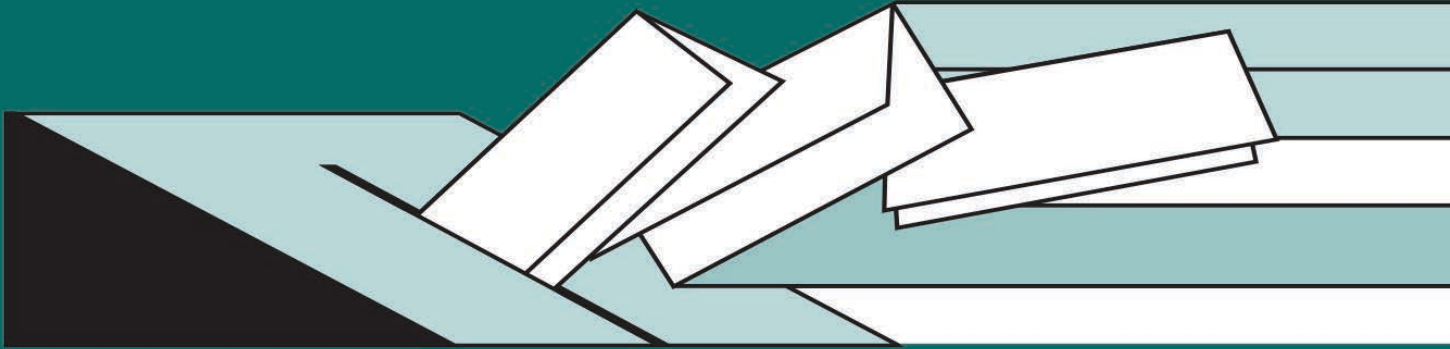
What are the branch's responsibilities during the campaign?

During the campaign, the branch must treat all candidates equally; any and all privileges extended to one candidate by the branch must be extended to all candidates.

The *RGBEP* warns, “The Department of Labor scrutinizes this aspect of elections very closely and will set aside elections based upon even minor violations.”

A branch must honor all reasonable requests to distribute campaign literature at a candidate's expense. Treating all candidates the same by refusing to distribute campaign literature does not fulfill the intent of the law.

The *RGBEP* states, “In order to avoid complaints of unequal treatment, branches should advise all candidates



in advance of the conditions under which it will distribute literature, and should promptly advise all candidates of any changes in those conditions.”

A branch can neither censor campaign literature nor require that branch representatives be permitted to read the literature before it is distributed.

A branch may not use branch dues, assessments or similar levies, or contribute anything of value to promote one candidate over another or to discriminate against any candidate. Branch funds, however, may be used for all notices and for all other expenses necessary for conducting the election.

“A branch is absolutely prohibited from criticizing or endorsing any candidate in a union-financed newspaper, publication, or letter,” according to the *RGBEP*.

However, publication of information sheets with biographical data is permissible, provided that all candidates are given equal opportunity to submit data and that the data for each candidate are given equal space and prominence. Similarly, providing newsletter space for candidates to present their views is permissible, provided that all candidates are given an equal opportunity to submit their statements and are given equal space and prominence in the branch newsletter.

Branch officers and candidates may not campaign on union time. Branch officers and candidates may not use branch funds, employees, office space, telephones, facilities, equipment or materials to campaign. And no campaigning is allowed within a polling place during voting.

Each candidate is entitled to have an observer present during the following election procedures:

- Preparation and mailing of ballots in mail ballot elections.
- Receipt and opening of ballots at each polling place.
- Counting, tallying and totaling of ballots.
- Recording of tally sheets.

How is voting at branch meetings handled?

During an in-person election, the election committee must write the total number of ballots on the voting register at the time of actual balloting. All voters must identify themselves before receiving a ballot. Upon receiving the ballot, the voter must sign the register of eligible voters.

The election committee must promptly send absentee ballots to all eligible members who request them, along with instructions, a ballot, a secret ballot envelope, and a prepaid, business reply or stamped envelope.

The register of voters, unused ballots and the ballot box containing marked ballots must always be under the supervision of the election committee.

Each candidate must be allowed to challenge the eligibility of any voter. Challenges should be handled in accordance with the regulations set forth in the *RGBEP*.

How is balloting by mail handled?

If your branch votes by mail, many of the election provisions are similar to voting at branch meetings. However, there are some unique requirements that branches should understand.

At least 20 days before the pre-announced election date (i.e., the date by

which ballots must be received in order to be counted), the election committee must mail First Class to all eligible members at each member's last known home address the following:

- Instructions for voting and the deadline for returning marked ballots First Class
- A ballot
- A plain envelope marked "Secret Ballot Envelope"
- A prepaid, business reply or stamped envelope, addressed to the election committee at a post office box, with a space for the member's signature, unless the branch uses an alternative identifier on the reply envelope to verify the eligibility of the voter

More information can be found in Chapter 14 of the *RGBEP*.

How are the ballots counted?

The election committee must carefully count the ballots, including absentee ballots, in accordance with the following rules:

- If a voter has signed their name on the ballot, the entire ballot is void.
- Write-in votes must not be counted. However, a write-in vote does not invalidate the rest of the ballot.
- If a voter has incorrectly voted for more than one candidate for an office, the ballot is void only for the offices incorrectly marked.
- The election committee must count the number of used and unused ballots and the number of members who voted, and it must write these numbers on the voting register.

- After the election, the committee must deliver all election records to the recording secretary. The election records include:
- All used, unused, spoiled, void and challenged ballots
- Eligibility lists
- Voting registers
- Mail ballot or absentee ballot envelopes
- Tally sheets

All election records must be preserved for one year, or in the case of an appeal, until after the final adjudication of an appeal if longer than one year.

How are the results reported?

The election committee must report the results of the election to the membership by:

- posting the information at all stations, or
- publishing the results in the branch newspaper, or
- in some other appropriate manner.

However, the work of the election committee isn't done, as the committee must deal with any appeals. For details on the appeals procedure, see the *RGBEP*.

"NALC is committed to the idea that fair, honest and open elections are vital to a democratic union and essential to the long-term health of the National Association of Letter Carriers," NALC President Brian L. Renfroe said. "By properly conducting branch elections, you will help preserve and strengthen the NALC's well-deserved reputation as one of the most democratic unions in America." **PR**

One carrier's interest in postal history reveals neighborhood's shared past



One of Kalani Han's exhibits on the history of the Ravenswood neighborhood

Kalani Han, a Chicago, IL Branch 11 letter carrier, has always had an interest in history, particularly architectural history. So, when he had the opportunity to explore the history of the Ravenswood neighborhood post office that he worked at, he dived in.

"The project was pretty much just kind of born out of curiosity," Han said. He researched the topic for about a year, then created two exhibits at his post office after his post office manager accepted his proposal.

"It was a massive undertaking," he said.

Han used information from the Chicago Public Library's Northside Neighborhood History Collection and the post office's own digitized historical records. His research involved looking through digitized newspapers, finding antiques in his post office, scouring the internet for artifacts, and even interviewing a longtime letter carrier.

For hours, he combed through pages and pages of eBay listings in search of physical relics of the past. His search yielded a lantern used at one of the first Ravenswood post office locations, postmarked letters from the late 1800s through the 1950s, stamps, tools, a 1970s clock, registered mail from the 1930s and old photographs.

As important as the physical items are, to further educate and explain the items' significance, Han created infographics.

He found out that while the current post office had only been there since the 1970s, a post office had existed in Ravenswood for more than 150 years. In the spring of 1869, the Ravenswood settlement was so small that a resident began all the sorting and distributing of the mail from his living room. Soon after, the first physical post office was

established in a small corner of the neighborhood's train station. Trains were a big part of the mail system at that time, so the location made it easy to send and receive mail from across the country.

The post office was ahead of its time. While USPS did not appoint a female postmaster general until 2015, Ravenswood elected its first female postmaster in 1887. Due to the station's popularity and the neighborhood's quick growth, the post office expanded and moved across the street to a two-story wooden building around the same time.

The Ravenswood neighborhood was originally part of the Township of Lake View and didn't become part of Chicago until 1889, the same year in which NALC was organized. Due to restructuring, the post office became referred to as "Station X," losing its identity as the Ravenswood neighborhood post office.

In one infographic, Han wrote, "It marked more than a bureaucratic change—it marked the end of local identity. For residents, it symbolized a broader reality—their suburb was no longer distinct, but part of a standardized system where individuality gave way to the needs of a growing metropolis."

Only 10 years later, the name "Ravenswood Station" was restored, and in 1901 postal operations in the neighborhood moved to the Ravenswood Exchange Bank building, "marking a new chapter in the neighborhood's postal history—one rooted again in place, not just protocol," Han wrote. The new location reflected Ravenswood's status as a place where business and mail went hand in hand. This time the railroad came to the post office, when a new

stop opened only steps away.

A new Ravenswood post office was built in 1910. It had skylights, tiled floors and dedicated areas for letter carriers. It was called by its postmaster at the time “the most modern post office in America.”

Despite its praise, 11 years later, in 1921, when the borders of the Chicago neighborhood were redrawn, the post office relocated to a new building. The area that had been the Ravenswood neighborhood was divided and absorbed into three of the newly drawn neighborhoods, causing it to be “quietly erased,” as Han wrote in one infographic. The station was relocated again in 1948, as well as in the 1970s to its current location.

“I realized it’s more than just a story about the post office,” Han said. “It’s really about community and resilience, identity.”

Even though the neighborhood has changed throughout the years, Han says the post office “helped build the community and preserve its identity.”

Han used his knowledge and research to create a second display, which celebrated the Ravenswood post office’s ZIP Code Day on June 6, 2025—the date that matches up to its ZIP Code, 60625. The post office held an event that 250 members of the community attended, featuring a temporary exhibit that Han put together.

“By the end of the day, customers were wishing each other happy ZIP Code Day,” he told USPS Link. “That moment of connection, of shared civic joy—that’s what the whole project was about.”

Though the Ravenswood local postal history exhibit will be a permanent fixture in the post office, the ZIP Code Day exhibit will be periodically



switched out to share information about other ZIP Codes in the area.

Han has enjoyed learning about the post office and said that he hopes it “inspires other people to get curious about the world around them.”

“[History] can be boring, but if you find an interesting piece and communicate it in a digestible and interesting way, it can be pretty powerful,” Han said. **PR**

Above: Kalani Han

Below: A display that was part of the ZIP Code Day exhibit



Grievance arbitration procedure

The National Agreement between NALC and the Postal Service sets the terms and conditions that the parties have agreed will govern the workplace for city carriers. Despite the agreement between NALC and USPS, occasionally these rights and benefits become the subject of dispute between NALC members and postal management.

“To best enforce these rights, all letter carriers, including city carrier assistants and part-time flexibles, should understand the grievance procedure and how it works,” NALC President Brian L. Renfroe said.

Article 15 of the National Agreement lays out the grievance-arbitration procedure that is used to resolve contractual disputes. Though the process includes several steps, it is designed to resolve disputes and grievances at the lowest possible step. Understanding the grievance process will put you in a much better position to help yourself, your shop steward and your fellow carriers if management violates the contract.

The grievance procedure starts with your shop steward. Shop stewards are the foot soldiers in NALC’s efforts to enforce the National Agreement. Stewards are letter carriers with special training and knowledge of the contract. Whenever management fails to provide a letter carrier with what they are entitled to under the National Agreement, the steward is the first to handle the problem. Talk to your steward if you have an issue, no matter how large or small the issue may be.

Sometimes problems are resolved without the letter carriers involved even knowing about them. “Many times, a steward goes to a manager and fixes a problem, or a potential

problem, just by informing the manager of the situation or reminding the manager of what the contract requires,” Renfroe said. “The issue gets resolved before it begins, and letter carriers down the line may never have to deal with the problem in the first place.”

All letter carriers have rights under the National Agreement, and all letter carriers should ask a steward to enforce those rights if they have been violated or denied. If other attempts to resolve a dispute or correct a contract violation fail, the steward may decide that a grievance is necessary.

A grievance is a dispute, difference, disagreement or complaint between the parties related to the wages, hours or working conditions of letter carriers. The process gives every letter carrier an opportunity to have their voice heard when management violates the National Agreement.

The National Agreement requires that grievances be filed within 14 days of when the contract violation took place, so be sure to talk to your steward as soon as possible after you become aware of a problem.

In each grievance, the union asks for a remedy. The remedy request should accomplish a couple of goals. For starters, it should require that management stop violating the contract. Additionally, some grievances ask for a monetary award to compensate the letter carrier if they suffered a loss in pay or some other loss because of the contract violation. It is important to give your shop steward all the information about the issue so the steward can request the appropriate remedy.

There are four potential steps in the grievance process, starting with Informal Step A, which involves the

steward discussing the issue with the supervisor. This initial step gives supervisors a chance to fix the problem immediately by talking to the steward without much paperwork. If the grievance is not resolved at Informal Step A, the union may appeal the grievance to Formal Step A within seven days of the Informal Step A discussion. At Formal Step A, the NALC branch president and the postmaster (or their designees) are responsible for fully developing the facts of the grievance, exchanging relevant documents, and meeting to attempt to resolve the grievance.

If the grievance is not resolved at Formal Step A, the union can appeal the grievance to Step B of the process. The union and management Formal Step A representatives each write their facts and contentions about the issue and send them, along with all relevant documentation, to one of the full-time dispute resolution teams (DRTs).

These DRTs operate all over the country under the guidelines contained in the Memorandum of Understanding Re: Article 15 - Dispute Resolution Process incorporated into the National Agreement. Each DRT is composed of a letter carrier and a manager who jointly consider the evidence, consults the National Agreement, and tries to resolve the grievance. DRT members are jointly trained on the National Agreement and on how to apply its terms to resolve disputes.

If the DRT can’t agree on a resolution and reaches an impasse, the NALC national business agent (NBA) for the region may appeal the grievance to arbitration. Once an NBA appeals the grievance, an arbitration hearing is held, during which the union and management present evidence and

testimony to a neutral arbitrator. The neutral arbitrator then issues a final and binding written decision on the grievance.

The NALC process has proven to be one of the best dispute-resolution processes among postal unions, or even unions in other industries. Grievances often are settled relatively quickly and fairly because everything is disclosed up front. The process is designed to use the facts to state what happened, and to use the contract to determine if a violation has taken place and what is needed to remedy the violation. It encourages confronting the problem head-on and preventing it from happening again in the future.

Even though NALC is the largest postal union, only a small percentage of grievances from postal employees that go all the way to arbitration involve letter carriers. Full disclosure of the facts at the beginning of the grievance process generally makes for speedy and fair outcomes—but it also makes a letter carrier responsible for supplying facts, and possibly evidence such as a written statement, up front.

“Your best chance for a successful grievance is to give your steward all the information you have and whatever else they need to build a solid case,” President Renfroe said. “Don’t hold anything back for any reason. Help your steward make the best case for you.”

Many letter carriers became shop stewards after seeing the success of the grievance process and deciding that they want to help their fellow letter carriers. Increased knowledge and understanding of the grievance process among all letter carriers will only make the process more successful go-

ing forward and get more letter carriers interested in serving as shop stewards in the future.

“Over the years, many contract violations have been reversed or prevented through the grievance process,” Renfroe said. “Shop stewards stand up for letter carriers day in and day out by enforcing the contract on the workroom floor. Their work turns a contract written on paper into an enforcement mechanism that protects our rights and makes our jobs better and safer.”

Don’t forget, the National Agreement requires that grievances be filed within 14 days of when the contract violation took place, so be sure to talk to your steward as soon as possible after you become aware of a problem. The early steps of the grievance process have very strict time limits, so don’t wait to report an issue. If you have further questions about the grievance process, don’t hesitate to reach out to your shop steward or branch officer. **PR**

**National
Association
of Letter
Carriers
(AFL-CIO)**



NATIONAL AGREEMENT



**United
States
Postal
Service**

2023-2026



For the 20th anniversary, we look at how the NALC Leadership Academy was created and how it continues to evolve

For 20 years, NALC members from all over the country and with a range of experience have been coming to the Washington, DC, area to take part in three weeklong training sessions to hone their leadership abilities. The attendees—30 at a time—devote their energy and talents to making the lives of their fellow letter carriers better.

“I don’t know of any other union that has this kind of commitment to developing its leaders at every level,” NALC President Brian L. Renfroe said. While he graduated from Leadership Academy Class 6 in 2008, he is quick to point out that it isn’t a golden ticket to success in the union. “Hard work at the local level got you noticed and selected for the Leadership Academy. The Leadership Academy will provide you with tools to go home and better serve the membership. That is the No. 1 goal of the Leadership Academy—to better serve the membership.

“Some of our graduates go on to elected union office,” Renfroe added. “But there are so many more ways they become leaders. Leadership isn’t just about a title.

“Some are working on specific projects; some are leading grassroots efforts on legislation, or rallying the troops and keeping them informed through

their writing in union publications and online, or sticking up for their fellow letter carriers as stewards. There are so many different paths they take in serving their union and fellow members.”

Leadership Academy today

The current curriculum consists of three weeks in a classroom setting at the Maritime Institute in Linthicum Heights, MD, and a fourth week at the member’s national business agent’s (NBA) office.

Each week has a theme. Week 1 focuses on time management and teaching techniques. Week 2 focuses on public speaking and communication. Week 3 focuses on mentoring, negotiation and strategic planning. Between Weeks 1 and 2, and between Weeks 2 and 3, each student completes a project on a subject that they learned about during that week. Students are expected to spend 40 to 50 hours working on their projects and presenting them at the branch level.

Each national officer teaches a class that focuses on what their position entails at NALC Headquarters and how that affects the members at the branch and workroom floor levels. Each Headquarters letter carrier staff member, as well as some of the professional staff members, present on the projects, roles and responsibilities they work on regularly.

“These classes are aimed at giving a bird’s-eye view of what happens

Opposite page: Jim Williams leads a breakout session during the first Leadership Academy.

nationally,” explained Assistant to the President Ed Morgan, who currently handles the administrative functions for the Academy. “It is a peek behind the curtain at what happens at 100 Indiana Ave.”

Morgan (a Class 18 graduate) and the other Leadership Academy lead facilitators Troy Clark (retired Region 6 NBA), Chris Wittenburg (retired Region 7 NBA and a Class 1 graduate), Keisha Lewis (Region 1 NBA and a Class 11 graduate) and Larrissa Parde (Region 7 regional administrative assistant and a Class 11 graduate) teach classes on topics such as NALC and union history, ethical decision making, leadership approaches, managing branch records, recruiting union activists, and active listening.

The experience knocks some students out of their comfort zones, especially the requirement to do public speaking. They all must give speeches, not only to each other, but at an event with special guests.

Most students face plenty of challenges, along with getting the opportunity to improve their skills with the help of their fellow students.

“These classes are designed to make the students think about all aspects of leadership,” Morgan said.

Creating the Academy

The original idea for the Leadership Academy came from then-Region 2 National Business Agent Jim Williams (NBA from 1994 to 2002). “The idea for a national-level Leadership Academy was a long-term dream of mine,” he said. “As an NBA, I focused on education and saw that letter carriers thrived in an environment of intense learning.”

Williams worked with then-Washington State Director of Education Jamie Lumm—who would later go on

to become the national director of education—to create stewards colleges in each of the states he represented. “From weeklong teaching techniques classes to [Office of Workers’ Compensation Programs] training, I saw that if an educational system was built, letter carriers would come, and the challenge transformed them,” Williams said.

In 2002, Williams was elected by acclamation to become NALC’s executive vice president, serving with recently elected NALC President William H. Young. “Bill Young asked me to prepare a document listing ideas that we could accomplish in our first term,” Williams said. “The Leadership Academy was on that list.”

Not everyone thought a Leadership Academy was a good idea, but Williams convinced President Young. “My



Jim Korolowicz

Then-NALC President William H. Young (c) recounts NALC’s history of collective bargaining with the assistance of Chief of Staff Jim Sauber (r) and Associate Counsel Keith Secular in 2005.





Then-President Fredric V. Rolando answers questions from a Leadership Academy class during his tenure.

belief was that by training members, we would be strengthening the NALC and providing a deeper pool of leaders at the local level,” he said. “I believed then and now that knowledge is power, and the union is better served by having those in leadership be better trained. I wanted to shorten the learning curve for those coming up in our union and give them an accurate ‘10,000-foot view’ of the NALC and the overall labor movement.

“Bill came to see the benefit and gave me free rein to start putting the Academy together. I am grateful for Bill’s foresight. So are the over 900 letter carriers who have graduated from the Academy,” Williams said.

Working with then-Director of Education Ralph Goldstein, Williams put together a list of more than 100 subjects for possible inclusion in the curriculum. He also recruited then-Assistant Secretary-Treasurer Jim Korolowicz to help. “Jim had a rich background in training, and he shared our vision,” Williams said.

The curriculum was based on two ideas. “Most elected officers came into

their positions with little or no preparation. Most of what I found members to believe about the NALC were myths. Why shouldn’t we combine those needs in an intense learning environment?” Williams explained. “The development of a list of subjects was based on what I perceived to be the needs of future leaders.”

Every subject included in the curriculum was intended to meet those goals, Williams said.

After a year of preparing teaching outlines for each subject, they shared the concept with the national officers and then incorporated their feedback. A focus group of branch presidents was brought in to offer feedback from their perspective.

“My original idea was to have four consecutive weeks of training, with the last week focusing on arbitration advocacy,” Williams said. “The focus group convinced me that four consecutive weeks would be too much and that advocacy training in arbitration would rule out many who did not work in the grievance procedure.”

Then-NALC Vice President Gary Mullins suggested that the fourth week should be worked at the members’ NBA offices to give a real-world experience for each student. “We know the learning is about so much more than classroom work, so we get the students out there to do work in the field, doing the work they might do as union leaders,” Williams said.

As the structure of the Academy was coming into focus, the organizers decided to limit the class size to 30 members “due to the complexity of the material,” Williams explained. Each week of class would be separated by six weeks of work at home on a self-selected project to work on with their



NALC President Brian L. Renfroe leads a recent Leadership Academy class.

mentors. Their report would then be sent to the Academy to be reviewed for both content and writing.

It also was decided to have national officers conduct the training. “I wanted to have national officers provide their expertise in the subject being taught,” Williams said. “For example, I felt that the students should know what each officer did for the membership. If it was an issue of the union’s financial status, the national secretary-treasurer, along with staff, should present that material. This concept came to be a home run for the students and the officers.”

They also developed an application that required a named mentor and for the mentor to be part of the application process.

The first Leadership Academy class

President Young announced the Leadership Academy—then known as the “Next Generation Leadership Training”—in his President’s Message in the December 2004 issue of *The Postal Record*. “I must prepare the union for the future. If I do otherwise, I will have dishonored the sacrifices of all those who have gone before,” he wrote. “To me, part of preparing for the future means that each one of us privileged to hold a position of leadership in this union—whether it be at the national, regional or local level—must admit that we are neither immortal nor indispensable and that one of our major responsibilities is to recruit and train the next generation of leaders.”

By the time the first application period was held from March 15 to May 1, 2005, the name of the training had been settled as the “Leadership Academy.” It was announced that the training would be held at the George Meany Center for Labor Studies in Silver

Spring, MD, just outside Washington, DC, where it was held for many years before the campus closed in 2012.

NALC received more than 300 applications for that first Academy, from which President Young personally selected the members. “Each one had qualifications richer than I imagined we would attract,” he wrote in his President’s Message in the July 2005 edition of *The Postal Record*. He selected two members from each of NALC’s 15 regions.

One of them was Chris Wittenburg, a member of St. Paul, MN Branch 28. “When my application was accepted to attend Leadership Academy Class 1, I felt gratitude for the opportunity to experience this new training,” the retired Region 7 NBA and current Leadership Academy facilitator said.

The three weeks of training were held July 24-29, Oct. 2-7 and Dec. 11-16 in 2005. On the first day of the Academy, students were divided into learning teams of three with a staff mentor. Those teams were kept together for the whole Academy experience, and it’s become an integral part of each Academy since then.

“After the first few days I realized this was a unique training for the NALC,” Wittenburg said. “Attending and graduating would benefit me as a person and an NALC leader. One of the primary focuses was to better myself to be the best I could be when representing our members. It was the opportunity of a lifetime. It became clear the responsibility to absorb and learn was ultimately on me.”

Wittenburg would rely on the skills he learned in the Academy throughout his career. “As a national business agent, the skills and knowledge I [had] acquired guided me in assessing and making the right decisions that would benefit the members I represent,” he said.

Students participate in the first Leadership Academy.





President Renfroe (c) welcomes Jim Williams (r) and Jim Korolowicz as they visit a recent Leadership Academy.

The first class was an instant success, and a second class was announced to begin in January 2006. Since then, one or two classes

have typically been held each year, with Class 30 graduating in May.

The Leadership Academy evolves

Since the first class, the graduates have been the best advertising for recruiting new talent to the Academy.

"I had heard many great stories about how Leadership Academy was one of the most valuable experiences the NALC provided. I knew it was something I wanted to attend," said Region 6 Regional Grievance Assistant Anna Mudd, who attended Leadership Academy Class 22 in 2017.

"Leadership Academy was known as a 'special club' that only a few could attend," she said. "Once there, I learned it wasn't a special club, but a club of special people. It was amazing how quickly we all bonded together to build those relationships that would remain with us forever. I learned a lot about myself, both good and bad. However, in that setting with all of us encouraging each other to be their best, the constructive criticism went a long way to helping me improve."

One aspect that many attendees enjoy is the chance to work with members from all over the country.

"Leadership Academy is a great way to bring activists from different branches across the country together to share information, broaden their network and make contacts that will help them do their jobs as leaders," President Renfroe said.

Patrick Johnson attended the Academy in 2014 at the suggestion of the president of Milwaukee, WI Branch 2. "I decided to attend the Leadership Academy after talking to my mentor, Steve Erceg, who was at that time the president of my branch. Steve explained that he felt that I was a future leader within the branch and that the Leadership Academy would help me hone those skills," the Region 7 NBA said.

"The Leadership Academy helped me to fine-tune skills necessary to be an effective leader, such as public speaking, organization and time management, all of which helps me greatly in my current position as national business agent," he said.

Williams continued as the lead instructor through Class 20 in the fall of 2015. Other facilitators stepped in to fill the void as Williams and the other original facilitators retired or moved on. One of them was Wittenburg, who became an instructor for Class 23 in 2018.

"When asked by the NALC to assist in facilitating the Leadership Academy, immediately upon retirement from being NBA, I felt honored to serve my union in this capacity," he said. "It had been 13 years since graduating from the Leadership Academy, and to see the up-and-coming leaders excited and eager to enhance their leadership skill set was refreshing."

The curriculum has evolved over the years, with feedback both from instructors and from each attendee. "Some classes have been added and expanded based on input from the classes," Williams said. "The classes have changed to meet perceived needs. At the same time, a few subjects were dropped and others added. One example is the demographics class, which was added. An internal snapshot of our membership

A breakout session during the first Leadership Academy





Leadership Academy Class 1

has helped future leaders see trends. For the most part, the major subject headings are still there.”

Morgan agreed, explaining that the main facilitators hold a strategic planning session once a year, deciding whether each class is relevant and effective. “The Leadership Academy is a living and breathing training. It evolves with the times. The main tenants remain the same, but how they are presented changes from class to class,” he said.

“In the last strategic planning session, we talked about how to talk about artificial intelligence, critical thinking, and the movement toward paperless training,” Morgan said. “We don’t want the books of information to sit on a shelf. We want the students to be able to look back on what they learned in a place that is close to them.”

Looking back

For the 20th anniversary, Williams presided over the graduation ceremony of the most recent class on May 23. “Returning to see the quality of the students was gratifying to me,” he said. “Some critics said the Leadership Academy would stop after a few classes due to the fact the quality of the students would diminish over time. Just the opposite happened.”

He’s also glad to see that the training is having its desired effect. “Graduates are filling needed leadership roles at the local, state and national levels,” he said. “To see the current Executive Council with many graduates makes me see that the Leadership Academy continues to be an important formative place for future leaders.”

Wittenburg agrees. “The value to our members with educated and experienced leaders is immeasurable, and the Leadership Academy plays an important part in this goal,” he said.

Mudd used her experience with the Academy not to help herself, but to help others. “We all work for the members, and the Leadership Academy provided me with the skills to do so,” she said. “My career in the NALC has always been about helping letter carriers and mentoring them along the way. Leadership Academy helped me to be able to do that in whatever capacity I serve.”

Williams is modest about the accomplishment of creating the Leadership Academy, wanting to focus on the “pay-it-forward” mentality of mentorship. “I want to thank those who continue to be mentors at the local level, as well as the teachers and mentors at the Academy itself,” he said. “A goal of the Academy is that we model what we teach. The current and past mentors have done an incredible job continuing to maintain and raise the bar.”

Application period is open

Applications are currently being accepted for the next Leadership Academy. Applications will be accepted until Friday, Sept. 26. They are on the NALC website at nalc.org/leadership.

The application includes an essay of 300 to 500 words, in which potential students explain their interest in the NALC Leadership Academy and discuss their qualifications. It also requests an essay from the mentor about why the applicant should participate in the Academy and what they see in the student’s potential as a future union leader.

“I always tell potential applicants to go for it!” Mudd said. “Our union has too many people to count who are deserving and would be an asset to the Leadership Academy. I tell them to maintain their resolve and keep applying. In the end, it’s worth the wait.” **PR**

Scan this QR code to go to the Leadership Academy application.



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 202-662-2420 or at postalrecord@nalc.org. We'll follow up with you to obtain news clippings, photos or other information.



Lindsey Nolte



Misty Hernandez

Honoring heroic carriers

Heroism, 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 their 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.

Carrier gives customer chance to say goodbye

In April, Hutchinson, KS Branch 485 letter carrier **Misty Hernandez** was delivering to a group of mailboxes outside an apartment complex on her route when she heard a woman's voice asking if anyone was there.

"I just thought she was on the phone, so I just ignored it and then I kept delivering the mail. And then I heard her voice again," the three-year carrier said. "She said, 'I need help. Can you call 911?'"

Realizing that the woman was talking to her, Hernandez went to the door, which was only about 10 feet from where she was delivering mail. While calling 911, she knocked and got permission to enter the home, where she found 77-year-old Sheila Park lying on the kitchen floor.

Park told the letter carrier that she had been there for three days after falling. While they waited for emergency personnel to arrive, Hernandez got her some water, put Park's cat in the bedroom and put a sheet on top of Park, as she was only wearing a nightgown.

"She just kept saying, 'Thank God you're here,'" Hernandez said.

Park was taken to a local hospital, then transferred to a hospital in Wichita, where she died about two days later due to a previously existing condition.

"They [Park's family] thanked me for helping her and just kind of explained what happened," Hernandez said, and added that she takes some solace in the fact that "she didn't die alone."

Carrier rescues elderly customer

Four-year letter carrier **Lindsey Nolte** has spent the last two years on the same route, during which time she has established relationships with some of her customers, including Terry.

So, when two days in January went by and Terry hadn't collected her mail, the Bellevue, NE Branch 4128 carrier became concerned. She also noticed that she didn't hear the barking of Terry's small dog.

Trusting her instincts, Nolte knocked on the door and rang the doorbell. To her shock, she heard Terry yell, "Help me! Help me! Call 911!"

She tried to get in through the doors, but the house had reinforced doors, so it wasn't possible.

"I was trying to voice-to-text 911 and my phone wasn't listening, and I was freaking out," Nolte said. Eventually she got through to a 911 dispatcher and informed them that emergency personnel would have to break open the door.

It turns out that Terry had been on the ground for four days after breaking her femur. She used all her strength crawling from her bedroom in the back of the house to the front.

"I'm really glad I trusted my instincts and just thought to knock," Nolte said. "I feel extremely grateful that I was just there at the right time."

Nolte hasn't seen Terry since but has spoken to her on the phone. Terry recovered at a rehab facility and is now in an assisted-living facility. Nolte has seen Terry's family members since, and they have expressed their gratitude to her.

"Her sister gave me a big, huge hug when she saw me," Nolte said.

"Lindsey's actions truly highlight the dedication, care and vigilance that make her such an invaluable member of our team," Branch 4128 Secretary **Diane Smock** wrote to NALC.

Carrier lends a hand to fallen women

On Oct. 24, San Francisco, CA Branch 214 letter carrier **Joseph Kornack** was walking to drop off a package on his route when he came across a woman in her 90s, Wilma Chin, lying on the ground as her daughter Cathy knelt next to her.

The two-year letter carrier asked, "Are you OK? Do you need help?" Cathy told him that Wilma frequently has dizzy spells during which she faints, but she wasn't sure whether this was something else. Cathy hadn't called 911, because she was holding Wilma's head, so Kornack took her spot while Cathy called an ambulance.

She wasn't unconscious, Kornack said: "She was, like, there, but she wasn't there."

Paramedics arrived quickly, and after they had the situation under control, Kornack continued with his route. He has seen the mother and daughter since.

"I was just asking how she was, and she said she was doing much better and then she just thanked me again," he said of Wilma.

Further showing her family's gratitude, Cathy wrote about Kornack to the local postmaster, as well as in the neighborhood's newsletter. "Thank you, Joe, for your kindness and heroic actions!" Cathy wrote. "The U.S. Postal Service and Miraloma Park are very lucky to have such an admirable carrier!"

Letter carrier comes to customer's aid after fall

One January day in Bridgeport, CT, 12-year letter carrier **Ryan Thompson** was preparing the mail in his truck for a loop he was about to start when he saw his elderly customer, Mr. Russell, on the ground. To the Branch 32 letter carrier, it appeared that Russell was looking for something, but upon closer inspection, Thompson realized that his customer had fallen.

"It occurred to me that something must be wrong," Thompson said. "I got out of the truck, and I started walking over."

It turned out that Russell had bent down to pick up an Amazon package delivered earlier that day when the wind pulled the storm door open, hitting him and causing him to lose balance and fall.

Thompson wondered, "Would I be able to get him on his feet by myself?"

Thompson wrapped his arms around Russell's middle and helped him up while his customer used his cane.

Thompson is glad he saw Russell when he did. "It could have been a lot worse because it was cold [that day]," he said.

Russell and his wife expressed gratitude to Thompson. "She was telling me how grateful she was that I was there at the time to help him," he said.



Carrier helps patron having seizure

Casey Roubidoux was on his route one April day in Weiser, ID, when he came across something unusual.

"Barb is one of my customers who I rarely put the mail in the mailbox for," the Branch 1703 letter carrier said of his elderly customer. "She watches for me every day, so I usually hand the mail directly to her."

On this occasion, the door was ajar, but her screen door was shut, and there was no Barb in sight at first. Once she reached the door, Roubidoux could tell something was off.

"She was having a seizure," he said. "She was kind of losing control of her body. Then she just kind of collapsed, and when she collapsed, she fell on her head, banging it against the wall. I think it knocked her out."

He immediately rushed inside and noticed that her condition was worsening. "Her eyes were kind of doing funky things. She started foaming at the mouth a little bit. I could hear gurgling sounds. That's pretty terrifying, to be honest," the carrier said.

He called 911 and tried to get the customer to sit up. He started yelling Barb's name and telling her to wake up. She started to regain consciousness, so Roubidoux held her hand and comforted her until emergency services arrived.

Roubidoux talked to Barb the morning after the incident, and she told him it was one of the worst seizures she has had. Barb was all right, but had sustained injuries to her head and arm.

"She was sad that she put me through that, but she was grateful that I was there, and I was glad that I was there for her," Roubidoux said. **PR**

César Chávez

Fighting for the rights of farm workers

¡Sí, se puede!
Yes, we can!

With this slogan, César Chávez inspired millions of farm workers to stand up for their rights when it seemed everyone else had forgotten these laborers.

Born outside Yuma, AZ, in 1927 on his family's farm, Chávez experienced the heartbreak of the Great Depression as a child, when his family lost their farm and were forced to become migrant workers on farms in southern California. Chávez began working in the fields after completing eighth grade.

Experiencing the backbreaking work, harsh conditions and low pay of transient farm work, Chávez yearned to make things better for his fellow workers. Farm workers had been left out of many laws—including the National Labor Relations Act that protected collective-bargaining rights for most other workers—even though farm laborers faced some of the toughest work conditions in the country.

He often spoke of the disconnect between America's abundant food supply and the workers who made it happen: "It's ironic that those who till the soil, cultivate and harvest the fruits, vegetables and other foods that fill your tables with abundance have nothing left for themselves."

Chávez began his activism working for the Community Service Organization (CSO), a prominent Latino civil rights organization in California. There, he helped organize voter registration drives and anti-discrimination campaigns. The CSO often worked in tandem with groups advocating for the

many Filipino farm workers who toiled on California farms alongside Latinos. Chávez was inspired by activists in the civil rights movement, including the Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King Jr., and learned from their tactics.

Shifting his attention solely to farm workers, Chávez left the CSO and founded the National Farm Workers Association (NFWA) in 1962, which later became the United Farm Workers of America union (UFW). He named the campaign "*La Causa*" (The Cause) and rallied supporters with the slogan "*¡Sí, se puede!*" (Yes, we can!).

Joining forces with other prominent activists, including Dolores Huerta and Larry Itliong, Chávez organized marches and demonstrations in California and nearby states to enlighten others about the cause. But he knew that wouldn't be enough, so NFWA turned to strikes and boycotts of California-grown produce to put pressure on farmers to meet the union's demands. Inspired by Indian independence leader Mahatma Gandhi, Chávez also used hunger strikes to further the cause.

In 1965, NFWA joined a Filipino-led strike against grape growers centered in Delano, CA. The Delano effort included a boycott of grapes, a successful effort to convince union longshoremens to refuse to load grapes on ships for export, as well as a march by striking workers from Delano to the



Chavez in front of a strike sign

state capitol in Sacramento, a 280-mile journey on foot.

Chávez knew that the key to victory was persistence, and the campaign stretched on for five years. A few years into the strike, some desperate striking workers began talking about turning to violence, but Chávez knew that would backfire. As Gandhi had done, Chávez fasted to prevent violence. He began a hunger strike in February 1968 as a way to rededicate the movement to nonviolence. His fast was part penitence for those who considered engaging in violence, part sacrifice as leader of the movement willing to give his life for it, and part example that there were better ways to win than with violence. He went without food for 25 days, only drinking water. The fast was effective; talk of violence subsided.

By 1970, the struggle over the Delano grape fields was a success, and workers gained union contracts that increased their pay and bettered their working conditions.

While farm workers formed the heart of the movement, some activists

came from elsewhere to help, including a young **Jerry Ryan**, who would later serve as president of NALC's San Bernadino, CA Branch 411. At the time, Ryan dropped out of college and participated in UFW marches, demonstrations and hunger strikes—being arrested or attacked numerous times—for seven years before joining the Postal Service.

Ryan recalled the spirit of strength that Chávez brought to farm workers who weren't used to having power over their own destiny. At the start of a union organizing drive, he said, "As we pulled into the dusty farm labor camp before dawn, there were hundreds of farm workers in a car caravan already there waiting for us. As César jumped on top of the car hood to greet the workers, they shouted in unison, '*Viva César Chávez! Viva la union!*' and the rally was on."

To read Ryan's story, see the January 2011 issue of *The Postal Record*, available at nalc.org/news/the-postal-record/2011/january-2011/document/0111-chavez.pdf.

The NFWA, which later merged with another group to become the UFW in 1966, took its campaigns to many other states, helping to organize farm workers across the country. Though they often faced threats and even physical attacks, the activists stuck to the principle of non-violence.

Though the UFW's struggle to win union contracts for farm workers in California succeeded at many farms, Chávez wasn't finished. He led a struggle to convince California's legislature to legally recognize collective-bargaining rights for the state's farm workers. The effort led to the passage of the California Agricultural Labor Relations Act of 1975. Since federal labor law

had left farm workers out in the cold, this law became the first in the nation to grant collective-bargaining rights for farm workers.

Chávez died in 1993, not far from the family farm where he was born. He was buried next to the headquarters of his movement near Keene, CA, now part of the National Chávez Center and the César E. Chávez National Monument.

In 2002, the Postal Service issued a commemorative stamp with his image. His birthday, March 31, is a holiday in California and seven other states.

Reflecting on his legacy in 1984, Chávez said:

All my life, I have been driven by one dream, one goal, one vision: To overthrow a farm labor system in this nation which treats farm workers as if they were not important human beings. Farm workers are not agricultural implements. They are not beasts of burden—to be used and discarded. That dream was born in my youth. It was nurtured in my early days of organizing. It has flourished. It has been attacked. I'm not very different from anyone else who has ever tried to accomplish something with his life. My motivation comes from my personal life—from watching what my mother and father went through when I was growing up; from what we experienced as migrant farm workers in California. That dream, that vision, grew from my own experience with racism, with hope, with the desire to be treated fairly and to see my people treated as human beings and not as chattel. **PR**



Chavez later in life



Veterans Affairs benefits and OWCP

Military veterans who suffer a workplace injury while carrying mail are protected by the Federal Employees' Compensation Act (FECA). The Office of Workers' Compensation Programs (OWCP) is responsible for adjudicating claims under the FECA.

A military veteran filing a claim for an injury as a letter carrier can be confusing when the injury is to the same body part where Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) disability benefits are being paid. Military veterans should not be discouraged from filing claims if an older military injury is worsened by carrying mail.

OWCP claims can be accepted when letter carrier duties aggravate or accelerate an older underlying condition, including those suffered while on military duty and for which the veteran is receiving VA disability benefits.

OWCP defines aggravation as a relationship that occurs when a pre-existing condition is worsened, whether temporarily or permanently, by an injury that occurs while in the performance of duty as a letter carrier. For instance, a traumatic back injury caused by lifting a parcel may aggravate pre-existing degenerative disc disease, and OWCP compensation would be payable for the duration of the aggravation.

A temporary aggravation involves a limited period of medical treatment and/or disability, after which you return to your previous physical status. A permanent aggravation occurs when a condition will persist indefinitely due to the effects of the work-related injury or when a condition is materially worsened such that it will not revert to its previous level of severity.

Letter carrier duties may also accelerate an underlying condition. A

work-related injury or condition may hasten the development of an underlying condition, and acceleration is said to occur when the ordinary course of the disease does not account for the speed with which a condition develops.

For example, a claimant's VA-accepted knee arthritis may be accelerated by letter carrier duties such as walking, stooping and squatting. An acceptance for acceleration of a condition carries the same force as an acceptance for direct causation. A condition that has been accepted as an acceleration has no set limitation on its duration or severity.

Every claim for a workplace injury needs to be filed via OWCP's ECOMP web portal, which can be accessed at ecomp.dol.gov. Instructions for registering and filing claims via ECOMP can be found at ecomp.dol.gov.

If you do not have a computer to file the claim, the Postal Service is required to provide a computer for your use. To ensure accuracy in your claim filing, never let a supervisor register and file a claim on your behalf.

Once a military veteran's claim is accepted, there may be times when the worker must decide between receiving benefits from the VA or OWCP. For example, if a letter carrier has a pre-existing shoulder injury that the VA has accepted as service-connected for which the VA has granted a disability rating of 20 percent, and the letter carrier further injures that shoulder in the performance of their postal duties, they may be eligible for both OWCP benefits and an increase in their VA disability rating.

Let's say in this example that the VA determines that the on-the-job injury warrants an increase in the rating of the service-connected shoulder disability from 20 to 40 percent. OWCP also determines that injured

letter carrier is eligible for wage-loss compensation. The letter carrier must now elect whether they want compensation from OWCP or the increased VA rating. If the letter carrier elects VA compensation based on the increased rating of 40 percent, they are prohibited from receiving compensation from OWCP. On the other hand, if the letter carrier elects compensation from OWCP, they may still continue to receive VA compensation for the shoulder disability at the pre-injury 20 percent rate as well as their OWCP benefit.

It should be noted here that the VA does not bar the continuation of VA benefits for the disability on which the OWCP benefits were predicated when the OWCP benefits end. In the above example, once the OWCP benefits end, the VA award may be increased to the 40 percent rate for the shoulder disability.

If you are a military veteran who has questions regarding OWCP and VA benefits, contact your national business agent's office.

Join the NALC Veterans Group

The NALC Veterans Group is designed to provide NALC members—both active and retired letter carriers—who are also military veterans the ability to connect with fellow NALC veterans and stay informed on issues of importance to letter carrier veterans. It is free to join.

Members receive a pin as a symbol of gratitude for their military service and membership in NALC.

If you are interested in joining the group, complete the sign-up card at nalc.org/veterans.

Veteran profile: Mark Swan

Though Saginaw, MI Branch 74 letter carrier **Mark Swan** didn't start at USPS until 1985, his postal career began five years earlier when he served in the Navy as a postal clerk on a 6,500-person aircraft carrier.

His goal in joining the Navy was to go to flight school, but he was ultimately denied due to being color blind. Despite not being allowed to achieve his original goal, Swan ended up enjoying his position.

Stationed on an aircraft carrier out of Norfolk, VA, he traveled for nine months around the world. The ship visited nine countries, including Monaco, the Philippines, Australia, France, South Korea and the Ivory Coast.

"It was a lot of fun because I got to do a lot of different things," Swan said.

Although post offices still offer money orders, they aren't as common as they were during Swan's time onboard. One of his main job responsibilities was to send money orders to families of the military men onboard.

Like now, Swan spent much of his time sorting letters. He recalled a time when the ship didn't receive mail for 19 days, then received it all at once. All 13 postal clerks had to sort for seven days just to get through the first-class mail.

But there weren't a lot of other similarities.

"Back in the early days, the jobs were pretty similar," he said. Now that many aspects of letter carrying are automated, his current duties as a letter carrier are not similar to his work as a naval postal clerk.

After his nine months at sea, he noticed that postal clerk positions on touring ships were becoming scarce, so he stayed stationed on an aircraft carrier in Alameda, CA. During his

last four months of military service, he worked at the Air Transfer Office on Mira Island in San Diego, where he sent mail out to the ships each day. He hoped that he would be able to return to sea, but nothing was available for his skill set until only five months before his military service would be up, so they decided not to send him.

"When I got out, I came back to Saginaw, MI, hoping to find a job," he said. "My wife was from Pennsylvania, and we went and visited her family for a couple weeks. I ended up taking the postal exam and I was hired right away."

In 1985 he became a letter carrier in Exton, PA, and joined NALC's Great Valley Merged Branch 4317. Two years later he transferred to Saginaw, because his father was ill, and joined Branch 74.

During the '90s he started to become more engaged in the union, motivated, he says, by "watching some of the things that I felt needed more representation as far as people's rights—and the union president at the time asked me if I wanted to be a union steward."

He was a steward for about 25 years until he became Branch 74 president—a position he holds today. He still carries mail, which he enjoys even 40 years after starting.

"I love the job," he said. "I appreciate the opportunity to be delivering mail because it is a wonderful job. It's gratifying to know that you can do something that makes somebody happy, and I love being outside."



Top: Mark Swan performing postal clerk duties for the Navy

Above: Delivering mail as a letter carrier

Article 8 Q&A's



**Paul
Barner**

The April 2025 *Postal Record* featured the provisions of Arbitrator Nolan's interest arbitration award setting the terms of the 2023-2026 National Agreement between NALC and USPS. Also, in that edition of *The Postal Record*, I wrote an article explaining how the work rule proposals were formulated for collective bargaining.

One of the specific work rule changes addressed in the Nolan award pertains to the method by which letter carriers volunteer for overtime work, as addressed in Article 8 of the National Agreement. This official NALC bargaining position stems from a resolution passed by the delegates at the 72nd Biennial National Convention. The resolution, approved by the delegates, reads in pertinent part:

Whereas the overtime issues plaguing the membership have gone on for decades, and

The overtime language in Article 8 have largely gone unchanged in decades,

The National officers/negotiators create language that allows for Article 8 to include language that creates two new overtime categories;

1. Overtime on each of the 5 scheduled work days for a letter carrier but not on the N/S days of the carrier, on any assignment in the office, station or zoned depending on overtime equitability language in the local, and,
2. Overtime only on the N/S day for the carrier but not on any other day

As discussed in my April *Postal Record* article, the National Convention is the supreme governing body of NALC, and resolutions adopted by the delegates at the convention that address provisions of the National Agreement become the official bargaining position of NALC. With the successful inclusion of new language in Article 8 accomplishing the directive from the 72nd Biennial Convention, NALC created a series of questions specific to the creation of the two Overtime Desired Lists (ODLs). After discussions with the Postal Service, the parties were able to reach joint agreement as it pertains to the following Q&A's:

There are two regular overtime desired lists (ODLs):

Regularly Scheduled Day ODL (RSD) - Available for up to 12 hours per day on any of the five regularly scheduled days in a service week.

Non-Scheduled Day ODL (NSD) - Available for 8 hours of overtime only on their nonscheduled days. (Exception: up to 12 hours per non-scheduled day if both ODLs are signed)

1. If a letter carrier signs both the non-scheduled day ODL and the regularly scheduled day ODL, can they remove their name from one list during the quarter and still be on the other list?

Yes. Once a carrier signs a list, their name remains on the list from quarter to quarter until the carrier asks that it be removed in writing. Carriers may remove their names from a list at any time during the quarter.

2. If a letter carrier signs both the non-scheduled day ODL and the regularly scheduled day ODL, can they work 12 hours on their non-scheduled day.

Yes. A letter carrier on the non-scheduled day ODL must also be on regularly scheduled day ODL to be eligible for work beyond 8 hours on their nonscheduled day.

3. If a letter carrier signs both the non-scheduled day ODL and the regularly scheduled day ODL, and they work beyond 8 hours on their non-scheduled day, how is it tracked for equitability?

If a letter carrier has signed both ODLs, any hours worked beyond 8 hours on their non-scheduled day will be tracked for equitability purposes on the regularly scheduled day list.

4. Can a Work Assignment List letter carrier volunteer to work beyond 12 hours in a day and/or 60 hours in a service week?

Yes. However, they may only work overtime beyond 12 hours in a day and/or 60 hours in a service week performing work on their own assignment on regularly scheduled days. Volunteering to work beyond 12 hours in a day and/or 60 hours in a service week does not create any entitlement to work these hours.

5. If a Work Assignment List letter carrier volunteers to work overtime beyond 12 hours in a day and/or 60 hours in a service week performing work on their own assignment, do they have the right to that overtime prior to working an ODL letter carrier?

No. Volunteering to work beyond 12 hours in a day and/or 60 hours in a service week does not create any entitlement to work these hours.

6. Does a Work Assignment List letter carrier have the right to refuse to work beyond 12 hours in a day and/or 60 hours in a service week and not be subject to disciplinary action?

Yes. The provisions of Article 8.5.G.3 apply to Work Assignment List letter carriers as well as those who sign one of the regular Overtime Desired Lists.

7. How will equitability be tracked?

Equitability will be tracked separately by list as follows:

1) Regularly Scheduled Day List - equitability will be tracked only among those carriers who have signed up for the RSD list.

2) Non-Scheduled Day List - equitability will be tracked only among those carriers who have signed up for the NSD list.

8. Can letter carriers sign up for Work Assignment overtime as well as the non-scheduled day ODL?

No. Employees cannot sign up for Work Assignment overtime and sign either of the regular Overtime Desired Lists. They have the option of:

1) only signing up for Work Assignment;

2) signing either one of the regular Overtime Desired Lists; or

3) signing both regular Overtime Desired Lists.

9. If a full-time letter carrier who is on the Work Assignment List or the regularly scheduled day overtime desired list volunteers to work beyond 12 hours in a day and/or 60 hours in a service week, can they limit how much time they are volunteering to work, i.e. "I only volunteer for an additional hour"?

Yes. The amount of time the letter carrier volunteers to work beyond 12 hours in a day and/or 60 hours in a service week is agreed upon between them and their supervisor.

10. If a letter carrier volunteers to work beyond 12 hours in a day and/or 60 hours in a service week, can they later change their mind?

Once the time is agreed upon and planned for, the expectation is that the letter carrier will complete the assigned work, barring an unanticipated circumstance (i.e. emergency or illness).

11. Will there be a sign-up sheet for carriers who are volunteering to work beyond 12 hours in a day and/or 60 hours in a service week?

No.

12. Prior to forcing non-ODL letter carriers to work overtime, must the letter carriers who have only signed the non-scheduled day ODL be maxed out to 12 hours on their nonscheduled day?

No. Letter carriers who only sign the non-scheduled day ODL are only volunteering to be available for overtime up to 8 hours.

13. If ODL letter carriers volunteer to work beyond 12 hours in a day and/or 60 hours in a service week, must they be utilized for the volunteered amount of time prior to requiring those who are not on the ODL to work overtime?



No. Article 8.5.G states that full-time employees not on the "Overtime Desired" list may be required to work overtime only if all available employees on the "Overtime Desired" list have worked up to twelve 12 hours in a day or sixty 60

hours in a service week. Volunteering to work beyond 12 hours in a day and/or 60 hours in a service week does not change this requirement nor does it create any entitlement or obligation to work beyond those hours.

14. If ODL letter carriers work beyond 12 hours in a day and/or 60 hours in a service week, does that time count toward equitability?

No. ODL letter carriers may volunteer to exceed 12 hours of work in a day or 60 hours of work in a service week, however those who do not volunteer shall not be subject to disciplinary action for terminating their tour of duty when the limits on hours are reached. Therefore, the hours worked in excess of 12/60 do not count toward equitability.

The above jointly developed Q&A's provide the mutual understanding of the national parties on issues related to specific provisions of Article 8 of the 2023-2026 USPS/NALC National Agreement. Members can access the electronic version of the Q&As (M-02011 in NALC's Materials Reference System [MRS]) by visiting nalc.org and clicking the MRS Quicklink in the middle of the home page.

Questions and Answers	
Article 8	
The attached jointly developed document provides the mutual understanding of the national parties on issues related to specific provisions of Article 8 of the 2023-2026 USPS/NALC National Agreement.	
	
Michael J. Elston	Brian Renfro
Vice President, Labor Relations	President
United States Postal Service	National Association of Letter Carriers, AFL-CIO
Date <u>July 10, 2025</u>	Date <u>July 10, 2025</u>

Disabled veteran absences for medical treatment



James D. Henry

Can a disabled veteran be disciplined for absences related to their disability while receiving medical treatment?

The simple answer is no. A disabled veteran who is directed to report for observation or treatment by a duly authorized medical authority must be granted leave and the absence cannot be used against the employee for disciplinary purposes. This right to be absent from work to receive medical treatment without threat of discipline is rooted in an executive order issued by President Herbert Hoover on July 17, 1930 (M-00165). In 1988, NALC and USPS agreed that the 1930 executive order

by President Hoover applied to any disabled veteran letter carriers (M-00866).

Under these circumstances, the granting of such leave is contingent upon the veteran giving prior notice of definite days and hours of absence required. Additionally, the veteran is required to provide documentation to demonstrate that the absence meets the qualifying requirements.

The Hoover executive order (M-00165) states, in relevant part:

With respect to medical treatment of disabled veterans who are employed in the executive civil service of the United States, it is hereby ordered that, upon the presentation of an official statement from duly constituted medical authority that medical treatment is required, such annual or sick leave as may be permitted by law and such leave without pay as may be necessary shall be granted by the proper supervisory officer to a disabled veteran in order that **the veteran may receive such treatment, all without penalty in his efficiency rating.**

The granting of such leave is contingent upon the veteran's giving prior notice of definite days and hours of absence required for medical treatment in order that arrangements may be made for carrying on the work during his absence. (Emphasis added.)

The request for leave can be Annual Leave, Sick Leave or Leave Without Pay (LWOP). Typically, when employees request LWOP in lieu of paid leave (Annual Leave or Sick Leave), it is granted at the employer's discretion. However, requests for LWOP by qualifying disabled veterans for medical treatment is an exception and must be granted. This exception to the discretionary rule can be found in the *Employee and Labor Relations Manual (ELM)*, Section 514.22

514.22 Administrative Discretion

Each request for LWOP is examined closely, and a decision is made based on the needs of the employee, the needs of the Postal Service, and the cost to the Postal Service. The granting of LWOP is a matter of administrative discretion and is not granted on the employee's demand except as provided in collective bargaining agreements or as follows:

a. A disabled veteran is entitled to LWOP, if necessary, for medical treatment.

As with many other protections, what is essential is proper documentation. The scheduling of an appointment and verification of observation and/or treatment by a duly authorized medical authority is required. This means that documentation from the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs or other health care provider authorized to schedule an appointment and treat the underlying conditions resulting from the original disability. Most every veteran is aware of the need to get and retain a wide range of documentation related to their military service, and this related medical documentation is certainly no exception.

For those veterans who qualify for Wounded Warriors Leave (WWL), this same protection applies. WWL, which grants additional rights and benefits, is for all employees who have a single or combined service-connected disability rating of 30 percent or more. Additional information about WWL can be found in *Management Instruction EL-510-2019-2* (M-01901), *Wounded Warriors Leave*, which can be found on the NALC website at nalc.org/veterans.

Submitting documentation for WWL is accomplished by completing and submitting PS Form 3971 and PS Form 5980, Treatment Verification for Wounded Warriors Leave. PS Form 5980 also is available on the NALC website listed above.

The Postal Service is the largest employer of military veterans in the country, and veterans make up almost a quarter of all postal employees inclusive of the letter carrier craft. These protections from discipline for our disabled veterans is the very least that can be done for those who have sacrificed to protect our freedoms.



Even more important reminders



Nicole Rhine

Article 2, Section 5 of the *NALC Constitution* contains information on the years-of-service membership pins available to NALC members. Per the *Constitution*, the branch secretary must notify the office of the national secretary-treasurer that a member will complete the necessary years of service and the pin will be sent to the branch to present to the member.

The notification can be made one of two ways—either in writing to the office of the national secretary-treasurer or by the branch secretary through the Members Only portal. The new pin request program on the Members Only portal sends the branch's request directly to Headquarters electronically.

Membership pins are provided to branches at no charge beginning at 25 years and for each five-year increment thereafter. Membership pins for Years 5, 10, 15 and 20 are available for purchase by branches from the NALC Store.

NALC members who have completed 50 years of membership are awarded a Life Membership Gold Card that entitles them to all privileges of membership in the NALC without payment of dues. Again, all requests for gold cards must be made by the branch, per the *Constitution*.

Please be aware that gold cards are a special order and must be engraved by an outside union vendor—so branches should allow four to six weeks for delivery.

Branches also should be aware that special recognition is given as well to members who reach 70 years of membership and at each five-year increment thereafter with a suitable plaque.

Transferring branch membership after retirement

Any retiree in good standing in their branch who is moving to another city may transfer membership to the branch located in said city if they wish to do so.

Article 2, Section 3 of the *Constitution for the Government of Subordinate and Federal Branches (CGSFB)* contains provisions for transferring membership from one branch to another as a retired member. On occasion, the Membership Department does not receive the required information necessary to process the transfer—which causes a delay. To assist with the issues the Membership Department encounters, below is what is needed—per Article 2, Section 3

(c) of the *CGSFB*—to complete a transfer of membership for a retiree wishing to do so:

(c). In the case of a retiree member seeking to transfer membership, [h]e/she shall make application to the Recording Secretary of his/her Branch, who shall ascertain from the Financial Secretary if all dues and assessments charged against him/her on that date are fully paid; if so, it shall be the duty of the Recording Secretary to announce at the next regular meeting of the Branch that the application has been received and all obligations discharged. There being no objections, the Recording Secretary will at once forward to the Recording Secretary of the Branch with which affiliation is desired, a letter of recommendation. The letter shall be read at the first regular meeting of the receiving Branch held after its receipt and the transferred individual shall be considered a member at that time. The Recording Secretary of the Branch shall then notify the Recording Secretary of the original Branch that the transferee has been received into membership.

Once this process has been completed, a copy of the letter of recommendation from the originating branch, as well as a copy of the letter from the receiving branch in which the transferee has been received into membership, must be forwarded to the Membership Department along with a request that the transfer of membership be completed.

Changing bank accounts

On occasion, my office receives calls from branches or state associations who are changing bank accounts, asking what information is needed at Headquarters to change the account into which dues are direct deposited. If a branch or state association is planning to change banks, an officer should contact the Membership Department for an electronic deposit change form. The form must be completed and signed by the president and the secretary-treasurer and returned to Headquarters along with a voided check from the new account. We recommend that the old bank account remain open until a dues deposit is verified as having been made into the new account.

Dues rosters and retiree lists

Branch presidents, secretaries and treasurers, as well as state presidents, secretaries and treasurers, have their branch biweekly dues rosters, quarterly branch retiree dues rosters and monthly state dues rosters available to them through the Members Only portal. The rosters can be sorted, downloaded and saved and printed.

Also available to branch presidents, secretaries and treasurers is a retired member listing for their branch. The list includes all current retired members of the branch and notes which of the retired members are gold card members. If any member is listed as “pending 1189,” it indicates that NALC Headquarters has not yet received an 1189 from the member.

What if



**Mack I.
Julion**

In February, an emergency meeting of the NALC Executive Council was called because of some leaked reports that the Trump administration was poised to place the United States Postal Service under the authority of the Department of Commerce. As the council discussed this possible executive order, my mind raced not only about the implications this would have on our union and membership, but also on my family and me. My concern was not as a union representative, but as a letter carrier. Because at the core, that's all I really am: a city letter carrier employed by the United States Postal Service. My "swing" is by Midway Airport in Chicago. I love my job, and I believe in the mission of the company for which I work. What if it was all taken away?

At that moment, I recalled my teenage years when my father's job was eliminated by the abrupt relocation of the Uniroyal plant in Chicago to a more employer-friendly right-to-work *for less* state in the South. He retired much sooner than he had planned. This was shortly after the Professional Air Traffic Control Organization (PATCO) debacle in 1981. PATCO was the union for air traffic controllers who believed that they had a friend in the president at that time, Ronald Reagan. Emboldened by his implied campaign support in 1980, the union went on strike for better wages and working conditions in their contract. This kind of strike against the government is called a "wildcat" strike because it is illegal, just like the Great Postal Strike of 1970.

Unfortunately, PATCO's strike did not succeed as ours had. Reagan ordered the air traffic controllers back to work, and when they refused, he fired more than 11,000 of them and banned them from federal employment for life. This signaled to other employers, in both the public and private sectors, that they need not capitulate to the threats of union demands. These *unionized* federal employees assumed their service to our country was so vital that nothing would happen to them...and it did! Suddenly, they were on the outside looking in. These were real people with career government jobs, families and, of course, bills. Sound familiar?

We now witness similar attacks against the American Federation of Government Employees (AFGE), the largest public-sector union, representing more than 800,000 federal and District of Columbia employees. AFGE had to lay off half of its staff due to the anti-union actions and executive orders of the administration. Yet many still believe this won't happen to us. Transportation Security Administration (TSA) employees, formerly represented by AFGE, are now without a union. Their contract and rights to collective bargaining have been stripped away, as they have been recategorized under the Department of Homeland Security. While we are collectively "fighting like hell," we must also prepare for contingencies, both personally and professionally, and for the what-ifs.

What if we were no longer able to collect dues via automatic deduction? *What if* we could no longer represent our members on the clock via union time? *What if* this new postmaster general—an appointee from FedEx—moves forward with plans to undermine the Postal Service and accelerate privatization? Our success in defeating some attacks on us in that big, ugly bill doesn't mean we are safe. I expect more direct, insidious attacks on the Postal Service and our unions. So, as we look at the what-ifs at Headquarters and plan accordingly, branches and state associations should consider in their budgeting and planning the storms that could present themselves in a very short time. Just like it takes resources to maintain our way of life personally, it also takes resources to represent our members. I don't believe in crying wolf, but we all need to know that the threats against the Postal Service are real.

Congratulations to State President Winston Purchase and the elected officers of the Illinois State Association. It's always good to go home and be around my union family there.



Vehicle news and updates



Christopher Jackson

In December 2022, the Postal Service announced its plan to acquire 106,000 delivery vehicles, replacing nearly half of its 220,000-vehicle fleet. Unfortunately, there have been recent efforts on Capitol Hill threatening to withdraw previously approved funding made available through the Inflation Reduction Act of 2022 that is needed to acquire and support these newer vehicles. So far, these efforts have not been successful, and USPS plans to acquire new vehicles appear to be unchanged.

According to the plan, USPS will purchase 60,000 of the recently developed Next Generation Delivery Vehicles (NGDV) from Oshkosh Defense. The remaining 46,000 vehicles in this plan will be commercial off-the-shelf (COTS) vehicles purchased from other manufacturers. Deployment of the NGDV to delivery units across the country began in June of 2024 and continues today. Meanwhile, USPS has been conducting pilot tests evaluating the performance of various other vehicle models when used for delivery operations. One vehicle that has completed the USPS evaluation process is the Ford E-Transit van and, in March of 2023, USPS ordered 9,250 of them for the delivery fleet.

Over the years, I have monitored pilot tests conducted by the Postal Service on various vehicle models being considered for purchase, including the Ford E-Transit. My department has examined each test model, collected feedback from letter carriers involved with the tests and met with USPS and vehicle manufacturer representatives to discuss the vehicles. This month, I will provide the latest information on several of the pilot tests that have ended recently.

Canoo Lifestyle Delivery Vehicle 190



LDV 190 is one of the few right-hand drive vehicles tested by USPS. The battery electric vehicle (BEV) has a unique design and many features that pilot participants enjoyed. Specifically, carriers liked the cabin area's modern design, including its open dashboard area with additional windows which en-

In May of 2024, the Postal Service began testing the use of the Canoo Lifestyle Delivery Vehicle (LDV) 190 at the South Atlanta Sorting and Delivery Center in Georgia. The Canoo

hanced visibility. Carriers also favored the cargo area's sliding shelves. Carriers suggested improvements for the vehicle as well, such as better lighting in the cabin area, ventilation tools in the cargo area and a need to reduce blind spots on the vehicle's roadside. Carriers also found it difficult to complete curbside delivery due to the height of the driver's-side window.

The Canoo LDV 190 pilot ended in November 2024. The vehicle manufacturer filed for Chapter 7 bankruptcy and halted all operations in January of this year. While USPS owns the models used for the pilot, they will not purchase any additional Canoo vehicles. For more information on this pilot, read my November 2024 *Postal Record* column.

eBike

In August of 2021, USPS purchased two models of the Coaster Cycle Freightier electric bicycle (eBike) for testing on existing bicycle delivery routes at two Florida offices, Miami Beach and St. Petersburg. Testing of the eBikes was transferred to the Fredericksburg, VA, Post Office a year later in August 2022. Because the two routes being assigned the eBikes at the Fredericksburg office were not established bicycle routes, the line of travel for each assignment was changed and the delivery method was switched to park-and-loop prior to testing.



Carriers participating in the test received training from driver safety instructors and had to pass a test prior to operating the eBike. One benefit from the test that carriers reported was a reduction in time spent waiting for relay drivers to drop mail to them. Several negatives identified by pilot participants included difficulty starting and stopping the eBike on hills, vehicles passing too closely in traffic and inadequate parking.

Although the eBikes currently owned by USPS will remain in use, NALC was recently notified that testing has ended, and the electric bicycles will not become a part of the delivery fleet. For more information on the eBike pilot test, read my July 2023 *Postal Record* column.

USPS will continue its efforts to replace older model vehicles. I am expecting results from additional vehicle pilot tests that have recently ended, including the Mercedes Benz eSprinter Van and two models of the Morgan Olson C250 (Internal Combustion Engine) and eC250 (BEV). I want to thank each carrier involved in these tests. Their input and cooperation has a significant impact on our craft. I will continue to provide updates on all vehicle testing. Be sure to read my article each month and visit nalc.org for the latest information.

Retaliation by management



**Manuel L.
Peralta Jr.**

This morning I received an Initial Heat Injury Report (nalc.org/workplace-issues/body/Heat-Injury-Initial-Report-Form.pdf) describing the circumstances suffered by one of our letter carriers in New Hampshire. The report suggested that he called his supervisor from the street because he was suffering from the heat. During the initial call, he advised that he was feeling lightheaded and sweating profusely, but that he would continue to the next delivery, which was at an air-conditioned business, and would then update his supervisor.

He called his supervisor 12 minutes later and advised that he was feeling worse, describing “palpitations.” The supervisor should have directed the employee to immediately call 911, or the supervisor should have immediately called 911 on behalf of the suffering employee and then directed responders to the employee’s location. I say “should have,” because, instead of following the protocol in the USPS national Heat Illness Prevention Program (HIPP) training, the supervisor told the employee to remain where he was so that the supervisor could go out and assess him.

This decision by the supervisor delayed medical attention and could have been fatal. The supervisor failed to adhere to the national instructions given in the 2025 HIPP training, which includes a nine-page document titled “FY25 Heat Illness Prevention Program Final” (nalc.org/workplace-issues/safety-and-health/body/FY25-Heat-Illness-Prevention-Program-Final.pdf), providing the following instruction on page 2:

The following Figure is intended to provide specific first aid measures for each condition and should not be implied to reflect any progression in severity. **Employees working away from a Postal Service facility should immediately call 911 and then their supervisor, if able, when they experience signs or symptoms of heat stress, as referenced in Figure 2 below.** (emphasis added)

Had the supervisor undergone the training that we should all have received, and then followed it, I would not be addressing this in my column.

In the last 13 years, the NALC has been actively involved in every aspect of dealing with management’s failure to properly train letter carriers on how to keep themselves as safe as possible in the heat. We have worked just as hard at challenging management over the fact that they have failed to properly train every single one of the supervisors who oversee our craft. Why? Because if they are not properly trained, they don’t know what they should do when our letter carriers reach out for help.

In June of 2016, Central Iowa was under a National Weather Service heat warning. A number of our letter carriers suffered heat-related injuries. The Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) conducted an inspection and then issued a citation to the USPS.

An employer has the right to challenge an OSHA citation by contesting the citation through the Occupational Safety and Health Review Commission (OSHRC). The OSHRC assigns a judge to oversee a hearing, with OSHA being represented by a solicitor for the Department of Labor and the USPS represented by its attorneys. After all evidence is presented at the hearing, the parties generally summarize their thoughts through closing briefs. The judge then weighs the evidence and issues a written decision. Either party has the right to appeal the decision of the judge by requesting a review by the board of the OSHRC. The board convenes a hearing and the appeal is heard. The board then issues a decision on the subject of the appeal.

The USPS challenged the Des Moines, IA, citation, along with several other heat-related citations throughout the country. In a consolidated decision, the judge overturned all five citations. Subsequently, the Des Moines citation was appealed and heard by the board of the OSHRC. By a decision dated Feb. 13, 2023, the board’s decision revived a portion of the original Des Moines citation (Docket# 16-1813), finding as follows:

The supervisor testified that she had never been trained by the Postal Service on heat-related illnesses prior to this incident, apart from sometimes receiving emails with heat safety information and seeing a heat safety poster in the breakroom. She said that “[a]ll the safety talks were performed in the morning before [she] reported to work.” According to the supervisor, her lack of training directly affected the way she responded to the carrier’s complaints: “Due to not being correctly educated on heat exposure, I wasn’t aware of how it was affecting her.” None of this testimony was rebutted by the Postal Service.

We agree with the judge that this evidence supports the Secretary’s argument that the Postal Service’s training at the Des Moines station was deficient and that adequately

training supervisors on heat safety would have materially reduced the risk posed by excessive heat to the carriers at the station...

...Given that the Postal Service instructs carriers to contact their supervisors whenever they experience heat stress symptoms, **providing this training to supervisors is critical to ensuring that they can identify when a carrier is in crisis and respond appropriately.** And the feasibility of providing such training is demonstrated by the fact that a heat-related safety talk was given to Des Moines employees in May 2016, and the supervisor who lacked training was required to attend a mandatory heat safety training shortly after the incident in early July 2016. (emphasis added)

The decision concluded as follows:

In sum, the evidence shows that an excessive heat hazard was present at the worksite and that the Postal Service could have feasibly and materially reduced that hazard by ensuring that all employees, including supervisors and CCAs, were trained on heat safety. We therefore vacate the judge's decision and remand for the judge to address the remaining issues in this case, including the other elements of the alleged general duty clause violation.

Following the remand by the OSHRC, the parties, consisting of the secretary of labor, the USPS and the NALC, entered into a settlement agreement recognizing the outcome as a serious violation of OSHA regulations, requiring the USPS to withdraw its challenge to the citation, comply with specific requirements and pay a reduced fine. A copy of the above findings and the settlement can be retrieved at nalc.org in the "Safety – Extreme Weather" section.

Whenever your carriers experience a heat injury that prompts them to call management for help, we need to find out if management acted properly and promptly. Did management immediately arrange for medical attention, or did they fail to act in accordance with the HIPPP?

We should therefore explore whether or not the USPS has made sure that each and every one of our supervisors are properly trained so that they act properly (OK, I'm dreaming) and take care of the city letter carriers who perform their duties in the extreme heat.

The above account is enough to upset any of us by not having provided immediate care to the carrier making the distress call.

But wait, there's more—It didn't end there.

The following morning, the carrier was hauled into a pre-disciplinary interview (PDI), which appears to be seeking a way to blame the employee for having the audacity of suffering a heat injury.

As the lamp swings over the employee's head, he is asked if he is aware of the signs and symptoms of heat-related illness. He is asked a series of questions designed to show that management has a HIPPP in place and that everyone should know the signs and symptoms of heat illness.

"In the last 13 years, the NALC has been actively involved in every aspect of dealing with management's failure to properly train letter carriers on how to keep themselves as safe as possible in the heat."

He was asked if he had worked in the heat before, what he ate on the day of the injury, how many bottles of hydration he had consumed and what kind, how he prepared for the expected heat of the day, where he parked and why.

The questioners also asked why he failed to follow instructions and many other insulting questions.

There was no justification for management to conduct a PDI, except for their effort to blame the employee and take no responsibility for their failure to immediately get off their ass on the first call (12:02 p.m.) and go check on this employee. His supervisor took 41 minutes to go out to check on him. He could have died. The USPS would then have staged a public relations representative to tell the media that the deceased was properly trained but did not follow instructions, as it has done in the past.

I have recommended that the employee file an OSHA whistleblower complaint and that the union investigate the misconduct of these managers. A whistleblower complaint can be filed at whistleblowers.gov/complaint_page.

Management professes that safety depends on you. I say that they do so because we cannot depend on them.

Keep an eye on each other and make sure that your supervisors know what they should be doing when they receive that distress call.

Budgeting for retirement



**Dan
Toth**

When preparing for retirement, an important step is to understand your budget. Everyone's retirement is unique, but we can learn a thing or two from reviewing our current budget as active employees.

There are two main components of a budget: money coming in and money going out. For letter carriers with a single stream of income, figuring out income is pretty straightforward. Some may need to grab pay stubs from other jobs, or IRS form W-2, Wage and Tax Statement from the latest year.

From there, we can start to chip away and see how the money is spent. Make a list of your bills and expenses, and their amounts (use averages when applicable). This should include mandatory items like mortgage or rent, utilities, groceries, clothes and transportation costs, as well as any and all discretionary expenses like streaming or subscription services, entertainment and hobbies. Grouping expenses into mandatory and discretionary can help one realize what can be trimmed out if the budget gets too tight.

Some other expenses right on your pay stub would be health insurance, life insurance, Federal Insurance Contributions Act (FICA) payroll taxes, state and federal taxes, Thrift Savings Plan (TSP) contributions and union dues.

However, budgeting for retirement is trickier because we typically expect our spending to change, and it isn't always easy to predict. With that being said, it's a good idea to start with your expenses pre-retirement and modify each expense when there is sufficient information to do so.

Employees enrolled in the Postal Service Health Benefits (PSHB) Program and those who stay enrolled into retirement will continue to pay the same total premiums. Active employees and retirees alike contribute 28 percent of the premium. So, unless you're changing plans during Open Season or from a qualifying life event (retirement is not a qualifying life event), you can expect to pay the same.

When looking at expenses on your paycheck, be sure to convert to a monthly or yearly amount. This can be done by multiplying by 26 (to make it an annual amount) and dividing by 12 (to make it a monthly amount).

FICA tax is deducted from each paycheck. This tax includes 6.2 percent for Social Security and 1.45 percent for

Medicare. Civil Service Retirement System employees do not contribute to Social Security, so they aren't subject to the 6.2 percent deduction. Another pay stub deduction is the TSP. Hopefully, everyone is contributing at least 5 percent of their base pay. Retirees won't need (and are unable) to continue contributions to their TSP. Because retirees won't be making FICA tax or TSP payments, Federal Employee Retirement System employees will be saving a total of 12.65 percent when retiring.

Union dues decrease significantly for retirees. National dues are only \$7 per year, with some states and branches charging an additional amount. This means that retirees will be saving, on average, about \$50 per month, depending on their specific dues.

You should try to determine how your spending will change after retiring. Will you spend more money on dining out and entertainment now that you have more free time? Or will you save money by cooking at home more often? Will you spend less on transportation now that you don't have to commute every day? If you have a mortgage, when will it be paid off? Have you accounted for home maintenance or rent increases? Regardless, it's wise to have a buffer planned so that you have flexibility when unanticipated costs arrive (and they will).

The next step is to get your annuity estimate and understand all your retirement benefits. What is your annuity estimate? Will you be receiving the annuity supplement, and if so, for how long? What is your Social Security estimate and when would you start drawing benefits? How much is in your TSP and how do you plan to use it? Putting all these together should give you some options and see how it compares to your current budget.

Once you've drafted your budget, you should track and review it for a few months. This will give you a chance to add items you didn't consider or simply update the numbers to better reflect your spending. Were you able to stick to your budget, and if not, why? Many people don't realize how small but frequent expenses, such as a morning coffee and muffin, can add up.

Hopefully your retirement income is larger than your budget, or you might need to reconsider your plans. You don't want to get off on the wrong foot and spend more than you bring in. Leave some room in your budget but also in your lifestyle and choices to remain flexible. Be prepared to adapt if needed. This could mean either tightening the belt or loosening it to maximize your retirement. Be mindful that money is important, but so is time. Balancing your time versus money can be a tricky feat.

Individual Disability Insurance frequently asked questions



**James W.
“Jim” Yates**

Last month my article covered frequently asked questions regarding our insurance products. This month we will review some of the most frequently asked questions regarding our Individual Disability Insurance (IDI) policy.

Why would I want a disability policy? Postal employees are not covered by state-run disability coverage. Our short-term disability insurance provides payment while you are out of work due to illness or injury (whether it was on the job or not).

What types of IDI plans does the MBA offer? MBA offers either six- or 12-month IDI policies at a benefit level of \$650, \$1,350 or \$2,000 per month.

How are partial months paid? The monthly payment amount is calculated to a per-day rate.

Who can take out an IDI policy? Our IDI plan is available to active letter carriers (including city carrier assistants) who are NALC members only, age 18-59. You may keep the policy until age 65, as long as premiums are paid and you maintain employment.

Do premiums go up as I get older? No, premiums are based on your age and which coverage options you choose when the policy is purchased and will remain the same as long as the policy is in force.

How can I get an application, or a claim form? You can print one off our website at nalc.org/mba, call our office (see below), or you can get one from your local MBA representative.

When does the policy begin and how can I pay the premium? The policy begins when we receive the first premium payment. A member can pay biweekly through payroll deduction, monthly or annually via a check, money order or electronic funds transfer (EFT).

What qualifies a disability for payment? To file a claim, it must be a “total disability,” which is due to an injury or sickness. The insured must meet three conditions: they cannot perform the substantial and material duties of their occupation; they’re under a physician’s care; and they are not engaged in any other gainful job or occupation for wage or profit.

How do I get paid when I’m disabled? After the elimination period, complete a disability claim form and submit the form to our office as often as you would like to receive payment. The claim form consists of three sections to be completed in full by the member, the attending physician, and the insured’s supervisor.

What is the elimination period? It is the number of days beginning with the day your total disability starts, for which no disability benefits are provided. Our IDI plan has a 14-day elimination period. The insured is covered for a full six or 12 months after the elimination period is satisfied.

Can I pre-fill the supervisor’s or physician’s section of the claim form? Only the supervisor or attending physician can fill out their section of the claim form.

What if my supervisor doesn’t want to fill out claim form? Sometime a supervisor will refuse to fill out our claim form. If this happens, you can submit your Absence Analysis (PS Form 3972) or your clock rings for the period of disability.

What if I am receiving treatment from two physicians? Both physicians would have to fill out a physician’s section disability claim form.

Can I file a claim for pregnancy? Our IDI does not cover normal pregnancies. If a claim was filed due to a pregnancy with complications that prevented the member from working, the MBA would review the claim for approval.

Can I file a claim for an on-the-job injury even if I filed for workers’ compensation? Yes, if you’re not working due to an on-the-job injury, our disability income will still cover you. Payments from our IDI plan will not affect your compensation claim. Our plan is private insurance, purchased by you. The insurance payments you receive are not considered income.

What is a pre-existing condition limitation? A pre-existing condition is a condition for which symptoms existed that would cause an ordinary prudent person to seek diagnosis, care or treatment within a one-year period preceding the policy date, or for which medical advice or treatment was recommended or received by a physician within a two-year period preceding the policy date. Our IDI policy has a pre-existing condition limitation stating that if total disability starts within

(continued on page 44)

More frequently asked questions



**Stephanie
Stewart**

Continuing from my July article, I would like to explore more of the commonly asked questions received at the NALC Health Benefit Plan (the Plan). Knowing that everyone has unique needs and circumstances, we've tried to compile a variety of commonly asked questions. Although some of the subjects are more specific to certain demographics, the information should be useful to all members of the Plan.

With that said, let's dive into more of the trending questions and answers.

Q: Why was my medical claim denied?

A: Although every medical claim is different, some reasons for denial may include other/primary coverage not processed, missing information, incomplete medical records, the services are not deemed medically necessary, failure to follow pre-authorization guidelines, or services are not a covered benefit.

Other helpful tools include the NALC HBP member portal. To understand why you received a denial, review the description listed at the bottom of the explanation of benefits (EOB) associated with the date of service in question.

Q: Why was my prescription or refill denied?

A: If the denial is related to a prescription, you may be able to speak with someone at the pharmacy to determine the reason for denial (e.g., prior authorization clinical criteria not met, refill too soon, prescription defined as over-the-counter medication, step therapy is required, or other).

However, if you are unable to determine the reason for denial at the pharmacy level, make sure to reach out the Plan, or log in to your CVS Caremark app, where you can review the status of your medication request.

Q: What if I don't agree with the Plan's denial?

A: Within six months of our initial decision, you may ask us in writing to review or reconsider our denial. It is important that you include a statement as to why you believe our initial decision was wrong based on our official provisions in the brochure, and include copies of physicians' letters, operative reports, bills, and/or medical records to support your claim.

Q: My EOB from the Plan shows a balance under patient liability. Where do I send this money?

A: Keep in mind that the EOB from the Plan is not an invoice. Once you have carefully reviewed the EOB statement for accuracy, any balance due should be sent to the rendering provider or facility. If you suspect the provider has charged you for services that you did not receive, or duplicated charges for the same service, reach out to the billing office, as there might be an error.

Q: Once my enrollment is processed in the SilverScript Prescription Drug Program, when will my coverage begin?

A: Normally processing may take up to 45 days. Once finalized, coverage will begin on the first day of the following month.

Q: What is the difference between a physician who has opted out of Medicare and a physician who is non-participating in Medicare?

A: Per cms.gov, opt-out and non-participating providers are defined as follows:

- "Doctors or other health care providers who don't want to work with the Medicare program may 'opt out' of Medicare."
- "Some providers who don't accept assignment still choose to accept the Medicare-approved amount for services on a case-by-case basis. These providers are called 'non-participating'."

Q: My provider has opted out of Medicare. What will my patient responsibility be?

A: When you utilize an opt-out provider, the Plan does not waive our deductible and will limit our payment to 20 percent of the Plan allowance after the deductible has been met.

Q: My provider is a non-participating (non-par) Medicare provider, meaning they have chosen not to accept the Medicare assignment and can charge 15 percent above the Medicare-approved amount. How will this affect me?

A: As stated above, non-pars may choose to accept or not accept the Medicare-approved amount. If they do not accept, the Plan will pay the Medicare coinsurance in addition to the 15 percent above the Medicare-approved amount, which is commonly referred to as the "Medicare limiting charge."

Understandably, a Q&A will never be able to address every problem that arises, but I hope these have been a good start. Also, please don't hesitate to reach out to one of our knowledgeable representatives should you need further assistance.

Administrative separations

Outside of the probationary period, or the 90/120 requirement, as a city carrier assistant (CCA), the Postal Service can only involuntarily separate employees in one of two ways; the first is by satisfying the “just cause” standard found in Article 16 of the National Agreement, or second, through an administrative process called separation-disability. This article will define administrative separations and explain the requirements associated with them.

Employees who have been absent for one year of continuous service without pay because of illness may be separated for disability. When an employee is being separated for disability, management must follow the applicable handbooks and manual provisions. The *Employee and Labor Relations Manual (ELM)* Section 365.34 lays out the provisions of separation-disability and begins by defining the term:

Separation-disability is a term used to indicate the separation of an employee other than a non-career or a probationary employee whose medical condition renders the employee unable to perform the duties of the position and who is ineligible for disability retirement.

ELM Section 365.342, Applicability, provides the criteria for employees with one year of continuous absence without pay because of illness, employees covered under the Uniformed Services Employment and Reemployment Rights Act (USERRA) who are recovering from a service-connected disability, and employees covered under the Office of Workers’ Compensation Programs (OWCP) due to an on-the-job injury. This section also details steps that must be taken prior to affecting disability-separation. *ELM* Section 365.342.a explains:

At the expiration of 1 year of continuous absence without pay, an employee who has been absent because of illness may be separated for disability. This action is not mandatory, however, and if there is reason to believe the employee will recover within a reasonable length of time beyond the 1-year period, the employee may be granted additional leave in 30-day periods, not to exceed 90 days. If the employee’s condition indicates that LWOP beyond that period is necessary incident to full recovery, the postal official must submit a comprehensive report to the area manager of Human Resources with appropriate recommendation and retain the employee on the rolls pending a decision.

It’s clear that disability separation is not mandatory. There is discretion to extend leave if the employee might recover within a reasonable length of time beyond the one year of continuous leave without pay (LWOP). Grievance handlers should be sure to examine

the actual LWOP used, in particular any interruptions to LWOP (i.e., they entered into a pay status), as well as reports indicating the employee may be able to recover and when.

USERRA provides rights to employees who are hospitalized or recovering from a service-disconnected disability. This provision is reflected in *ELM* Section 342.b:

An employee covered under USERRA who is hospitalized or convalescing due to a service-connected disability is required to return to work once recovered. The recovery period may not exceed 2 years (see EL-312 773(d)). Before any employee covered under USERRA can be separated for disability, the requesting postal official must submit a comprehensive report through the proper channels to the manager of Human Resources (Area), with appropriate recommendations. The employee must be retained on the rolls of the Postal Service pending a decision.

Employees in an LWOP status due to an on-the-job injury receive additional protections from an administrative separation for disability. *ELM* Sections 365.342.c and 365.342.d state:

c. If an employee on the rolls of the Office of Workers’ Compensation Programs (OWCP) is unable to return to work at the end of the initial 1-year period of LWOP, the LWOP may be extended for successive additional periods of up to 6 months each. Extensions are granted only if it appears likely that the employee will be able to return to work within the period of the extension. If it does not appear likely that the employee will be able to return to work during the period, the employee, upon approval of the area manager of Human Resources (Area), is separated subject to reemployment rights.

d. Before any employee on the rolls of the OWCP can be separated, the requesting postal official must submit a comprehensive report through channels to the manager of Human Resources (Area), with appropriate recommendations. The employee must be retained on the rolls of the Postal Service pending a decision.

Take note that extensions for employees on OWCP for an on-the-job injury are in six-month periods (rather than 30-day periods in Part a) and there is no limit placed on the number of extensions.

Grievance handlers may be able to prevent disability-separations of employees by utilizing light- and limited-duty procedures. Returning an employee to a pay status through these provisions would instantly make the employee ineligible for a disability-separation, as it would break or interrupt the one year of continuous LWOP requirement. The provisions of Article 13, Assignment of Ill or Injured Regular Workforce

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Administrative separations (continued)

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Employees, govern voluntary requests for light-duty work by employees who are temporarily or permanently incapable of performing their normal duties as a result of illness or injury. USPS procedures regarding limited duty (provided for an employee who is temporarily or permanently incapable of performing their normal duties as a result of a job-related compensable illness or injury) are found in Section 540 of the *ELM*. The local union must initiate any limited- or light-duty grievances prior to the effective date of the separation while the employee is still on the postal rolls.

Handbook EL-505, Injury Compensation lays out additional procedural rules that management must follow when separating an employee out on OWCP. *EL-505* Section 4-22 requires the Postal Service to initiate the following actions prior to separating an employee who is injured on duty and has been in a continuous LWOP status for one year:

- Request current claim status and copies of the latest medical reports from OWCP.
- Schedule the employee for a fitness-for-duty exam.
- If the medical documentation indicates that the employee is capable of performing full duty, **return the employee to work.**
- If the medical documentation indicates that the employee is temporarily partially disabled, **issue the employee a written limited duty job offer.**
- If the medical documentation indicates that the employee is permanently partially disabled, **issue the employee a written permanent rehabilitation job offer.**
- If the medical documentation indicates temporary total disability and the injured employee is expected to return to work within six months, extend the LWOP status.
- If the medical documentation indicates permanent total disability, request separation according to the procedures outlined in *ELM* Section 365.

Thus, when a carrier's disability is partial (able to perform some work) and work related, the Postal Service does not have the authority to separate (regardless of whether the partial disability is temporary or

permanent). Instead, it must provide a limited-duty job or rehabilitation assignment.

Union representatives can find evidence of the status of the injured employee's disability (partial versus total and temporary versus permanent) in various places. These include:

- A. Medical documentation. This can come from the attending physician and/or second opinion or referee doctor in the form of CA-17, Duty Status Report, OWCP 5c Work Capacity Evaluation Musculoskeletal Conditions, medical narratives explaining restrictions, etc. It should be noted that when there are differing medical opinions, only OWCP can determine which opinion is controlling.
- B. OWCP case file:
 1. A letter from the claims examiner that states the employee can return to work.
 2. Evidence of vocational rehabilitation. OWCP does not provide vocational rehabilitation when employees are totally disabled.

When the evidence shows that disability is permanent and total after one year of LWOP, prior to separating an employee, *EL-505* Section 4-23 requires local management to prepare a request letter to Postal Service Headquarters that includes:

- A brief history of the employee's injury.
- The date the employee entered into an LWOP-IOD status. The employee must have been in an LWOP-IOD status for one year before separation is requested.
- Conclusive medical reports that are no more than six months old and a summary of pertinent medical documentation substantiating the request for separation.
- A request to the area HR analyst for confirmation to terminate the employee's LWOP-IOD status and initiate separation action. The request is to be agreed with by the district HR manager and the appropriate functional manager and be signed by the district manager.

After management has prepared their request in accordance with the above provision, they are then required to submit the request to USPS headquarters and maintain the employee on the rolls until a formal

decision is received from headquarters. If applicable, the letter carrier must be advised of retirement rights in the final notification letter.

To preempt management arguments that the *EL-505* is not enforceable through the grievance procedure, grievance handlers can cite the Postal Service's post-argument brief dated Jan. 6, 2012, in MSPB case *Latham v. USPS* (docket no. DA-0353-10-0408-1-1). In this brief, the Postal Service argues that the *EL-505* is part of the collective-bargaining agreements, and as a result binding. The brief states, in part:

But there is no dispute that *ELM* § 546 and *Handbook EL-505* are, for all intents and purposes, collective-bargaining agreements...As a result, *ELM* § 546 and *Handbook EL-505* have been transformed from unilateral policy statements to binding agreements.

In all situations under *ELM* Section 365.342, management must retain the employee on the rolls pending a decision. In each case, the requesting official must submit a "comprehensive report" to the manager of Human Resources (Area). Stewards should be sure to request the comprehensive report (be sure to do so in writing and include the request in the case file).

ELM Section 365.342.e explains that if the manager of Human Resources approves the request to proceed with a disability separation, the employee is not separated until given an opportunity to retire. *ELM* Section 365.342.e states:

e. If the manager of Human Resources (Area) approves the request, and if the employee has sufficient service for entitlement to retirement, the employee is not separated until given an opportunity to retire. For involuntary separation, the notice and appeal procedures outlined in 650 or the applicable collective bargaining agreement, whichever is appropriate, is followed.

Civil Service Retirement System (CSRS) employees must have completed at least five years of creditable federal civilian service to be eligible for disability retirement. Federal Employees Retirement System (FERS) employees must have completed at least 18 months of federal civilian service to be eligible for disability retirement.

If the employee is eligible for disability retirement but chooses not to apply, they are not separated until a complete medical report has been received (by the manager of Human Resources) and the employee has received retirement counseling. *ELM* Section 365.342.f states:

An employee who is eligible for disability retirement but chooses not to apply is not separated for disability until a complete medical report has been received and the employee has received retirement counseling.

Separated employees can still apply for disability retirement even if they chose not to while employed. The application for disability retirement must be received by the Office of Personnel Management (OPM) within one year after the date of the separation.

There are situations in which management may initiate disability retirement on behalf of the employee. These regulations are found in *ELM* Section 568 for CSRS employees, and *ELM* Section 588 for FERS employees. *ELM* Section 588.21, Basis for Filing, explains:

An employing office may file an application for disability retirement for an employee who has at least 18 months of creditable civilian service when all of the following conditions are met:

- c. The employing office has issued a decision to remove the employee;
- d. The employing office concludes, after its review of medical documentation, that the cause for unacceptable performance, attendance, or conduct is disease or injury;
- e. The employee is institutionalized or, based on a review of medical and other information, the employing office concludes that the employee is incapable of making a decision to file an application for disability retirement;
- f. The employee has no personal representative or guardian;
- g. The employee has no immediate family member who is willing to file an application on her or her behalf.

OPM, the government agency that promulgates CSRS and FERS, mandates that the employing agency must file a disability application when all of the conditions are met in the Civil Service Retirement System (CSRS) and Federal Employees Retirement System (FERS) *Handbook for Personnel and Payroll Offices (CSRS FERS Handbook)*, Chapter 60. These conditions are similar to the conditions found in *ELM* 588.21 and *ELM* 568.11.

If the agency files a disability retirement application on an employee's behalf, the application must be filed prior to separating the employee from service. Additionally, the agency should place a statement in the OPF (official personnel file) that describes the agency's attempt to perfect an application and its reasons for believing that such an application was appropriate. These regulations are found in Section 60A.3.1-2 of the *CSRS FERS Handbook*.

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Administrative separations (continued)

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Employees must receive official notice if being separated for disability. *ELM* Section 365.343, Notice to Employee, states:

No employees who have completed their probationary period are separated for disability until given a notice in writing of the proposed action and an opportunity to reply in accordance with appropriate adverse action procedures. Employees eligible for disability retirement are advised and notified that unless they file application for disability retirement within 1 year of separation their rights will lapse.

Employees who receive notice of separation should immediately contact their union representative for assistance. In disability-separation grievances, the union should be sure to fully document the contract violation with appropriate contentions and evidence that supports the violation. Remember that these grievances are not the same as discipline cases, and the union bears the burden of proof.

The Postal Service also has attempted to use administrative separation procedures on employees

after they have passed their probationary period (or 90/120 requirement as a CCA) when these employees received an unfavorable National Agency Check with Inquiries (better known as a NACI background check). Through disputes over these separations, management has argued that the provisions of Article 16 and the “just cause” principle are not applicable. However, in a national award by Arbitrator Newman dated June 30, 2025, (USPS Case No. 6X 21C-6X-C 3281423 and C-37276 in NALC’s arbitration system), Arbitrator Newman found that grievances protesting the separation of non-probationary employees based upon an unfavorable NACI report are arbitrable, and in such cases the Postal Service must prove that it had just cause for the separation/removal under the principles of Article 16. Grievances concerning separations after probation due to an unfavorable NACI report should be sure to include this national award.

It is vital for grievance handlers to discover and attack all procedural errors when management initiates an administrative separation outside of the probationary period.

Director of Life Insurance

Individual Disability FAQ (continued)

(continued from page 39)

two years from the policy date, and is due to a pre-existing condition, benefits will not be paid unless you have gone for a period of one year while the policy is in force without receiving any medical advice or treatment for that condition.

What is a concurrent disability? A concurrent disability means one continuous period of total disability that is caused, or is continued by, more than one injury or sickness. Benefits will be paid as if the concurrent disability was caused by one injury or one sickness. In no event will the insured be considered to have more than one continuous period of total disability at the same time.

What is recurrent disability? A recurrent disability is a disability due to the same or related cause applicable to the prior period of total disability; it also occurs within 180 days after the end of the prior total disability. In such cases, the benefit period will be reduced by the number of days benefits were paid for the prior period (or periods) of total disability. The elimination period must be satisfied with each recurrence. Two or more periods of recurrent disability may not be used to determine completion of one elimination period.

Additional information can be obtained about any of our policies on our website at nalc.org/mba or by calling the office at 202-638-4318 Monday to Friday 8 a.m. to 3:30 p.m. Eastern time.

MDA Summer Camp

First and foremost, thanks to all who participated in 2024 to raise more than \$1.25 million for MDA. Each dollar you raised gave many children and young adults hope and many weeks of fun at an MDA Summer Camp.

The following NALC members and their guests were in attendance at the MDA Summer Camp: Michael Short of Northeastern New York Branch 358; Joshua Petersson of South Central Indiana Branch 828; Jesse Redden of Fort Wayne, IN Branch 116; Clint Colie of New Jersey Merged Branch 38; Chris Hull of Zanesville, OH Branch 63; David Norton of Portland, OR Branch 82; Tim Huhta of Erie, PA Branch 284; Larry Sleger of Manitowoc, WI Branch 490; Melissa Harris of Louisville, KY Branch 14; Assistant to the President for Community Services Christina Vela Davidson; and MDA National Service Partners Director Tawny Saunders.

"This was the first return of the Category Winners' Incentive NALC/MDA trip since COVID," Vela Davidson explained.

On June 17, the category winners attended the Salvation Army Wonderland Camp, which hosted the 2025 MDA Summer Camp. All sponsors were there that day and able to interact with the children and volunteers, playing games and awarding prizes. NALC members ran several booths and helped children partake in the games and have fun.

"It was an emotional time, seeing the smiles on the children's faces and hearing their laughs," Vela Davidson said. "It made me tear up. However, it made the work we all put in worth every penny."

Each summer, kids and young adults with neuromuscular disease attend these life-changing overnight camps around the United States at no cost to their families, thanks to NALC and other generous supporters. Camp gives kids a chance to discover new interests while gaining self-confidence, making lifelong friendships and experiencing the independence of being away from home.

MDA Summer Camp creates a world of possibilities for children living with neuromuscular disease. It's a magical place of inclusion, empowerment, exploration and growth.

The magic is in the experience of trying something new, developing friendships that last a lifetime, learning to self-advocate, and harnessing potential.

Camp offers a variety of activities and programs such as arts and crafts, sports and games, traditional camp activities and more. Every activity is adapted to meet



each individual's needs and abilities. Dedicated and trained volunteer camp counselors are available to help campers with activities of daily living and personal care. An MFA poll showed the positive benefits:

- 98% of parents shared that MDA Summer Camp creates opportunities for campers to develop a positive self-identity.
- 94% of parents shared that MDA Summer Camp fosters independence and agency in their child.
- 93% of parents shared that MDA Summer Camp provides their child opportunities to make friends.

"Thanks to your fundraising efforts, brothers and sisters, MDA can provide a safe, inclusive summer camp experience at no cost to families," Vela Davidson said.

For the NALC attendees, the experience was a moving one that made them want to continue to raise money for MDA. "My mother told me, 'If you think you can help someone, you should always try,'" Melissa Harris from Branch 14 said.

Make sure you and your branch are continuing to fundraise for 2025.

Reminder: Send a copy of the allocation form and checks to NALC so your branch can be credited the proper totals. Remember to send all money raised into MDA before Dec. 31 to receive credit.



OWCP suspends, resumes oral hearings



Regional Workers' Compensation Assistant Coby Jones

On April 22, OWCP sent out notices unilaterally canceling every scheduled oral hearing nationwide. This was deeply disturbing to us on multiple levels. It left hundreds of our members who were anxiously awaiting the timely adjudication of their claims stranded in uncertainty—many without income and unable to work. The right to an oral hearing is the only avenue of appeal that the Federal Employees' Compensation Act (FECA) itself

explicitly provides for at 5 USC 8124(b).¹ Congress created this statutory right almost 60 years ago, when it amended the FECA in 1966. And while this is the first time that this right has been suspended, the good news is that OWCP resumed scheduling oral hearings at the end of June.

According to the cancellation notices sent out, “Due to unforeseen circumstances related to our contracted transcription service, we regret to inform you that your upcoming hearing (scheduling notice attached) must be cancelled.” While there were unsubstantiated rumors that the Department of Government Efficiency (DOGE) canceled the transcription service contract, without the transcription service the statutorily mandated hearings could not take place. Court reporters form an essential part of the oral hearing process and the transcriptions they produce constitute the legal record of the hearing.

Every initial formal decision from OWCP carries with it the right to request an oral hearing. And while initial formal decisions often involve the initial denial of a claim, initial formal decisions can occur at any point during the life of an accepted claim. They can be issued in cases involving denials of wage-loss compensation, terminations of benefits based on recovery or the rejection of suitable work, wage-earning capacity determinations to reduce compensation benefits, denials

or reductions of schedule awards, reimbursements of travel expenses, forfeitures of benefits, denials of medical procedures, etc.

An appeal to the Branch of Hearings and Review (BHR) for an oral hearing or review of the written record must be made within 30 days from the date of the decision. Hearings representatives at the BHR are among the most experienced claims examiners with broad knowledge of the FECA and OWCP regulations and procedure.

In many initial denials, especially the initial denial of a claim, oral hearings may be the best appeal route. In the give and take of the hearing, the hearings representative can respond to the claimant's questions and provide guidance to the claimant regarding deficiencies in the case and the sort of evidence that the claimant will need to produce to overcome the deficiencies in order to get a claim accepted, or an initial denial or reduction of a benefit reversed.

An oral hearing is also a good venue in cases where the issues are more complex. For example, if the claim is denied for a “performance of duty” issue, such as in the case of an emotional reaction claim, it will be easier at oral hearing to address direct questions from the hearing representative and present clarifying testimony from the claimant, their co-workers, or any other witnesses to the issue at hand.²

The biggest downside to requesting an oral hearing is that it can take three to six months to get the hearing scheduled, and then up to 75 days to get a decision. Appealing to BHR, however, in many cases it might actually expedite the appeals process. When hearings representatives receive an appeal, they will review the entire case file. If they find, during this preliminary review, sufficient evidence to reverse the initial decision or to determine that the initial decision was in error, they can issue a new decision without even going to hearing. In recent years, OWCP has encouraged its hearings representatives to issue such decisions whenever the evidence warrants it. Our regional workers' compensation assistants have all noted the positive effects of this policy emphasis.

While the NALC welcomes the resumption of oral hearings, we still have deep concerns over ongoing staff reductions within OWCP. The Department of La-

¹ The other avenues of appeal, such as applications for reconsideration or to the Employees' Compensation Appeals Board, fall under the more general language of 5 USC 8128(a) that permits the secretary of labor to “review an award for or against payment of compensation at any time on his own motion or on application.” This language gave the Department of Labor the authority to create OWCP's appeals process, found in Subpart G of the implementing regulations at 20 CFR 10.600-626.

² An oral hearing is the only appeal route that permits oral testimony by witnesses. And it is the only part of the claims process where a claimant may request a subpoena. The granting or denial of such a request is at the discretion of the hearing representative.

bor (DOL) has told us repeatedly over the years that well-run state injury compensation programs, such as in Washington state, operate most efficiently in balancing quality and timeliness of case decisions with a ratio of about 200 case per claims examiner. That's the industry gold standard. The current ratio at the DOL is approximately four times higher. Frankly, with such a high caseload, we're anticipating delays

in claims processing that in the short run will disrupt and devastate injured workers' families, and in the long run will make the program more expensive. Timely adjudication of cases and prompt provision of treatment and benefits result in a much higher return-to-work rate. Delays lead to higher costs with workers remaining on the OWCP rolls for much longer—and sometimes permanently.

News

Updated food drive results and corrections

The list of branch totals for the 2025 Stamp Out Hunger Food Drive results that ran in the July issue of *The Postal Record* accidentally included the incorrect names for

a number of branches. The correct branches are in the first list below.

The second list below are additions to the results published in the previous issue. With these additions and

Kellanova committed to providing 250,000 pounds of food to local food banks nationwide, the overall total pounds of food collected increases to 48,104,028 pounds. **PR**

Corrected branch names

Palm Springs, CA Br. 4149
Ft. Lauderdale, FL Br. 2550
Milledgeville, GA Br. 1269
Gainesville, GA Br. 1441
Cedar Falls, IA Br. 719
Arlington Heights, IL Br. 2810

Frankfort, IN Br. 368
Evansville, IN Br. 377
Jeffersonville, IN Br. 553
Elizabethtown, KY Br. 3515
Jackson, MI Br. 232
Wyandotte, MI Br. 758

Cape Girardeau, MO Br. 1015
Paterson, NJ Br. 120
South Jersey, NJ Br. 908
Raton, NM Br. 1142
Jamaica, NY Br. 562
Orangeburg, SC Br. 1782

Atlanta, TX Br. 5445
Logan, UT Br. 970
North Sound, WA Br. 450
Milton, WV Br. 5599

Additional branch totals

Arkansas

Camden Br. 1802..... 788
West Memphis Br. 4189..... 864

California

Tulare Br. 1810..... 260
Pasadena Br. 2200..... 123,537

Kansas

Emporia Br. 185..... 2,700

Kentucky

Lawrenceburg Br. 3624..... 100

Massachusetts

Boston Br. 34.....158,860

Michigan

Menominee Br. 249..... 8,200
Zeeland Br. 2178..... 12,281

Mississippi

Jackson Br. 217..... 1,017

North Dakota

Dickinson Br. 1463..... 1,205

Ohio

Martins Ferry Br. 1061..... 5,000

Oklahoma

Guymon Br. 3264..... 765

Tennessee

Greeneville Br. 1079..... 2,245

Utah

Pleasant Grove Br. 5360..... 12,317
Moab Br. 5964..... 2,000

Virginia

Virginia Beach Br. 2819..... 15,571

Washington

Tacoma Br. 130..... 86,357
Snohomish Co. Br. 791..... 176,603

Wisconsin

Madison Br. 507..... 156,100

Wyoming

Riverton Br. 5923..... 1,260



NALC Financial Statement

NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF LETTER CARRIERS UNCONSOLIDATED STATEMENT OF CASH RECEIPTS AND CASH DISBURSEMENTS BY FUND FOR THE SIX MONTHS ENDING MARCH 31, 2025

	General Fund	Building Fund	Convention Fund	Legislative and Political Action Fund	Public Relations Fund	Political Education Fund	Doherty Scholarship Fund	Subtotal Unrestricted Fund	Donelson Scholarship Restricted Fund	Total All Funds
Cash Receipts										
Per capita tax	26,860,394	92,983	88,333	46,492	18,598	278,949	20,586	27,385,749	3,389	27,385,749
Investment Income	4,998,239	491,312						5,510,137		5,513,526
Postal Record Advertising Income	1,175							1,175		1,175
Inventory Sales	49,813		110,558					160,371		160,371
Contributions	291,478						3,650	295,128		295,128
Service Allowance Transfer	9,500,000							9,500,000		9,500,000
Rental Income	188,376							188,376		188,376
Other Income	85,754							85,754		85,754
Building Corporation Transfer	1,600,000							1,600,000		1,600,000
Total Cash Receipts	43,575,229	584,295	198,891	46,492	18,598	278,949	24,236	44,726,690	3,389	44,730,079
Cash Disbursements										
Salaries and Other Compensation	13,819,215							13,819,215		13,819,215
Benefits and Employment Taxes	6,793,635							6,793,635		6,793,635
Office and Administrative Expenses	3,603,266		70			19,798		3,623,134		3,623,134
Contributions, Awards & Scholarships	181,500							181,500	1,000	182,500
Affiliation & Fees	1,353,202							1,353,202		1,353,202
Professional Expenses	4,378,188				18,598	1,454		4,401,240		4,401,240
Meetings and Travel	3,216,365		3,000			203,029		3,434,539		3,434,539
Communications & Publications	3,725,899		15,145					3,729,854		3,729,854
Office Occupancy	3,154,865		3,787			168		3,154,865		3,154,865
Capital Assets Purchased	682,607	150,000						832,607		832,607
Total Cash Disbursements	40,908,742	150,000	22,002	-	18,598	224,449	-	41,323,791	1,000	41,324,791
Excess of Cash Receipts over Cash Disbursements	2,666,487	434,295	176,889	46,492	0	54,500	24,236	3,402,900	2,389	3,405,289

Nicole Rhine
Secretary- Treasurer

Anchorage, Alaska

Great work by the NALC in keeping the FERS supplement as a retirement benefit. Of course, the rest of the bill will negatively affect us at tax time and ensure the billionaires stay billionaires. The attack on federal workers won't stop as long as this administration is in power.

The back pay is coming soon, and it's a great opportunity to either start or increase your contributions to the Letter Carrier Political Fund. You can make a one-time donation as well.

My letter carrier was telling me how they recently adjusted his route. I suspect it's happening to many of you that, when you look at your line of travel, you are driving by deliveries that were put on other routes. I know they adjusted a route where a park was in the middle of the street, yet management still wanted the carrier to do the even side first and then the odd side. To do this, it added nearly 30 minutes of drive time to make the deliveries the way they had the line of travel.

OPM has made changes for federal agencies on how it processes the retirement package. OPM is processing retirements electronically now. OPM will no longer accept paper retirement applications. There shouldn't be anything different for those retiring. You will still complete the forms on paper and submit as has been done. It will be HRSSC who will have to scan and send your retirement packet to OPM electronically. The goal is to modernize the system and make processing quicker. In the last two months, OPM has received double the number of retirement applications. Its inventory is up by more than 10,000. So, you can expect to add another month to have your retirement application finalized. Prepare yourself financially for the added delay.

Jim Raymond, Branch 4319

Bergen Co. Mgd., New Jersey

We had another great retiree luncheon at the Brownstone. We had more than 89 people who attended, which included 28 retirees.

One of them was 95 years young: Edward Mani, who retired in 1988. Happily retired Larry Cirelli (our former business agent) attended and said a few words.

Legislative and Political Organizer Ozzie Lecky Jr. was there to talk about the Letter Carrier Political Fund and got a handful of members to sign up to contribute.

Some of the new retirees who attended were Vincent Tedesco, Alvaro Ruiz and Donna Marie Nawrocki. We also presented a gold card to Al Valverde.

Follow the branch on our Facebook page and please attend the union meetings.

Dennis Spoto, Branch 425

Centennial, Colorado

Another missive from a retired letter carrier; I just celebrated the six-year mark. Life continues with all the usual ups and downs. Last year I wrote about getting my spouse on Medicare Part B—what a mess that turned out to be. A phone call to my congressman put “a fire” under the local head of Social Security,

and he was approved in April of this year. Since the implement date was January, he had four months of premiums taken out of his Social Security check (didn't see that coming). Now the expenses that our health plan covered in those four months are being renegotiated, because he had Medicare, but no one knew? The ups and downs... I'm curious if anyone else had such a hard time with this.

So, heading into the extreme heat reminds me of all the things we used to do to stay cool. I remember looking for shade trees and learning how to rearrange the mail to start at a different address. Wearing a hat that I could soak every few blocks seemed to work. Spraying water into the LLV fan was nifty. This can be a tough time of year for heat sensitive folks; please watch out for each other, especially those just starting out.

Finally, I want to welcome the newest retiree from Branch 5996—D. E. (Danny) Chavis. He started with a military career, moved into delivering mail and fought for letter carriers many years as a steward and then vice president of the local branch. Passionate, funny and loyal, he'll be a welcome sight to our monthly retiree breakfast, as well as a continuing activist for NALC. And congratulations to Anne Ibison, who was appointed as our new V.P.

In unity—

Barb Larson, Branch 5996

Paterson, New Jersey

With the inception of a new government agency, the Department of Government Efficiency (DOGE), many people welcome a national auditing system to detect waste and fraud. Although this may be a reasonable expectation, is it necessary to eliminate full departments of the government and throwing many government public officials and dedicated employees out of work?

Not every agency has waste and fraud, and some agencies were developed to protect the American public. Government does have an obligation to protect the public not only from wars, financial chaos, health, etc. Does our government have our best interest in mind? We certainly hope so.

Notice

By making a contribution to the Letter Carrier Political Fund, you are doing so voluntarily with the understanding that your contribution is not a condition of membership in the National Association of Letter Carriers or of employment by the Postal Service, nor is it part of union dues. You have a right to refuse to contribute without any reprisal. Any guideline amounts are merely suggestions, and you may contribute more or less than the guidelines suggest and the union will not favor or disadvantage you by reason of the amount of your contribution or your decision not to contribute. The Letter Carrier Political Fund will use the money it receives to contribute to candidates for federal office and undertake other political spending as permitted by law. Your selection shall remain in full force and effect until canceled. Contributions to the Letter Carrier Political Fund are not deductible for federal income tax purposes. Federal law prohibits the Letter Carrier Political Fund from soliciting contributions from individuals who are not NALC members, executive and administrative staff or their families. Any contribution received from such an individual will be refunded to that contributor. Federal law requires us to use our best efforts to collect and report the name, mailing address, name of employer and occupation of individuals whose contributions exceed \$200 in a calendar year.

There is a fine line between eliminating waste and fraud and placing those savings in certain areas that do not seem to help the working class, and instead placing it in the self-interests of people in power.

We must keep a close eye on these situations in order for the working class to remain strong, and to maintain a strong middle class.

Joseph Murone, Branch 120

Springfield, Ohio

At the most recent retiree luncheon (first Wednesday each month, location varies) I was talking with a retiree who mentioned that they did not stay in the union after retiring.

In the past if you did not stay in the union upon retirement, you were SOL and could not join the NALC. But in 2024 at the national convention, the rules changed, and carriers can now join the union months, or even years, after retiring.

The one rule is that you had to be a member in good standing at the time of retirement. If you were not in the union at the time of retirement, you're still SOL.

Cost to join Branch 45 is \$12/year. Yep, a measly \$1 a month. Out of that \$1 a month, 58 cents goes to NALC HQ and gets you *The Postal Record* each month, access to help with scheduled awards, and other retiree issues.

The other 42 cents goes to Branch 45 and gets you access to monthly meetings with free pizza and soda, a rotating day off calendar each year, and a chance to participate in most other branch activities.

So, if you know a retiree who is not in the union, have them give me a call. It's the best dollar you spend each month unless you hit the lottery.

If you want to know the location of the next retiree luncheon, please call Teresa Herzog at 937-360-5777 and leave a message and she will return your call. Thanks, Teresa. Or you can call me at 937-901-8241.

Branch meetings are the second Thursday of each month, 6:30 p.m., second floor of the post office. Elevator is available. Free pizza and soda. Hope to see you there.

Brian Gourilis, Branch 45

State Summaries

California

Kudos to all of you who called, emailed or wrote hard-copy letters to your elected representatives during consideration of the “Big, Beautiful Bill!” The legislation that the president signed into law on Independence Day did not contain any cuts to our pensions. Originally, when the House Oversight and Government Reform Committee members did their markup on April 30, they passed the following cuts: 1) pensions will be based on a high-5 average as opposed to high-3, which would result in a 3 percent reduction in your annuity; 2) those hired as career employees prior to 2013 would pay 5½ times more toward their FERS pension with nothing in return; and 3) elimination of the Special Annuity Supplement, which on average is \$1,500 a month starting for most of you at age 57 and ending at 62.

Our friends in the House were able to strip most of the bad stuff before it got to the Senate. The only thing remaining was that those retiring after 2027 would lose the SAS. Our friends in the upper chamber took that out. But at the same time, Sen. Rand Paul, who is not your friend, proposed that new employees pay over 15 percent of their base pay toward their pensions (over 300 bucks per pay period, if you’re top step) with nothing in return and that the USPS sell back the electric vehicles it’s slated to get. But the Senate parliamentarian stepped in and ruled those moves out of order.

The bad thing is that they cut Medicaid funding to the tune of \$1 trillion. That means that hospitals and other health care providers, who get most of their funding via Medicaid patients, will pass on the costs of newly uninsured patients to someone.

That someone is you, who has health insurance.

Elections matter.

Eric Ellis

Colorado

We can’t thank everyone enough for their support in taking action when called upon. Our success of coming together on a unified front helped us get the negative attacks against letter carriers out of the legislation last month that was signed on Independence Day.

The work is not over! We need to be ready for more attacks coming in the future from those who want to take away workers’ rights. If you are not registered in the NALC “Take Action” center, do it immediately so you can be ready to step up when called upon.

Follow Se Min (Simon) and me on the “Bipartisan Buzz” podcast to get regular updates on what steps you can take to protect yourself and your fellow sisters and brothers on the workroom floor concerning legislative issues.

Stay safe out there, and make sure you stay hydrated during these hot months.

Richard Byrne

Indiana

During June, Indiana lost two distinguished brothers. Both served on the ISALC board and the boards of their branch: Al Lauer of Fort

Wayne Branch 116 and Mike Ragan of Indianapolis Branch 39.

Al Lauer—He was a veteran serving with the United States Air Force. He became a city letter carrier in May 1967. As a branch officer, his time was significant as an MDA volunteer, the president, and eventually a gold card member. Al served on the ISALC board, and he continued his work after retirement. “Al listened and respected other people’s views, often asking non-members about an issue to eventually get them to join. He would fight to the end,” a Branch 116 member said.

Mike Ragan—He was a veteran serving with the United States Navy. He served 25 years as a letter carrier. He was the director of safety and trustee for Branch 39. As an ISALC board member, he was a congressional liaison and the director of retirees. Earning the Eagle Scout rank shows how proud Mike was of the Boy Scouts of America.

May their spouses, their branches, the ISALC and others live on through their works and their contributions to society. It is never too late to ask yourself how you will be remembered by others. Take advantage of your time, because time is not promised to anyone.

Letter carriers, active and retired, including their immediate family members, are invited to ISALC’s family picnic titled “Grillin’, Chillin’ and Politics.” It will be held on Sunday, Aug. 25, at the MLK Jr. Park, 1702 Broadway St., Indianapolis. Food will be served at approximately 12 p.m. A special invited guest will be in attendance. We are our brother’s and sister’s keeper.

Kieaunta Roberson

Kentucky

I am proud of my brothers and sisters of the NALC, and especially those from the state of Kentucky. What has always made us great is the unrelenting fight to protect our rights as a union and as letter carriers. Thank you, Kentucky, for your emails and calls to Congress to remove the parts of H.R. 1 that would adversely affect the NALC and the letter carrier craft.

The provisions that were in the bill would tear at the very fabric that holds the NALC together. Raising the annuity for new employees would have in essence made a third pay structure. That structure would have made any new employee a third-class citizen in the Postal Service. The provisions of being an at-will employee and the high-5 are all attempts to tear us apart from the inside out. You stood up and proved, no matter our disagreements, we still operate as one to outside threats. I thank you, brothers and sisters. The NALC and its members have prevailed, but the fight is never over. History has shown this will not be the last attack on the NALC. I ask each member in the state of Kentucky to keep using the resources through nalc.org, and keep calling and emailing Congress. We stand in solidarity.

I personally would like to thank Bob McNulty for his 20-plus years of service to the Kentucky State Association, and laying the groundwork to grow the association. Bob, I will keep us moving forward and growing in strength. Kentucky, we have started making plans to help

with education at the branch level. Any questions or training you would like, reach out to your branch president or me. I look forward to working with all the branches in the state to grow stronger in solidarity.

Lee Lynch

Michigan

My, how time flies! Our convention was at the end of April, and here I am trying to make the deadline for publication in August’s *Postal Record*. The new board is settling in nicely. Our first board meeting (save for a few minutes together after the convention adjourned) will be on July 9 and 10. We delayed scheduling our meeting until after the local negotiating period had concluded.

Election results from the convention: president—Ron Zalewski of Branch 4374; vice president—Elaine Jones of Branch 1; treasurer—Pete Palmer of Branch 1; secretary—Morgan Harrington of Branch 246; director of education—John Dick of Branch 3126; director of retirees—Mike Sheridan of Branch 4374; executive board chair—Tonya Casey of Branch 56; and executive board members—Beth Bays of Branch 320, Ben Dixon of Branch 1, Jen Rake of Branch 2184 and Kevin “Ohio” Walker of Branch 3126.

Ronald Zalewski

Tennessee

Hello, couriers of the satchel!

Low DPS and a lost Amazon account equals a loss of parcels, along with 12-hour days and a seven-day workweek—that’s enough to stress all letter carriers.

What does all this mean to a carrier? It means that these issues may leave a carrier feeling frustrated and overwhelmed, and lead to stress and other medical conditions. How does one manage it? Drugs and alcohol abuse are not the solution, but exercise and meditation are great for the mind and the body.

Street time (e.g., park-and-loops, hop-outs) is not exercise, but work. One needs to focus on their strengths and try to see their job as a challenge. We need to be vigilant and keep our heads on a swivel looking out for kids running in the street or the criminal intent on robbing you of an Arrow Key. As we enter these muggy days on a park-and-loop or sit in an FFV/LLV with an inside 130-degree cabin temperature, we need to look within ourselves, persevere and deliver the mail.

From the Pony Express days to the present, letter carriers have had a long history of overcoming obstacles. Let us stand strong like a tree and move like a river. Be safe, relax, and be strong!

Tony Rodriguez

Texas

Amid ongoing legislative developments in the United States and Texas, another letter carrier has died while on duty. Jacob Taylor (“JT”), a 28-year employee from Dallas Branch 132, passed away while performing his job. Although the exact cause of death is undeter-

mined, JT had been working in conditions exceeding 90 degrees Fahrenheit at the time. We are asking to please keep JT and his family in your heart and prayers; a young brother gone too soon.

Texas has experienced significant damage as floodwater swept through Kerr County, causing widespread devastation and destroying homes and businesses in the area. Letter carriers were also affected by these storms and can use all the help they can receive to

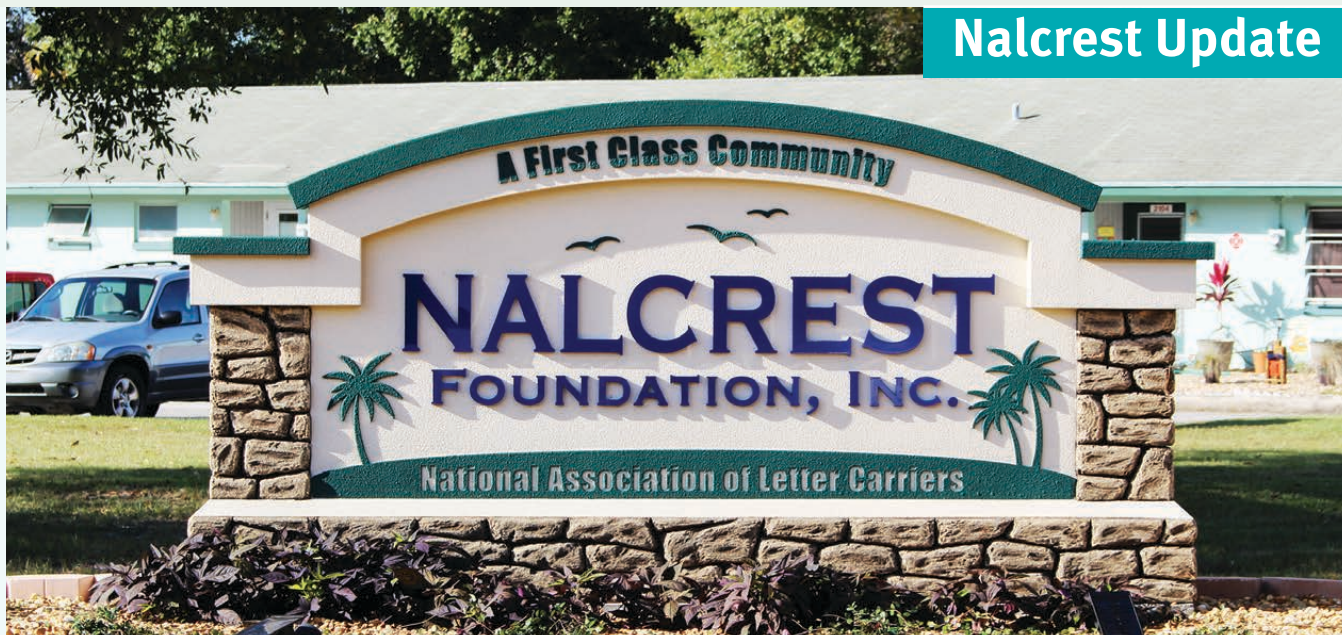
rebuild their lives and homes. We also ask you to please keep them in your heart and prayers.

The "Big, Beautiful Bill" has passed both the House and the Senate and received the president's signature. Letter carriers contacted their representatives regarding legislation that would have affected federal employees' retirement. While the bill contains provisions that may affect various groups of Americans, it was not without controversy. Voters

concerned about the bill are encouraged to consider how such legislation may influence them during upcoming elections.

The TSALC convention is set for July 28-30 with a "Hell No!" rally scheduled for the Tuesday morning of the convention. Buses are scheduled to leave the DoubleTree and travel to the Capitol for the rally. Looking forward to seeing everyone at the convention.

Everett Wyllie



Nalcrest Update

From the Trustees

We continue to see progress with the roof replacements and repainting of our buildings around the Nalcrest community. We are one month into the 2025 six-month hurricane season, and so far, so good. Thanks go to the many NALC branches who have donated funds to adopt a building for the beautification project to paint all the buildings.

We are also very close to completing the expansion and redesign of the areas of Nalcrest (boat yard and maintenance yard) where residents can store their boats and trailers, utility trailers and recreational vehicles. The storage areas look great, and the nominal fee structure went into effect on July 1. Maintenance Manager Matt Dunaway is overseeing the process of communicating with those residents and assigning vehicle slots in the appropriate storage yards. The addition to the building used by the Ladies Club is also near completion.

We have also begun the process of replacing the old and undersized toilets that are in many of the apartments. We have purchased the first group of toilets and are coordinating with our contractor to schedule the replacements.

We are also excited to announce that we have entered into a lease agreement to once again open the café in Town Center. As currently planned, the café will be open for business effective Sept. 1.

As previously discussed at the last residents meeting, the 5 percent rent increase for new leases went into effect July 1. The new rates will go into effect for new residents, and for current residents beginning the month of their lease renewal July 1 and later. As discussed in detail at the meeting, this increase was necessary to assist with the additional out-of-pocket costs associated with replacing the roofs from the hurricane damage, the increasing insurance premiums, and the continued cost of replacing the 60-year-old water/sewer infrastructure in the apartments, among other increasing costs. As also discussed at the meeting, we implement rent increases when necessary to maintain the income sufficient to cover costs and necessary reserves. We pride ourselves on maintaining a very affordable community.

The annual apartment inspections have been completed, and we have noted apartments that need repair. Our maintenance group has begun to schedule the necessary work.

We are also in the process of changing the process for reserving the 17 guest apartments. Priority consideration will be given first to NALC members, second to family of Nalcrest residents, and third to non-members. The process will begin in January of 2026 to reserve one of the 17 guest apartments for 2027. Once the January priority consideration process is

completed, rentals will continue to be on a first-come, first-served basis. Details will be in the new brochure.

The current waitlist for leasing one of the 483 Nalcrest apartments with annual leases is around 400 members.

Fred Rolando

Apply to live at Nalcrest

For an application to live at Nalcrest, visit nalc.org/nalcrest, call 863-696-1121 or fax 863-696-3333.

Nalcrest Trustees

NALC Executive Vice President Paul Barner

NALC Secretary-Treasurer Nicole Rhine

NALC Assistant Secretary-Treasurer Mack I. Julian

NALC Director of Retired Members Dan Toth

Nalcrest Trustees Vice President Fred Rolando

Nalcrest Trustees Vice President Tony Diaz

Election Notices

Anchorage, Alaska

This is official notice to all members of Branch 4319 that nominations for the following officers and national convention delegates will be held at the regular branch general membership meeting on Oct. 2: president, vice president, financial secretary-treasurer, recording secretary, health benefits representative, three trustees and sergeant-at-arms.

The president, vice president, financial secretary-treasurer, recording secretary, and health benefits representative shall become automatic delegates to the NALC national convention in 2026 by virtue of their election to their office. The president, vice president, financial secretary-treasurer and recording secretary shall become automatic delegates to the regional assemblies held during their term of office. Nominees for delegates to the national convention must have attended a minimum of two-thirds of the regular branch general membership meetings since the previous national convention to be eligible for reimbursed expenses, except for the delegates who work in offices outside the municipality of Anchorage.

All nominations must be accepted verbally or in writing at the nominating meeting, or they must be received in writing not later than seven calendar days after the close of nominations. Failure to accept nominations as stated will result in automatic decline of the nomination.

The election for officers shall be done by referendum mail ballot. The ballots must be received in the election committee's post office box by Dec. 1. There shall be no write-in votes cast for candidates not officially on the ballot. The results of the election shall be reported by the election committee at the Dec. 4 meeting of the branch. The newly elected officers shall hold office for a period of two years, beginning Jan. 1, 2026.

Jennifer Atwood, Rec. Sec., Br. 4319

Ann Arbor, Michigan

This will serve as an official notice to all Branch 434 members.

Nominations will be held at the regular branch meeting at 6 p.m. on Oct. 15 at the IBEW Hall, 7920 Jackson Road, Ann Arbor. Nominations for the following offices will take place: president, vice president, recording secretary, treasurer, HBR-MBA, sergeant-at-arms, one trustee (three-year term, Jan. 1, 2026, through Dec. 31, 2028), delegates to the 2026 national convention, and any other office that may be vacated. The offices of president, vice president, recording secretary and treasurer are automatic delegates to the national convention, per branch bylaws. Candidates must accept nominations at the time made or, if absent, in writing to the branch recording secretary by 6 p.m. on Oct. 15.

The election will be held by secret ballot at the regular monthly branch meeting at 6 p.m. on Nov. 19 at the IBEW Hall, 7920 Jackson Road, Ann Arbor.

Absentee ballot requests must be made in writing with printed name, address and signature to the election committee no later than Nov. 5. Absentee ballots must be returned to P.O. Box 2434, Ann Arbor, MI 48106-2434, no

later than 6 p.m. on Nov. 19.

No write-in votes will be allowed.

Carol White, Rec. Sec., Br. 434

Arizona Merged

In accordance with Branch 1902 bylaws, this is official notice to all members of Branch 1902 that nominations will be held at the regular branch meeting on Oct. 8. Nominations will be for local branch officers and delegates to the 2026 national convention.

Election results will be announced at the Nov. 12 branch meeting.

Russell Diana, Pres., Br. 1902

Arizona River Cities

In accordance with Article 5 of the NALC Constitution, this is the official notice that nominations for branch officers will be held at the regular meeting of Branch 5850 on Oct. 29. All members in good standing are eligible for nomination. If you have held a supervisory position in the previous 24 months prior to nominations, you are not eligible for nomination. If you are unable to attend the meeting, you must submit a letter in writing stating you will accept a nomination. Send all letters to: Arizona River Cities Branch 5850, P.O. Box 21271, Bullhead City, AZ 86439-1271, no later than 5 p.m. on Oct. 29.

Elections will be held at the regular meeting of Branch 5850 on Nov. 19.

Todd McIntyre, Sec., Br. 5850

Austin, Minnesota

This is an official notice to members of Branch 717 that the nominations for state/national delegates and for the following branch officer positions will be held at our regular branch meeting on Wednesday, Oct. 15, at the American Legion (809 12th St. SW): president, vice president, steward, assistant steward, secretary/treasurer, three trustees, health benefit representative and sergeant-at-arms. Elected positions are for a two-year term.

Candidates can only accept nomination for one position and must accept the nomination at the time made or, if absent, must signify in writing prior to the nominations to the branch secretary their willingness to serve in the desired position.

The election, if needed, will be held by secret ballot by mail. All ballots, if mailed to the address on record, must be received by 5 p.m. on Wednesday, Nov. 19. If members choose to bring ballots to the Nov. 19 meeting, the ballots must be turned into election officials prior to the counting of the ballots.

Victoria Carlson, Sec./Treas., Br. 717

Bakersfield, California

Nominations for the election of officers of Branch 782 for the 2026-2029 term and delegates to the 2026 national convention will be held at the regular branch meeting at 7 p.m. on Sept. 24 at the Branch 782 union office, located at 2628 F St., Bakersfield. Candidates must accept nominations at the time made or, if absent, in writing to the branch recording secretary within three days after the nomination is made. Nominations may be submitted in writing, provided that they are received by the branch recording secretary prior

to the closing of nominations at the regular branch meeting in September. Candidates may accept nominations for only one office. Upon nomination, every nominee must certify that they had not served as a supervisor for the 24 months prior to being nominated.

Nominations will be held for president, vice president, recording secretary, treasurer, financial secretary, sergeant-at-arms, three trustees and MBA/health benefits representative. By virtue of the positions, Branch 782 president and vice president shall be delegates to both the national and state conventions. The term of office will be three years, from January 2026 to January 2029.

The election will be conducted by secret ballot at the regular meeting at 7 p.m. on Nov. 19 at the Branch 782 union office, 2628 F St., Bakersfield.

Any member who, for any reason, will be unable to vote on Nov. 19 may obtain absentee ballots by submitting a signed written request to: Election Committee, Golden Empire Branch 782, 2628 F St., Bakersfield, CA 93301. Absentee ballots must be requested after nominations have been closed, but no later than Nov. 5. Write-in votes are not permitted.

Mike Towery, Pres., Br. 782

Bloomington, Illinois

This is to serve as official notice to all members of M.T. Finnan Branch 522 that nominations for treasurer, as well as delegates to the state convention in Peoria and the national convention in Los Angeles, CA, in 2026, shall be made at the regular meeting at 7 p.m. on Aug. 13.

Elections, if necessary, will be held at 7 p.m. at the regular meeting on Sept. 11.

Tara Horwedel, Sec., Br. 522

Boulder, Colorado

This is official notice to the members of Branch 642 that nominations for officers, delegates to the national and state conventions, and stewards will be held at the regular branch meeting on Thursday, Oct. 9. All members in good standing, except those who have held or applied for a supervisor or 204b position within the last 24 months as provided in Article 5 of the NALC Constitution, will be eligible to be nominated. All members who want to be nominated for officer, steward, and/or delegate to the national and/or state convention, must be present at the Oct. 9 meeting or signify in writing, signed and dated, to the secretary of Branch 642, by 6 p.m. on Oct. 9 their willingness to be nominated, or be placed in nomination for officer, steward, and delegate to the national and/or the state convention. Any nominee who is unduly prevented from attending the nomination meeting will have five days to contact the secretary of Branch 642 by phone, text, email or in person to accept the nomination.

The following officers to be nominated are president, vice president, recording/financial secretary, treasurer, sergeant-at-arms, health benefits representative, mutual benefits representative, director of retirees and board of trustees (composed of three members).

Shop stewards shall be nominated by members of their respective stations and will be elected by the members of their respective stations by mail ballot.

Election, if necessary, will be by

mail ballot. The ballots will be mailed to members at least 20 days prior to the Dec. 11 branch meeting. Each member will mail their ballot to a P.O. box address established by the election committee. Ballots will be counted by the election committee, per Section 14, Conducting Mail Balloting of the NALC Regulations Governing Branch Election Procedures, which will be strictly enforced. The election committee and observers will follow all the guidelines, as outlined in Conducting Mail Balloting of the NALC Regulations.

Any member who, for any reason, will be unable to vote during the times the polls are open (as listed above), may request an absentee ballot. Absentee ballots must be requested after nominations have been closed, but at least two weeks before the election.

Dave Negrotti, Pres., Br. 642

Buffalo-Western New York

This is an official notice to all members of Branch 3. Nominations for delegates to the 2026 national convention will be held at 7:30 p.m. on Oct. 14 at the Matthew Glab Post #1477, Lackawanna. The election of delegates will be held at the branch general membership meeting on Nov. 18. The convention will be held in Los Angeles, CA, Aug. 3-7, 2026.

According to the bylaws of the branch, Article 5, Section 1(c) 2 states: "Acceptance of the nomination must be made verbally or in writing at this meeting. In the event a candidate is unavoidable detained, the candidate may designate any member in attendance at the meeting to accept the nomination on behalf of the candidate. Acceptance of nominations may also be submitted in writing to the Secretary prior to the meeting or no later than three (3) days after the close of the meeting."

Members who have held, accepted or applied for a supervisory position are ineligible to run for or hold office for a period of two (2) years after termination of such status. All candidates must verify, upon nomination that they have not served, accepted or applied for a supervisory position within the last 24 months."

Article 4, Section 2 states: "All officers as listed in this Article 4 section 1, by virtue of their election will automatically be delegates to the State & National Conventions provided each officer is actually holding office at the time of the convention."

Kim Fitzgerald, Sec.-Treas., Br. 3

Bux-Mont, Pennsylvania

In accordance with Article 5 of the NALC Constitution and the bylaws of Branch 920, this is the official notice to all members of Branch 920 of nominations for delegates to the NALC 2026 national convention. Nominations will take place at the regular October meeting at 7 p.m. at Mike's York Road Tavern, located at 544 York Road, Warminster.

Elections, if necessary, will take place at the regular November meeting at 7 p.m. at St. Gabe's Lodge, located at 525 Jefferson St., Stowe.

Sean Geackel, Pres., Br. 920

Camden, New Jersey Merged

This is official notice to all members of Branch 540 of nomination of the fol-

lowing officers: president, executive vice president, vice president, recording secretary, financial secretary, treasurer, sergeant-at-arms, five trustees, health benefits representative, director of MBA, director of retirees and shop stewards. Nominations will be made at the October (Oct. 8) and November (Nov. 12) regular branch meetings at 7:30 p.m. at VFW Post 2445, 914 E. Main St., Maple Shade. There will be no written nominations.

The officers will serve a three-year term. The president, executive vice president, vice president, secretary, financial secretary, treasurer and director of retirees shall be a delegate to the state convention and national convention automatically.

Voting will be by secret mail in ballot sent to all members in good standing. Counting of ballots will be conducted at the regular branch meeting in December via secret ballot by the election committee. No nominations shall be made on the night of the elections.

Stacey Adams, Rec. Sec., Br. 540

Canton, Ohio

In accordance with Article 5 of the *NALC Constitution*, this is official notice to all members of Branch 238 that nominations for officers will be held at the regularly scheduled Oct. 14 meeting. The election will take place at the Nov. 13 meeting. Nominations and the election will take place at the William O. McDonald Jr. Hall, 1718 Navarre Road SW, Canton, with the meetings commencing at 7:30 p.m.

The following offices are open for nomination/election for a one-year term: president, vice president, secretary/recording secretary, treasurer/financial secretary, sergeant-at-arms, trustee three-year (one three-year term), building manager, director of retirees, health benefits representative, mutual benefits representative, and delegates to national convention and/or seminars. Nominees must have attended six of the last 11 regularly scheduled meetings to be eligible as paid delegates to the convention.

Nominees must accept in person when nominated, or must submit acceptance in writing to the branch secretary by Oct. 14. The election will be by secret ballot on Nov. 13.

Election ads will be accepted for publication in the *Branch Reporter* at a cost of \$10 per ad and must be in the hands of the editor of the *Branch Reporter* no later than 10 days after a regular scheduled meeting.

Absentee ballots may be requested from the election committee in writing at 1718 Navarre Road SW, Canton, OH 44706-1667. Absentee ballots must be in the hands of the secretary prior to the commencement of the election night meeting in order to be turned over to the election committee.

Bonnie L. Contrucci, Rec. Sec., Br. 238

Cape Atlantic, New Jersey

This is official notice to all members of Branch 903. Nominations for all branch officers and delegates to the national convention will be held at the regular branch meeting at 7 p.m. on Oct. 8. Members must accept nominations

at time made or, if absent, in writing prior to meeting.

Jeff Gaskill, Pres., Br. 903

Centennial, Colorado

In accordance with Article 5 of the *NALC Constitution* and Article IV of the branch bylaws, this is official notice to all members of Branch 5996 that nominations for the following offices and positions will be held at 7:30 p.m. at the regular Oct. 2 branch meeting at the Centennial branch office, located at 1010 S. Joliet St., Suite 204, Aurora: president (two-year term), vice president (two-year term), financial/recording secretary (two-year term), treasurer (two-year term), sergeant-at-arms (two-year term), director of retirees (two-year term), health benefits rep (two-year term), MBA rep (two-year term), one trustee (three-year term), shop stewards—all stations (one-year term), delegates to the national convention, delegates to the NALC Colorado state convention, three delegates to the Colorado AFL-CIO convention, and three delegates for the Denver Area Labor Federation.

Election will be by secret mail ballot and results will be announced at the Dec. 4 regular branch meeting.

Candidates must accept nominations at the time made or must signify in writing to the branch financial/recording secretary prior to the meeting their willingness to serve in the desired position.

All regular members shall be eligible to hold any office or position in the branch, except that a member who, voluntarily or otherwise, holds, accepts or applies for a supervisory position in the Postal Career Service for any period of time, whether one day or fraction thereof, either detailed, acting, probationary or permanently, shall immediately vacate any office held, and shall be ineligible to run for any office or other position for a period of two years after termination of such supervisory status. Upon nomination, candidates must verify that they have not served in a supervisory capacity for the 24 months prior to the nomination.

In accordance with Article IV, Section 2 of the branch bylaws, the branch president and vice president shall be delegates to the national and state conventions by virtue of their office provided they were elected pursuant to the NALC election regulations.

Barb Larson, Fin./Rec. Sec., Br. 5996

Chesapeake, Virginia

Branch 6066 will conduct nominations for the 2026 national convention held in Los Angeles, CA. The nominations will be on Oct. 1 at 2250 Old Greenbrier Road. Hope to see you there.

David J. Watson, Pres., Br. 6066

Davenport, Iowa

This is official notice to members of Branch 506 that nominations for branch officers and delegates for the national convention will be held at the regular scheduled branch meetings on Thursday, Oct. 9, and Thursday, Nov. 13.

The voting will take place at the Thursday, Dec. 11 meeting.

Jennifer Rushton, Sec., Br. 506

Deland, Florida

This is official notice to the members of Branch 2591 that nominations of all officers and delegates to the 2026 national convention will be held at our regular branch meeting on the second Thursday in October.

Charlene Adamets, Sec., Br. 2591

Downers Grove, Illinois

Nominations for the election of officers of Branch 1870 (Downers Grove/Woodridge) will be held at the regular branch meeting at 7 p.m. on Sept. 11 at the Knights of Columbus Hall, 25 N. Cass Ave., Westmont. Candidates must accept nominations at the time made or, if absent, in writing. Candidates may accept nominations for only one office.

Nominations will be held for the following branch officers: president, vice president, secretary, treasurer, sergeant-at-arms, health benefit rep/MBA rep and three trustees. The terms of office will be two years, beginning Jan. 1, 2026. In addition, nominations will be held for the delegates for the 2026 state convention in Peoria and the national convention in Los Angeles, CA.

Elections will be conducted through mail-in ballots, and all ballots will be counted during the meeting at 7 p.m. on Nov. 13. Meetings are held at the Knights of Columbus Hall, 25 N. Cass Ave., Westmont.

Any member in good standing is eligible for nomination.

Jeanie Williams, Sec., Br. 1870

Elizabeth, New Jersey

In accordance with Article 5 of the *NALC Constitution* and bylaws, this is the official notice to all members of the John Enz Branch 67 that nominations for the delegates to the 2026 national convention to be held Aug. 3-7, 2026, will be held at the regular September branch meeting.

Any member who is in good standing and is current with their dues may be candidates for these positions; however, our bylaws in Section 5 state: "Any member, in order to receive expense money from the branch, must have attended at least six meetings during the period of one year to the motion or nomination for the expense. Per Diem expense money will be according to the per diem Conus rate set by the GSA. Total expense money per affair cannot exceed \$1250.00."

All candidates must be present at the time of their nominations, or signify their willingness in writing to accept, if elected. Candidates, upon nomination, must certify that they have not served, nor applied, for a supervisory position within the past 24 months.

Nominations will be held at 7:30 p.m. on Sept. 4 at the American Legion Hall, 115 Grove St., Roselle. Elections will be held in October, if necessary.

Kris B. Aguero, Rec. Sec., Br. 67

Eugene, Oregon

This is official notice to all members of Emerald Empire Branch 916 that nominations for all officer positions as well as national and state delegates will occur at the regular branch meeting on Oct. 2. The branch meeting will be held at 711 Shelley St. in Springfield at the Team-

sters Hall in accordance with our bylaws.

Voting will be done by mail in accordance with our bylaws, and the results will be announced at the Dec. 4 branch meeting at the same location.

Please read the monthly *Relay Box* for more information. If you are not receiving the *Relay Box*, please reach out to the union as soon as possible to resolve that issue.

Frost, V.P., Br. 916

Fairfield, Connecticut

This is official notice to members of Branch 2313 that nominations will occur at our meeting on Oct. 15 at St. Thomas Church at 1719 Post Road, Fairfield. The term for each office shall be two years. The following offices will be available for nominations: president, vice president, recording secretary, secretary treasurer, financial secretary, sergeant-at-arms, NALC health care representative, mutual benefits representative, three trustees, and convention delegates and alternate delegates.

Elected officers will automatically be considered national/state convention delegates. The number of delegates allowed will be determined during the convention preparation period. Any member can self-nominate. Members can be nominated for multiple offices; however, they only can accept one office before the adjournment of the October meeting. The nomination results will be disclosed at the November meeting.

Elections shall be by secret ballot. When there are two or more candidates for any office, the election shall be by ballot and the plurality of all votes cast for such office shall be necessary to elect. There shall be no write-in votes for candidates on the ballot. Any such write-ins shall not be counted but will not invalidate the rest of the ballot. Non-active members shall receive a ballot in the mail if a runoff is required.

In addition, absentee ballots will be available upon request between Nov. 1 and Nov. 15 for active members. They must be returned to the branch by Nov. 19 and will be held in a secure location.

An election committee shall be established by the September meeting. Any qualified member wishing to be on the election committee can submit their name to the executive board by the September meeting; however, nominees are not allowed to be on the election committee. If you have questions, contact the president or recording secretary.

Michael Capodicci, Sec., Br. 2313

Fargo-W. Fargo, North Dakota

This is official notice to all members of Branch 205 that nominations for delegates to the 2026 national convention will be accepted beginning at 7 p.m. at the Oct. 2 meeting. Members who want to be nominated to delegate positions must be present at the October meeting, or signify in writing, signed and dated to the secretary of Branch 205, by 7 p.m. the day of the branch meeting.

Kristi Taylor-Livdahl, Sec., Br. 205

Flushing, New York

This is official notice to all members of Branch 294 that nominations for delegates to the 74th Biennial National Convention to be held in Los

Election Notices

Angeles Aug. 3-7 2026, will be held at the branch meeting at 6 p.m. on Oct. 8 at the Knights of Columbus Hall, 3579 160th St., Flushing.

Keith Bates, Sec., Br. 294

Fort Dodge, Iowa

In accordance with Article 5 of the *NALC Constitution* and the branch bylaws, this is an official notice to all members of Branch 645 who are in good standing that nominations for president, vice president, secretary, treasurer, sergeant-at-arms, health benefits representative, one trustee, and delegates to the national convention will be held at the regular monthly meeting on Oct. 14. The term of office is for one year. Candidates may accept nomination for only one office.

Following nominations, elections will be held by mail ballot prior to the December meeting.

Members wishing to be nominated must accept such nomination in person or submit their willingness to be nominated to the branch secretary prior to the October meeting.

Josh Ropte, Sec., Br. 645

Gainesville, Georgia

This is official notice to all members of Branch 1441 that nominations for president, vice president/sergeant-at-arms/MBA representative, recording secretary/financial secretary/treasurer/health benefits representative, and a board of trustees comprised of three members will be held during the regular branch meeting at 6 p.m. on Oct. 2. Nomination shall be made from the floor and candidates must accept nominations at the time made or, if absent, in writing. Candidates may accept nominations for only one office. The president, vice president and secretary-treasurer of this branch shall, by virtue of their office, be regular delegates to all national and state conventions. The president, or vice president if the president is unable to attend, shall be chairman of each delegation.

If after nominations an election is in order, it shall be consummated and concluded during the regular branch meeting at 6 p.m. on Nov. 6, in accordance with the provisions of Article 5 of the *NALC Constitution*, with election to be conducted by secret ballot.

Rex Newell, Pres., Br. 1441

Garden State Mgd., New Jersey

This is official notification to all members of Branch 444 that nominations for the office of president, vice president, secretary/treasurer, assistant secretary/treasurer, sergeant-at-arms, director of city delivery, director of retirees, NALC health benefits representative, three trustees, and delegates to the 2026 NALC national convention shall take place at the regular branch meeting on Wednesday, Oct. 8, at Pagano's Uva Restaurant, 800 Main St., Bradley Beach. By virtue of their office, the president, vice president, secretary/treasurer, and the sergeant-at-arms are automatic delegates. All members in good standing shall be eligible to run for office and delegate except a member who accepts or applies for a supervisory position in the USPS, whether one day

or a fraction thereof, either detailed, acting, probationary or permanently, for a period of two years after termination. The meeting commences at 7:30 p.m. Candidates accepting nomination must be present or submit an acceptance letter to the secretary/treasurer prior to the Oct. 8 meeting.

If necessary, election ballots will be sent to the last known address of each member after the Oct. 8 meeting. No write-in votes shall be accepted. Ballots must be received no later than 12 p.m. on Nov. 12 to be counted.

Earl R. Dorman, Sec./Tres., Br. 444

Grand Forks, North Dakota

This is the official notice to all active and retired members of Branch 517 that nominations for elected officers and delegates for the 2026 national conventions at our regular October meeting on Oct. 9 at the VFW in East Grand Forks. Nominations will be accepted for the following branch offices: president, vice president, secretary, treasurer, steward(s), sergeant-at-arms, director of retirees and three trustees.

Members must be present or submit a notice of acceptance prior to the October meeting.

The election will be held by mail-in ballot. Ballots will be sent out after the October meeting and must be received with postmark date no later than Dec. 1.

Ashley Pesch, Sec., Br. 517

Green Bay, Wisconsin

This is official notice to all Branch 619, Tittletown, members of nominations and elections for the following positions: president, vice president, recording secretary, financial secretary/treasurer, sergeant-at-arms, health benefits representative, editor, three trustees, one (or two) stewards for each office represented by Branch 619, and delegates to both the state and national conventions in 2026.

Nominations for the election of officers, stewards and delegates of Branch 619 will be held during the regular branch meeting at 7 p.m. on Oct. 2 at the Labor Temple at 1570 Elizabeth St., Green Bay. The term of office will be for two years, beginning Jan. 1, 2026. All members in good standing shall be eligible to hold any office or position in the branch except as provided under Article 5, Section 2 of our *NALC Constitution*. Every member shall have the right to nominate a candidate(s). Candidates must accept nominations at the time made or, if absent, in writing. Candidates may accept nominations for only one office. The president and vice president, by virtue of their office, are delegates to the state and national conventions.

The election will be conducted by secret mail ballot. Ballots will be mailed to the home addresses of eligible members in October. Ballots must be mailed back to the election committee at P.O. Box 13456, Green Bay, WI 54307-3456, and must be received by 5 p.m. on Nov. 1. At this time, the election committee will collect the ballots, bring them to the Labor Temple and begin to tally. Ballots may be returned to the election committee the night of the regular meeting of the branch on Nov. 6. Write-in votes are not permitted.

The members present at the Oct. 2

meeting will determine how many delegates will receive branch funds for expenses incurred to attend national and state conventions.

Mary Hillmann, Rec. Sec., Br. 619

Hammond, Indiana

This is the official notice to the membership of NWI South Shore Branch 580 that nominations for the delegates to the 2026 state and national conventions will be held at the Sept. 18 meeting and the election for both conventions will be held at the Oct. 16 meeting at 1221 E. Ridge Road in Gary. The 2026 state convention will be held in Michigan City, and the 2026 national convention will be held in Los Angeles, CA. The president of the branch is an automatic delegate to both.

Brandy Shaw, Rec. Sec., Br. 580

High Point, North Carolina

This is an official notice to the members of the Howie Leff Memorial Branch 936 that nominations for the following branch offices will be held at the branch meeting at 7 p.m. on Oct. 9 at the union hall, located at 1446 Bethel Drive, High Point: president, vice president, recording secretary, assistant recording secretary, treasurer, sergeant-at-arms, health benefits rep, three trustees, parliamentarian, chaplain, and delegates and alternate delegates to the 2026 national convention in Los Angeles, CA, and the 2027 state convention in Roanoke Rapids. The terms of office will be two years, beginning Jan. 1, 2026.

Candidates must accept nominations at the time made or, if absent, in writing. Nominations may also be made in writing, but must be received by the branch secretary no later than Oct. 9 at P.O. Box 465, High Point, NC 27261. Requests for absentee ballots must be received by the election committee no later Oct. 30.

The president shall serve as a delegate to the 2026 national convention by virtue of the office.

The elections will be held at 7 p.m. on Nov. 13 at the union hall, located at 1446 Bethel Drive, High Point. The elections will be by secret ballot. Ballots must be mailed back to Election Committee, Emerywood Post Office, P.O. Box 5052, High Point, NC 27262, no later than 5 p.m. on Nov. 13.

Natasha Brown, Rec. Sec., Br. 936

Hopkins, Minnesota

This is official notice to all members of Branch 2942 that nominations for one trustee position, delegates to the 2026 Minnesota State Association convention and delegates to the 2026 NALC national convention shall be taken at the regularly scheduled branch meeting on Oct. 2.

Elections, if necessary, will be held during the meeting on Nov. 6.

Leanne Steinbrunn, Rec. Sec., Br. 2942

Houston, Texas

In accordance with Article 5 of the *NALC Constitution*, this is the official notice to all members of Space City Branch 283 of nomination for all officers and delegates.

Nominations for the elections of officers of Branch 283 will be accepted at

the regular union meeting in session at 7 p.m. on Tuesday, Sept. 9, at the union hall, 2414 Broadway St., Houston. Any member in good standing may run for any office they desire. The nominations for officers will be for the following positions for the years 2026-2028, beginning in January 2026 for a term of office of three years: president (full time), vice president/treasurer (full time), recording financial secretary (full time), assistant to the secretary and treasurer (full time); five trustee positions, health benefit representative, MBA-NSBA representative, editor and sergeant-at-arms.

In addition, nominations will be accepted for delegates and alternates to the national convention for the year 2026.

Upon nomination, the candidates must certify that they have not served in a supervisory capacity for 24 months prior to nomination. Candidates may accept nominations to only one office.

All candidates must be current in payment of their dues in order to qualify to be a candidate for office including delegate.

Final day for election chairman to receive accepted and signed nominations slip will be Sept. 12. All signed accepted slips must be received by noon on Friday, Sept. 12, at the union hall, 2414 Broadway St., Houston. Drawing slate placement will be Sept. 12 at 12 p.m.

The election will be conducted by secret mail ballot. Ballots will be mailed on Oct. 7, and must be returned by 8 a.m. on Nov. 10. Counting of ballots will be Nov. 10 at the union hall. Write-in votes are not permitted. Balloting instructions will be enclosed with the ballot mailed to each member. All members are requested to keep their mailing address up to date. If you have recently moved, please notify the branch at the union hall, 2414 Broadway St., Houston, TX 77012, of your new address.

Perla Garza, Rec./Fin. Sec., Br. 283

Killeen, Texas

This is an official notice to all active and retired members of Branch 4217 for nominations for the appointment of the following positions: president, vice president, secretary, treasurer, financial secretary, sergeant-at-arms, health care coordinator, three trustees, and delegates for state and national conventions.

Nominations will take place starting at 6 p.m. on Sept. 18 at IHOP restaurant, 170 E. Central Texas Expy., Harker Heights.

Ruben Caro, Pres., Br. 4217

Las Vegas, Nevada

This is official notice to all members of Branch 2502 about nominations for the following officers: president, executive vice president, vice president, treasurer, branch secretary, health benefit representative, sergeant-at-arms, five trustee positions, and stewards from each station represented by Branch 2502. Full-time officers, by virtue of office, shall automatically be included as paid delegates to the state and national conventions and the state AFL-CIO convention.

In accordance with the instructions from our national business agent, Keisha Lewis, nominations will be held at

the regular branch meeting at 7 p.m. on Wednesday, Sept. 3, at the union hall, located at 2620 E. Sunset Road, Las Vegas.

Nominations must be made at the branch meeting in accordance with the branch bylaws, *NALC Constitution* and NALC elections procedures. Acceptance of nominations may be made in person at the branch meeting or in writing in accordance with branch bylaws delivered to the branch secretary prior to the start of the Sept. 3 meeting. All candidates must be in compliance with the *NALC Constitution* and branch bylaws concerning eligibility for holding office. Upon nomination, the candidate must verify that they have not applied for or served in a supervisory capacity for the 24 months prior to the nomination. The term of office for all positions will be from Nov. 5, 2026, to January 5, 2028. This represents the remainder of the term of 2025 through 2027 previous election.

The election will be conducted by secret ballot. Ballots will be mailed to each member's last known address on file with the national membership records. The election committee must receive all ballots by 9 a.m. on Wednesday, Oct. 1. The results of the election will be announced at the general meeting on Wednesday, Oct. 1.

Jerry W. Penn, Sec., Br. 2502

Levittown, Pennsylvania

This is the official notice to all members of Branch 4973 that nominations for the offices of president, vice president, secretary, treasurer, sergeant-at-arms and three trustees will be accepted on the third Tuesday meeting in September and October. All elected officers will serve as delegates to the state and national conventions.

Following final nominations, ballots will be handed and/or mailed to all members. Ballots will be counted at the November union meeting. All ballots must be postmarked by Nov. 18 and received prior to the union meeting. The results will be announced at the meeting.

John Morlando, Sec., Br. 4973

Lorain, Ohio

This is official notice to all active and retired member of Branch 583 that nominations for the offices of president, vice president, recording secretary, treasurer and three trustee will be accepted at the October meeting to be held at 7 p.m. on Oct. 1 at the American Slovak Club, 2915 Broadway Ave., Lorain. Any member seeking office who is unable to attend on the night of the nominations must indicate by written notice to the recording secretary of their intent.

Elections will be held by secret ballot at the regular meeting on Nov. 5 at the same location.

Anthony Ross, Pres., Br. 583

Minnesota

This is an official notice to all members of the Minnesota State Association of Letter Carriers.

Nominations and elections for the offices of president, vice president, treasurer, secretary, editor, executive

board and director of retirees will be held at the state convention Sept. 28-Oct. 1) at Sugar Lake Lodge in Cohasset. The term of office will be two years.

Two additional Minnesota AFL-CIO delegates and two Minnesota AFL-CIO State Retirees Council delegates will be elected for a term of two years.

Members who have held, accepted or applied for supervisory positions are ineligible to run for and hold office for a period of two years after termination of such status. All candidates must verify upon acceptance that they have not served, accepted or applied for supervisory position within the last 24 months.

Nominations will take place during the Sept. 29 session of the convention. Newly elected officers will be sworn in during the Tuesday session of the convention.

Christa Abraham, Sec., MSALC

Mishawaka, Indiana

This is an official notice to all members of Branch 820 that nominations for officers, delegates and stewards will be held at our November monthly union meeting at 6:30 p.m. on Tuesday, Nov. 11, at 125 S. Hill St., Mishawaka.

Candidates must accept nominations at the time made or, if absent, in writing. Candidates may accept nominations for only one office.

Jeff Maure, Pres., Br. 820

Missouri

This is official notice to all members of the Missouri State Association of Letter Carriers. Nominations and elections will be held at the convention Sept. 26-28 in Osage Beach at the Margaritaville Resort, 494 Tan Tar A Drive. This election is for the following positions: president, vice president, secretary, treasurer, director of retirees and district representatives.

All elected positions will be nominated and voted on during the convention and will serve a two-year term.

Kraig Shafer, Sec., MOSALC

Mobile, Alabama

This is the official notice to all members of Branch 469 that nominations of officers will be held during the regular branch meeting at 7:30 p.m. on Sept. 11.

If, after nominations, an election is in order, it shall be done and concluded from 6:30 p.m. to 8 p.m. on Oct. 9.

Kawanda James, Sec., Br. 469

Monroe, Louisiana

This is official notice to the active and retired members of Branch 136 that nominations for all officers and delegates will take place at the regular monthly branch meeting at 6 p.m. on Oct. 16 at the union hall, located at 113 Cotton St. in West Monroe.

Elections, if needed, will be conducted by mail-in ballot in accordance with Article 5 of the *NALC Constitution* and the bylaws of Branch 136. Ballots will be mailed to members' last known addresses. The results will be read at the Dec. 18 meeting, and the installation of officers will take place at the NALC retirement banquet at Catfish Cabin in January 2026.

Elizabeth Osbourne, Pres., Br. 136

Monterey, California

In accordance with Article 5 of the *NALC Constitution*, this is official notice that nominations for delegates to the national convention will be held at the regular meeting of Branch 1310 on Sept. 18. All members in good standing are eligible for nomination.

If you have held a supervisory position the previous 24 months, prior to nomination, you are not eligible for nomination.

If you are unable to attend the meeting, you must submit a letter in writing that you will accept a nomination. Send it to Branch 1310's P.O. Box 1383 to arrive no later than 5 p.m. on Sept. 18.

Elections will be held in October by secret ballot.

Scott Bedell, Sec., Br. 1310

Napa, California

This is official notice to all members of Branch 627 that nominations for all branch officers will be held at the regular meeting on Oct. 16 at the Branch 627 office, 1832 Soscol Ave., Room 112, Napa. Offices for election are president, vice president, recording and financial secretary, treasurer, sergeant-at-arms, trustees (three), NALC HBR and MBA rep. There will also be nominations for the 2026 national convention delegates and alternate delegates. The term of office shall be two years. By virtue of the office, the president shall be first delegate to any convention.

The election will be held at the Napa post office by secret ballot. Absentee ballots will be mailed to all retirees and those who request one. All ballots must be received by election day. Election Day shall be the date of the November meeting, Nov. 20. Results will be announced at the November meeting.

Nominations shall be valid only upon written acceptance by the nominee within five days of the nomination.

David James, Pres., Br. 627

Naperville, Illinois

This is to notify the members of Branch 1151 that nominations for delegates to the 2026 state and national conventions will take place at the regular monthly meeting on Nov. 4 at the VFW, 908 W. Jackson Ave., Naperville. Nominees need not be present at the meeting, provided that they submit written notice of their intention of running to the recording secretary prior to or within one week after the nomination meeting.

The election will be held by secret ballot at the same location between 6 p.m. and 6:45 p.m. on Dec. 2. Any member who, for any reason, will be unable to vote on Dec. 2 may obtain absentee ballots by writing to Election Committee, Branch 1151, P.O. Box 2851, Naperville, IL 60567, or by requesting it in person from the election committee at the Naperville Post Office at 1750 W. Ogden Ave. Requests must be received before Dec. 2.

The president, vice president, secretary and treasurer, by virtue of the office, shall be automatic delegates to both conventions.

Lyphus Stevenson, Pres., Br. 1151

New Braunfels, Texas

This is official notice to all members of Branch 2805 about nominations for

all branch officers. Nominations will be held at our regular branch meeting on Oct. 8.

Elections will be held at our regular branch meeting on Nov. 12.

Jeffrey Wagner, Sec.-Tres., Br. 2805

New Haven, Connecticut

This is the official notice to all members of Branch 19 that the nominations for delegates to the NALC national convention to be held in Los Angeles, CA, Aug. 3-7, 2026, will be held at the regular branch meeting on Nov. 19. Candidates must accept the nomination at the time made or, if absent, in writing to the recording secretary by 8 p.m. on the night of nominations. In accordance with our branch bylaws, all elected officers are automatic delegates to the 2026 national convention.

If more delegates are nominated than what is allotted, an election shall be held by secret ballot. This election shall be in the same time and manner as stated in the Branch 19 bylaws, Article 5, Section 5.e.2.

Frank Falcone, Rec. Sec., Br. 19

North Dakota

This is official notice to the membership of the North Dakota State Association of Letter Carriers that nominations and elections of the following officer positions—president, vice president/director of education, secretary-treasurer, director of retirees and five executive board members (for a two-year term)—will take place at the North Dakota 69th biennial state convention Oct. 24-25 at Ramada Bismarck Hotel in accordance to Article IV of the bylaws of the North Dakota State Association of Letter Carriers and Article 7 of the *Constitution for the Government of State Associations* of the NALC.

The installation of the newly elected officers will take place at the banquet prior to the adjournment of the state convention.

Janell F. Harris, Sec., NDSALC

North Little Rock, Arkansas

This is official notice to all members of Branch 3745 that nominations will be held during October's regular monthly union meeting. The offices available for nomination are as follows: president, vice president, treasurer and recording secretary. These offices are for a two-year period. Trustee #2 is for a three-year period. The meeting will be held at 6 p.m. on Oct. 9 at American Pie Pizza, located at 4830 N. Hills Blvd., North Little Rock.

An election (if necessary) will be held at November's regularly scheduled meeting at 6 p.m. on Nov. 13 at American Pie Pizza in North Little Rock. Voting will start at 6 p.m. and end at 9 p.m.

Kenny Newsom, Rec. Sec., Br. 3745

Northern Virginia

In accordance with Article 5 of the *NALC Constitution*, this is the official notice to all members of Branch 3520.

Nomination of delegates to the 2026 national convention in Los Angeles, CA, will be held at the regular branch meeting at 7:30 p.m. on Thursday, Nov. 13. Elections, if necessary, will be held at the regular meeting of Branch 3520 on Thursday, Jan. 8, 2026.

Election Notices

Branch 3520 regular meetings are held at the Motel 6, Governor Room, 6652 Arlington Blvd., Falls Church.

Evangelina O. Camacho, Sec.-Treas., Br. 3520

Panama City, Florida

This is the official notice to all members of Branch 3367 of nominations for the following positions: branch president, vice president/sergeant-at-arms, recording secretary/HBR-MBA Rep, financial secretary/treasurer and three trustees. Shop stewards will also be nominated by work zone. Delegates will also be nominated for the 2026 national convention. The president and vice president, by virtue of their office, will automatically be delegates to the national convention. The term of office will be January 2026 through December 2027.

Nominations will be held at the regular branch meeting beginning at 7 p.m. on Thursday, Oct. 16 at Golden Corral, 105 E. 23rd St., Panama City. All members in good standing shall have the right to nominate candidates. All candidates must be present at the meeting when the nomination is made or submit in writing to the secretary prior to their nomination their willingness to serve if elected. All candidates must verify they have not held, served or applied for a supervisory position in the last 24 months.

Members who have held, accepted or applied for a supervisory position are ineligible to run or hold office for a period of two years after termination of such status.

If two or more candidates are nominated for a position, the election will take place by mail-in secret ballot. Ballots must be received by the date of the election. The ballots will be counted and winners announced at the Nov. 20 regular branch meeting.

Linda Kelley, Sec., Br. 3367

Pasadena, Texas

This is the official notice to all members of Branch 3867 for nominations and election of delegates to the NALC's 74th Biennial Convention Aug. 3-7, 2026, in Los Angeles, CA. Any member in good standing and current in their payment of dues may run for delegate.

Nominations will be held at the union hall at 130 S. Munger St. in Pasadena during the regular monthly meeting at 7 p.m. on Sept. 16. A person being nominated for delegate should be present or may be nominated if they have submitted a letter to the president stating they will accept the nomination as a delegate. This letter must be signed and dated by the potential nominee.

The number of delegates to the convention will be determined in accordance with the NALC Constitution and Branch 3867 bylaws.

The election, if needed, will take place in October with details to follow.

Lydia Amador, Sec., Br. 3867

Pennsylvania

This is official notice of nominations and elections for the officers of the Pennsylvania State Association to be held on Friday, Oct. 2, during the 58th Pennsylvania state convention to be held in Lancaster. The election shall be by secret ballot and conducted between the hours of 1:30 p.m. and 2:30 p.m. for the following offices:

president, vice president, secretary, treasurer, director of education, director of retirement and eight members of the executive board. Terms of office are for three years.

Paul Nyman, Sec., PSALC

Puyallup/Sumner Mgd., WA

This is the official notification to all members of Branch 1484 that nominations for all elected positions will be held at the regular branch meeting at 6:30 p.m. on Oct. 9 at The Ram Restaurant & Brewery, located at 103 35th Ave. SE, Puyallup. The elected positions are as follows: president, vice president, secretary-treasurer, two shop stewards for South Hill Post Office, one shop steward for the Downtown Post Office, one shop steward for the Sumner Post Office, sergeant-at-arms, director of retirees, health benefits coordinator and three trustees. All officers shall be elected for a term of two years, or until their successors are duly elected and installed.

The election, if necessary, shall be conducted at the regular branch meeting to be held at 6:30 p.m. on Nov. 13 at The Ram Restaurant & Brewery, located at 103 35th Ave. SE, Puyallup.

Brian Dunigan, Pres., Br. 1484

Royal Oak, Michigan

This is official notice to all members of Merged Branch 3126 that nominations for officers, shop stewards and alternate stewards for a two-year term, as well as delegates to the 2026 national convention and the 2027 state convention, will take place at the regular membership meeting at 7:30 p.m. on Oct. 2 at the Branch 4374 office, 8124 E. 10 Mile Road, Centerline.

The nominations and elections will be held in accordance with Article 5 of the NALC Constitution and Article 10 of the branch bylaws.

Candidates for all offices must signify in writing their acceptance of nomination, and their willingness to serve if elected. The secretary must receive a candidate's letter of acceptance by 5 p.m. on the Tuesday following nominations (Oct. 7).

The offices up for nomination are: president, executive vice president, vice president, recording secretary, financial secretary (treasurer), sergeant-at-arms, health benefits representative, insurance officer (MBA/NSBA), director of retirees, compensation (OWPC) officer, five trustees, two AFL-CIO delegates, delegates to the 2026 national convention and the 2027 state convention, two alternate AFL-CIO delegates, stewards and alternate stewards.

The president, executive vice president, vice president, recording secretary and financial secretary (treasurer), by virtue of their elected office, shall be delegates to all conventions during their term of office with compensation, as determined by the branch bylaws. Members elected as delegates to either the national or state convention will be compensated as determined by the branch bylaws.

Elections will be by referendum ballot mailed to the last known address of each member in good standing. Results of all elections will be announced at the December regular membership meeting. All terms of office will begin

after the installation of officers conducted at the regular membership meeting on Jan. 8, 2026.

John T. Dick, Rec.-Sec., Br. 3126

St. Cloud, Minnesota

This is official notice to all members of Branch 388 that nominations for all positions (president, vice president, treasurer, secretary, sergeant-at-arms, trustee and union stewards) of the branch will take place at the regular scheduled meetings in September and October.

Elections will be held at the regular meeting on Nov. 12.

The meetings are held starting at 6 p.m. at the Sauk Rapids VFW at 901 Benton Drive North in Sauk Rapids.

Lawrence Kroska, Acting Rec. Sec., Br. 388

Santa Ana, California

This is official notice to all Branch 737 members of nominations and elections for the following positions: president, executive vice president, vice president, financial secretary/treasurer, sergeant-at-arms, recording secretary, trustee/health benefit representative, trustee/Mutual Benefit Association representative, and trustee.

Term of office will be for three years, from January 2026 through January 2029. Nominations will be held during the regular branch meeting that commences at 6:30 p.m. on Sept. 9 at the union office at 702 S. Broadway in Santa Ana. Nominations may also be made in writing, but must be received by the branch recording secretary no later than Sept. 2. All regular members in good standing shall be eligible to hold any office or position in the branch except as provided under Article 5, Section 2 (subordinate branches) of our NALC Constitution. Every regular member shall have the right to nominate a candidate(s). Candidates must accept nominations at the time made or, if absent, in writing.

The election will be held by mail. A ballot, a secret ballot envelope, and a postage prepaid envelope addressed to the Election Committee shall be mailed to each eligible member of the branch at their last known mailing address at least 20 days prior to tabulation. A sealed post office box shall be rented by the branch to receive the ballots; jurisdiction of said box shall be in the hands of the election committee. If there are two or more candidates for any office, the plurality of all votes cast for such office shall be necessary to elect. There shall be no write-in votes for candidates not officially on the ballot. Ballots must be received no later than 12 p.m. on Oct. 14.

By virtue of his elected position, the president shall be the chief delegate of this branch at the state and national conventions or duly called conferences.

Adequate safeguards to ensure a fair election shall be provided.

Cheryl Stoffel, Rec. Sec., Br. 737

Santa Fe, New Mexico

This will serve as notice to all members of Branch 989 that nominations for officers, station stewards and delegates to the national convention will take place on Oct. 2 at the Elks Lodge for the following positions: president, vice president, secretary-treasurer, board of trustees (three positions),

sergeant-at-arms and health benefits representative (HBR).

If needed, elections will follow at the Nov. 6 meeting at the Elks Lodge by secret ballot. The term for these positions is two years.

The installation of newly elected officers will be at the Dec. 4 meeting.

Derek Garcia, Sec.-Treas., Br. 989

Scranton, Pennsylvania

This is the official notice to all members of Branch 17 that nominations for officers will be held at the regular monthly meeting on Oct. 7 at 431 Wyoming Ave., Scranton. The officers to be elected for a two-year term are president, vice president, recording secretary, financial secretary/treasurer, MBA/health benefits representative, director of retirees, sergeant-at-arms and three trustees.

Elections will be by secret ballot at the regular monthly meeting from 7 p.m. to 8:30 p.m. on Nov. 4 at the same location.

Erasmus Diaz, Rec. Sec., Br. 17

Snohomish Co., Washington

Nominations for state convention delegates will be conducted at the branch meeting on Sept. 4 and Oct. 2. Nominations for national convention delegates will be conducted at the branch meeting on Sept. 4 and Oct. 2. Nominations for branch trustee will be conducted at the September and October meetings.

The vote shall be conducted at the November meeting by those present. All nominees for all branch offices and delegates must indicate their acceptance of the nomination as required in Article 4, Section 6.

Meetings are held at 7 p.m. on the first Thursday of each month (except July and August) and are held at the Everett Labor Temple, 2812 Lombard Ave., Everett.

The president, vice president and secretary, by virtue of their office, shall be automatic delegates to the national and state conventions.

De' Franklin, Pres., Br. 791

Spartanburg, South Carolina

This is an official notice to all active and retired members of Branch 628. Nominations for delegates to the state and national convention will be conducted at the October branch meeting. The meeting will be held at 7 p.m. on Oct. 7 at the union hall, located at 1569 Old Anderson Mill Road, Moore.

Nominations for all elected officers of Branch 628 will be held at the regular scheduled meeting on Oct. 7. Candidates must accept nominations at the time they are made. However, if a candidate is absent, they must submit in writing notice of acceptance to the branch secretary prior to the start of the meeting.

If an election is necessary, the election will be held on Nov. 4 at the branch monthly meeting at the address shown above.

Rob Lutz, Pres., Br. 628

Stockton, California

This is the official notice to all members of Branch 213, Port City Branch, of nominations and elections for branch

officers for the period of Jan. 1, 2026, to Dec. 31, 2029. Nominations will be conducted at the general meeting held on Oct. 15 at the branch union hall, located at 4801 East Fremont St., Stockton. The meeting will commence at 7 p.m. All candidates must be present at the time of their nomination or must submit a letter to the recording secretary, which must be received within 30 days prior to the date of the election. Candidates may accept a nomination for only one office.

Nominations will be held for the following offices: president, executive vice president, vice president, recording secretary, treasurer, sergeant-at-arms, director of retirees, scribe, health benefits officer/MBA, legislative liaison and three trustees. If there are two or more candidates for any office, the election will be conducted in accordance with the National Constitution for the Government of Subordinate and Federal Branches (Article 5, Section 5.c).

Nominations will also be held for delegates to the 74th Biennial National Convention Aug. 3-7 in Los Angeles, CA, at the Oct. 15 general meeting. The election will be conducted on Nov. 13 at the general meeting. Those members present at the meeting in November will do the voting. There will be no mail ballot for convention delegates.

Ruben Figueroa Jr., Rec. Sec., Br. 213

Valdosta, Georgia

In accordance with Article 5 in the branch bylaws, this is the official notice to all members of Branch 998.

Nominations and elections for delegate to state and national conventions, as well as nominations for all officer positions, will take place from the floor at our regular monthly meeting starting at 7 p.m. on Oct. 14 at Wooden Nickel, located at 3269 Inner Perimeter Road, Valdosta. All positions will serve a two-year term, January 2026 through 2027.

Officers to be nominated are president, vice president, financial secretary, secretary-treasurer, sergeant-at-arms, health benefits representative and three trustees.

All regular branch members in good standing shall be eligible to hold any officer and delegate positions in the Branch. Members willing to serve must be present to be nominated, unless they signify their intentions in writing to the branch secretary prior to the meeting.

If there is to be a runoff election, an election committee will be formed by the branch president. The election will take place by secret ballot at our regularly scheduled union meeting on Nov. 11. Any absentee ballots requested from the secretary will be mailed to the members' last known addresses on record and must be returned by 6 p.m. on Nov. 11 to be valid and counted by the committee members, who will open all ballots. There will be no write-in candidates.

All nominees' acceptance must also include that they have not, voluntarily or otherwise, held, accepted or applied for a supervisory position in the Postal Career Service for any period of time, whether for one day or a fraction thereof, either detailed, acting, probationary or

permanently, at any time during the 24 months prior to the nominating meeting.

Edi Appling, Sec., Br. 998

Valparaiso, Indiana

This is an official notice to all members of Branch 753 about nominations for all offices of Branch 753, including president, vice president, steward, treasurer, secretary, HBR, sergeant-at-arms and three trustees. Nominations will also be taken for delegates to the Indiana State Association of Letter Carriers convention and also for the NALC national convention.

The nominations will be taken at the regular meeting held on Oct. 21, and the election will be held at the regular meeting on Nov. 18, with the results given at that meeting. Absentee ballots may be obtained from a member of the election committee and returned by COB on Nov. 18.

Donald Gulbransen, Sec., Br. 753

Virginia Beach, Virginia

This will serve as the official notice to all members of Branch 2819 about nominations for the office of president, vice president, secretary, treasurer, sergeant-at-arms, health benefit rep and three trustees. To qualify for election of branch officers, any member in good standing shall be eligible to hold office. The term shall be for three years, beginning January 2026.

Nominations will be held at the regularly scheduled branch meeting on Sept. 30 at 6064 Indian River Road, Suite 203, Virginia Beach. Election for branch officers will be by mailing ballots as established by the election committee.

Nominations for the NALC 2026 national convention delegates and alternates will also be held at the Sept. 30 regular branch meeting at the union hall. Elections are to be conducted from 5 p.m. to 7 p.m. on Oct. 28 at the Aragona Moose Lodge, 3133 Shipp's Corner Road.

To qualify for delegates and alternates to the NALC 2026 convention, any member in good standing attending eight of 10 meetings in the qualifying years shall be eligible to be funded.

Candidates must accept nominations at the time made or signify in writing to the branch secretary within three days their willingness to serve in the desired position.

This will serve as official notice to all active members that nomination for station shop steward will be held from Sept. 1-25. Candidates must print their name and sign their name on the official nomination form located in each station. Results will be announced at the Sept. 30 regular monthly meeting. If a runoff vote is required, a committee will be appointed by the branch president with voting conducted at that station to select the winner. The steward allotment is as follows: Acredale—two, Bayside—one, Lynnhaven—two, London Bridge—two, Princess Anne—one, Seapines—two and Witthuck—two.

Jamie Drayton-Bey, Sec., Br. 2819

Washington, DC

This is the official notice, pursuant to Article 5 of the Branch 142 bylaws, of the nomination and election of del-

egates and alternate delegates to the 74th national convention to be held in Los Angeles, CA, Aug. 3-7, 2026. Nominations for all delegates will be made at the regular branch meeting on Oct. 1. The election of delegates and alternate delegates will take place at the regular branch meeting on Nov. 5. Capitol Branch 142 union meetings begin at 7:30 p.m. located at 6310 Chillum Place NW, Washington, DC.

In the event of the COVID-19 pandemic and social gathering guidelines from the CDC changes, and we are unable to have a regular branch meeting on Oct. 1, the membership will be notified by mail in reference to nominations and elections for all delegates. If there are any questions about the nominations for the 2026 national convention, please contact the union hall at 202-291-4930.

All members in good standing as defined in the NALC Constitution must be present, or they have a member in good standing place their name in nomination. All members in good standing must signify their acceptance of nominations in writing to the recording secretary no later than 72 hours after the Oct. 1 nominating meeting. By virtue of their office, all Branch 142 officers are delegates to all conventions. The nominee's written acceptance must also include that they have not, voluntarily or otherwise, held, accepted or applied for a supervisory position in the Postal Career Service for any period of time, whether one day or fraction thereof, either detailed, acting, probationary or permanently, at any time during the 24 months prior to the nominating meeting. Written acceptance of nomination can be faxed to 202-291-4944. It is the responsibility of the nominee to ensure that their faxed written acceptance has been received timely.

Karen R. Clark, Rec. Sec., Br. 142

Wheeling, Illinois

This is official notice to all members of Branch 4739 that nominations for president, vice president, treasurer, health benefits rep/OWCP officer, safety officer, recording secretary, financial secretary, sergeant-at-arms and three trustees will be held at the general meeting on Sept. 16 at 700 N. McHenry Road, Wheeling.

If election is necessary, it will be held at the same location on Oct. 21.

Branch stewards and winners of the election are automatically elected as delegates to state and national conventions.

Dale Prechodko, Rec. Sec., Br. 4739

Wilmington, Delaware

This is official notice to all members of Branch 191 that the nomination for the election of Delaware State Association (DSA) Wilmington District Executive Board representatives for three seats will be held at the regular branch meeting on Wednesday, Nov. 12, at the branch hall, located at 409 Old Dupont Road, Wilmington. Upon nomination, every nominee must certify that they have not served in a supervisory position for the 24 months prior to being nominated. As per the Branch 191 bylaws, the nomination form must be filled out and received at the union of-

fice within 14 days following the date of nomination.

Election will be held by secret ballot at the regular branch monthly meeting on Dec. 10 from 4 p.m. to 8:15 p.m. at the union office, located at 409 Old Dupont Road, Wilmington, and results will be announced at the end of the Dec. 10 branch meeting.

Write-in votes are not permitted.

This is official notice to all members of Branch 191 that the delegate election of 12 delegates to the national convention will be held at the regular branch meeting on Wednesday, Oct. 8, at the branch hall, located at 409 Old Dupont Road, Wilmington.

As per the Branch 191 bylaws, in order to be eligible to be a delegate to the national convention at branch expense, a member must have attended 14 regular meetings of the branch in the preceding 24 months prior to delegate elections and must signify in writing their willingness to attend the national convention.

Delegate election will be held by secret ballot at the regular branch monthly meeting on Oct. 8 from 4 p.m. to 8:15 p.m. at the union office, located at 409 Old Dupont Road, Wilmington. Results will be announced at the end of the Oct. 8 branch meeting.

Write-in votes are not permitted.

David M. Smith, Pres., Br. 191

Woodbridge, Virginia

Nominations for the election of officers of Branch 5921 will be held at the regular branch meeting at 6:30 p.m. on Oct. 14 at a location that will be posted well in advance of the meeting. All candidates must be present to accept nominations at the time made or, if absent, in writing. Candidates for office may accept nominations for only one office. The term of office will be for two years, beginning Jan. 2, 2026. Nominations will be held for the following branch offices and delegates: president, vice president, secretary-treasurer, four shop stewards, sergeant-at-arms, three trustees, delegates to the national convention in 2026, and MBA/health insurance representative.

The election will be conducted by secret ballot at the regular branch meeting at 6:30 p.m. on Nov. 12 at a location that will be posted well in advance of the meeting. Any member who will be unable to attend may request an absentee ballot from the election committee and must submit it no later than 5 p.m. on Nov. 10 at the union office, located at 3360 Post Office Road in Woodbridge. Write-in votes are not permitted.

Joseph McCartney, Pres., Br. 5921

Yonkers, New York

This is an official notice to all members of Branch 387 that nominations for president, vice president, recording secretary, treasurer, sergeant-at-arms, HBR/MBA, director of retirees and three trustees, plus delegates to the 2026 national convention.

This will take place commencing at 6:30 p.m. sharp on Wednesday, Oct. 15, at VFW Post 375 at 10 Huber Place.

Anthony Giobbe, Sec., Br. 387

Branch Items

Albany, New York

Don't give yourself a pay cut.

Recently in Albany, NY, letter carriers went through their first full route inspection and adjustment in over a decade. Everyone expected some changes. But when the dust settled, 16 routes had been eliminated—an eye-opening number that stunned the carriers. I've spoken with many carriers upset by the outcome. In those conversations, I asked some simple questions. "Do you knock on the customer's door and wait when a parcel doesn't fit in the mailbox?" One carrier said, "Nah, I just scan and leave it on the porch." Another, working in a large apartment building, admitted to leaving bulk mail in a tub in front of the boxes rather than delivering to each receptacle.

Unfortunately, these are not isolated habits. They're shortcuts being passed from one generation of letter carriers to the next, and they're costing us routes. The *M-41 Handbook* is our instruction guide for this job we do each day. Section 322.3 requires an attempt at the customer's door for undeliverable parcels. If no one is home, 322.311 mandates that a PS Form 3849 be left in the mailbox indicating where the item was placed. The *M-41* outlines what to do with mail that can't fit in small apartment boxes.

When was the last time you took a look at the *M-41 Handbook*? On my own route, I saw firsthand how simply following the *M-41* and delivering every piece properly eventually led to my large apartment building updating and replacing the tiny 1970s-style mailboxes.

The bottom line is that when we cut corners, we provide the data management uses to justify cuts. That hurts all of us. As more cities undergo route inspections, Albany should be a warning. Follow the handbook and protect your time, which will protect your route.

Norris Beswick, Branch 29

Alliance, Ohio

NALC Branch 297 cookout announcement. Where: Beechwood playground, 2270 Beechwood Ave., Alliance. When: Wednesday, Aug. 15. Time: Immediately following the end of the workday. Hot dogs and burgers will be ready by 5:30 p.m.

Joshua Lilly, Branch 297

Charlotte, North Carolina

We at Branch 545 hope all our members are having a wonderful summer. We want everyone to keep an eye on their mail, for our branch will be sending out election notices for our upcoming officer positions that are available. The notices will include instructions on how to properly fill out your ballots and the dates by when the ballots must be returned. Also, please continue to be proactive in our preparedness for the hot conditions that are continuing to be upon us. Please drink plenty of fluids, wear sunscreen, and cover as much exposed skin as possible to keep your body cool. Remember, only you know what your body is telling you when it comes to the status of your health.

At this time, we want to thank our fellow member on their recent retirement. Brenda Barnette retired with 34½ years of service from our Downtown Station. We thank you for your service and we want to wish you the best in the next chapter of your life.

The union leadership would like to let all our members know that we are continuing with our in-person meetings. We are holding our meetings on the third Tuesday of every month for anyone who is interested in attending. Food will be provided at the meeting for those who are able to attend. We look forward to seeing all of our members who are able to make it out. Also, if anyone is interested in participating in our local union in any capacity, please contact our local union office or speak with the union steward in your office.

Justin Fraley, Branch 545

Cincinnati, Ohio

Wow, what a hot and miserable summer this has been here in the Queen City. Talking about losing weight, all you must do is half of a relay and a few pounds are gone. Now I see why they do not use June through August as far as data for inspection is concerned, besides being in the contract—all the supervisors and our managers would actually sweat and have to do some walking in miserable weather. Why would they want that?

When was the last time we went one day without the DPS being upside-down, inside-out, without half of it being out of station, or looking like it just came from under a car that peeled out? Talk about adding some time to your day. There are some days with the DPS being the way it is, messed up, a good 45-plus minutes are added to your day, just so you can see an upright address, without killing your eyes. Thank goodness for good vision insurance.

There were a few days it was so bad, I was standing on every customer's porch, and it seemed like forever sifting through the DPS mess making sure I had all their mail before going on. By the time I got back to the vehicle, my satchel had just as much out-of-station mail in it, if not more. Impossible, right? It didn't even feel like I did that relay.

Let's all strap our belts a little tighter and see what the next postmaster has in store for us. Can it be any worse than what DeJoy did, and left us with? Only time will tell. Meetings every second Thursday of the month in Forest Park; please come and join us for postal knowledge, which is power.

In solidarity—

Chris Rought, Branch 43

Emerald Coast, Florida

Recently in my office, we have had a host of outside supervisors calling themselves "assisting the current management team" with getting the office back into shape.

One of their main concerns is attendance. So, they have appointed an "attendance monitor" to review attendance issues in my office. Mind you, we have our own supervisors in our

office, but they (MPOO) wanted someone from her team to do it.

It started out OK; they were meeting with the carriers to discuss their attendance, then they started having the steward present during the discussions (*wrong*), then having the steward present for the PDI (protecting the carrier). Now the attendance monitor is issuing discipline (*hell no*).

It is my opinion that the attendance monitor does just that: monitor the attendance. And if there is an issue, they would get with the immediate supervisor and advise them of the attendance issue(s).

This is not happening. The attendance monitor has become the judge, jury and executioner, with the immediate supervisor completely out of the picture, which is a violation of Article 16. Discipline has been issued in the form of seven- and 14-day suspensions, with no active or prior discipline in their files. We had an OIC in the office during this time, but the attendance monitor signs the request for discipline as the postmaster, which they are from another office totally, on one form, and as the administrative assistant on the other.

We will get to the bottom of this and protect the carriers' rights. The funny part about this is that both the OIC and the immediate supervisor(s) were completely left out of the loop. Attendance is the flavor for the day. If you are going to monitor it, stay in your lane.

Percy Smith Jr., Branch 4559

Fargo-West Fargo, North Dakota

"Everyone you meet is fighting a battle you know nothing about. Be kind." I saw this on a shirt the other day. There are a multitude of concerns one can list. People can carry a great amount of stress, dealing with issues. Unresolved, this can and will disrupt your home and work life. The Employee Assistance Program (EAP) is a service one could consider using, which is confidential and is provided at no cost for postal workers and their families. There are person-to-person visits, phone conversations, or the employee and/or families may use video counseling through a phone or computer using the EAP's privacy-protecting portal. The EAP website, eap4you.com, is also a great resource for getting help. One can find articles, assessment tools, training, webinars, advice and videos there.

EAP's 800-EAP-4YOU (800-327-4968) is a toll-free line available 24 hours a day, 365 days a year. Counselors are available for emergency and urgent care intervention. EAP is an incredible resource for all sorts of problems. Don't hesitate to use it. Everyone is fighting a battle that we know nothing about.

The American worker: Most of us get a paid holiday off on Sept. 1 for the Labor Day holiday. Think about how labor has raised our standard of living and has created so much of the nation's strength, freedom and leadership that we have come to know. Labor Day emerged from the labor movement of the late 19th century, a period when the workers were fighting for better wages, reasonable hours and safer working conditions. Labor Day became a fed-

eral holiday in 1894. Labor Day was a day to commemorate the labor movement, and it has become a day of relaxation and an unofficial end of summer.

Just a thought—

Dave Steichen, Branch 205

Fresno, California

Years ago, a supervisor was writing up a discipline letter for a letter carrier. She called me to her desk, asking what discipline to issue. I was offended, telling her that that was not my job. I represent employees, not discipline them.

For many years, I had never heard of Article 10 charges in my branch. That has changed over the past several years. In my local, and other branches, NALC members are filing charges against others. Article 10 charges are there to be used if needed, but the number being filed is disturbing. These charges are not funny. I have witnessed laughter during one meeting when the subject of how severe the punishment should be was being talked over. That was disgusting. Members were acting like abusive management, or a crazed U.S. president. Some charges should have been settled much sooner.

Management is reasonable for providing a safe, hostile-free work environment on the workroom floor. If they do not, grievances and EEO complaints should be filed against them.

Not all letter carriers get along. During my time, I had problems with co-workers. Many of us do. I believe in unity over being Article 10-crazy. So, I encourage our membership to work out matters with level heads. At the very least, consider it. Being divided is not better than being united.

Jesse Dominguez, Branch 231

Hagerstown, Maryland

To begin this month, I'd like to take a point of privilege to congratulate Keith Clowser on a well-earned retirement. After many years of service, I hope you get everything you have ever wanted out of your retirement! We will all miss you at the office, even though I'm sure you are very glad to officially be done. On behalf of Branch 443, congratulations!

We also have congratulations to give out. Last month, Cory Patrick officially converted to a full-time regular! The job of our CCAs and PTFs is daunting and thankless, but now that you've finally made regular, I hope you'll enjoy your newly earned benefits. I would also like to welcome the newest transfer to our branch and look forward to working together!

Last month the official budget bill became law, but thanks to the tremendous efforts of NALC members, as well as all federal employees across the country, we were able to protect our hard-earned retirement benefits by stripping the harmful reduction provisions from the bill. While calling and writing your congressional representatives, along with voting, are the most beneficial ways to make sure your voice is heard, another strong way is to get involved in the Letter Carrier Political Fund. The LCPF is a

very strong resource in getting the changes we want to ensure that harmful legislation is not passed, and that we have the ear of Congress to get positive changes written into law. If you are not currently donating to LCPF, I highly recommend doing so, even if it is as little as \$1 a month.

Lastly, please continue to stay safe during the last days of the summer heat and take breaks as needed to cool off and keep safe.

In solidarity—

Jeremy Kessel, Branch 443



Marrero, LA Br. 4323 Secretary Terri Ancar shows the door prize she won at the Louisiana state convention.

Knoxville, Tennessee

Hello, brothers and sisters!

It's been a while since many of us have participated in a six-day route count and inspection. For several years, we had joint route adjustments, such as IARAP, MIARAP and JARAP, which were based on the carrier's actual performance over a given period. Apparently, management wasn't capturing enough routes, so now they went back to the traditional six-day route count and inspection.

A few of our stations underwent the route inspection and did not fare well, especially with the COR (Carrier Optimal Routing) program, which has a history of wreaking havoc on routes and cheating letter carriers out of street time. COR can create the most illogical lines of travel imaginable.

But besides COR, we must look inward to ourselves. There are carriers who do not carry their routes in accordance with the *M-41 Handbook*. They are called "runners," and they've been around since the beginning of the Post Office. They are known for their "shortcuts," skipping their lunch and break periods. On the other hand, cancellation of the Amazon contract has led to a dramatic drop in parcels, which in turn has led to the Auto Pivot Program. This program supposedly captures undertime, but it has been mismanaged from the get-go, which has led to grievances. There have been mismanaged DOIS-related programs in the past, but the one issue that is always consistent is the carrier who runs their route, and when there is an inspection that adds to their route, they are the first one to complain the loudest.

So, the bottom line, again, is for everyone to carry their route in accordance with the *M-41 Handbook*. Look within yourself and set up a goal to be a safe and efficient letter carrier!

Tony Rodriguez, Branch 419

Marrero, Louisiana

Greetings, brothers and sisters.

I hope everyone is staying safe and hydrated during these hot summer months. Please take your breaks, watch for signs of heat stress, and look out for one another on the workroom floor and on the street.

A question I've been hearing often is, "When are we getting our back pay?" As of now, it's expected to arrive sometime in August. But a better question is, "What should we do with it when it comes?"

Let me be clear, I'm not a financial advisor. I'm just a fellow letter carrier offering some friendly advice you might find useful.

First, consider opening a separate savings account and starting a \$1,000 emergency fund. Life happens—car issues, medical bills or unexpected expenses—and it's smart to be prepared.

Second, if you've got debt, especially smaller ones, pay those down first. Getting rid of smaller balances builds momentum and frees up cash to tackle larger ones.

Third, with our new hourly raise, this might be a good time to boost your TSP (Thrift Savings Plan) contributions. Try aiming for 15 percent if you can. Retirement might feel far off, but your future self will thank you.

Fourth, consider giving a little. Support your favorite charities or causes. Helping others not only makes a difference, but also lifts your spirit.

Finally, don't blow it. This is a one-time boost, not a lifestyle change. Avoid unnecessary purchases and don't fall into the trap of spending to impress others.

Use this moment to move one step closer to financial peace of mind.

In solidarity—

Abraham Askar, Branch 4323

Minneapolis, Minnesota

I have a question: Are we on the same team? Brothers? Sisters? I believe the word is *union*...am I right?

As carriers, we come from different walks of life with different life experiences. We have dif-

Notice

By making a contribution to the Letter Carrier Political Fund, you are doing so voluntarily with the understanding that your contribution is not a condition of membership in the National Association of Letter Carriers or of employment by the Postal Service, nor is it part of union dues. You have a right to refuse to contribute without any reprisal. Any guideline amounts are merely suggestions, and you may contribute more or less than the guidelines suggest and the union will not favor or disadvantage you by reason of the amount of your contribution or your decision not to contribute. The Letter Carrier Political Fund will use the money it receives to contribute to candidates for federal office and undertake other political spending as permitted by law. Your selection shall remain in full force and effect until canceled. Contributions to the Letter Carrier Political Fund are not deductible for federal income tax purposes. Federal law prohibits the Letter Carrier Political Fund from soliciting contributions from individuals who are not NALC members, executive and administrative staff or their families. Any contribution received from such an individual will be refunded to that contributor. Federal law requires us to use our best efforts to collect and report the name, mailing address, name of employer and occupation of individuals whose contributions exceed \$200 in a calendar year.

Branch Items

ferent perspectives and goals. We all decided to come together to form this group called NALC. Our goal should be to stand together and stand up for each other.

Lately, we have gone through some division. It's really been exhausting...hasn't it? I just want to tell you that it's OK for us to have different ideas, to disagree and to have spirited debate. Just remember, though: When that's all over, we need to come back together. We need to understand that we can achieve more when we act together.

Back in the day, I decided to become more involved in the union in much the same way that you probably did—someone from management really set me off. I was comfortable standing up for my rights, but I realized that some of us don't feel comfortable standing up. *Some of us need the rest of us to stand in strength and solidarity.* Much like you, I decided that I wanted to stand up for and stand alongside my fellow city carriers as a steward at my station. That's how I do my part.

How do you serve? Or...how will you serve?

Years ago, a popular author named Jim Collins wrote a book titled *Good to Great*. In this book, I was affected by his analogy of the bus. The bus is both Branch 9 and the NALC. We have *all* the right people on the bus—good people, like *you* and me. We just need everyone in the right seats. Once that happens, I believe that...

Together, we are unstoppable!

William Mathes, Branch 9

Monterey, California

Happy Independence Day, everyone! It's been 249 years since we gained our independence.

As we celebrate the birthday of our country, I hope we can save our democracy. I believe in the First Amendment and taking your grievances to the street. During the 1787 convention, Benjamin Franklin was asked by Elizabeth Willing Powell if we have a monarchy or a republic. Benjamin answered: "A republic, if you can keep it." Only time will tell.

Summer is here; be sure to stay safe and hydrated. Heat exhaustion is real and not much fun. Take care of yourself.

If you haven't contacted your representatives about saving the Postal Service and let them know it should not be privatized, what are you waiting for? You can email them or call them. Let your voices be heard. It only takes a few minutes.

Changing retirement from the high-3 to the high-5 will cost you money. Taking away the supplement will cost you about \$1,700 a month. Your contribution could go up. If you don't care, keep quiet; if you do care, *let your voice be heard—make that call.*

If management isn't treating you right, pulling you from your opt, talking to you with disrespect, talk to your steward—*always ask permission to speak to your steward.* You are supposed to be given time in the same shift; if not, you must be told when you will get your time. It's your union—make sure you take advantage of your rights and benefits.

Much love goes out to our brothers and sisters in Los Angeles. May peace be with all of you.

United we bargain—divided we beg.

Patty Cramer, Branch 1310

Norristown, Pennsylvania

I've paid my dues / time after time / I've done my sentence / but committed no crime!

Thanks, Freddie Mercury, for helping me with my last scribe! If anyone remembers my



Members of Newark, DE Br. 1977 (l to r) Kelly Scott, John Yardley and Jeffrey Warfel are recognized with Million Mile Awards for safe driving.

first scribe, which was way back in 2015, I wrote about our work offices being like prisons, with the stupidvisors being prison guards! I wish I could say things have gotten better, but I can't! The warden—I mean PM—has binoculars and will scan the exercise yard—oops, I mean parking lot—and watch carriers loading up and trying to

escape—I mean go to their routes—and looking for something to discipline them about!

But the inmates—sorry, carriers—are still escaping for greener pastures (quitting) or getting put on EP or getting PDIs for stupid reasons. Some have just started their sentence—oops, I mean career—and aren't fully versed on all the little things that we do on a daily basis (that, duh, management changes on a whim).

I've worked with dozens of stupidvisors over the years, 'cause they changed constantly, and I have had some who actually knew how to do the job professionally and effectively, but I won't name them, 'cause they would be disciplined for their common sense and integrity and caring!

I'm a few days into retirement, and it feels strange but relaxing, still waking up and thinking about my customers and forwards and holds. With time, it shall pass. The thing I will miss most is my co-workers and the good times we had in the mornings before hitting the street.

Now it's time to make up for all the times I missed with family and try to catch up and make new memories! The thing that is crazy is that on my 90th day of probation, they tried to fire me, but 31 years later I get to say, "I quit!"

Joel Stimmler, Branch 542

North Florida

Thankfully there were enough of us who took the NALC Legislative Department seriously enough to contact their representatives to oppose sections of the "Big, Beautiful Bill" that

were adverse to letter carriers. Through our efforts, all threats directly affecting letter carriers (including other postal unions) were left out of the bill.

Personally, I contacted my congressman and two Florida senators. One senator in particular has a response, but no response to all issues. When you contact her about an issue, some three weeks later she responds with a standard letter that just tells us how hard she is working, but nowhere is there any mention of the issue we contacted her about. That will not stop us, as we have to continue to "Fight Like Hell!"

Since the big bill has passed, we are now seeing the economy adversely affected. Migrants who do the work American citizens won't do (e.g., farming, roofing, other construction and factory jobs) now have employers scrambling to fill vacancies. Rounding up immigrants who have no records and shipping them off to other countries, and the list goes on. Changes to Medicaid, and now Medicare premiums will be affected. This administration is ruining our military's effectiveness. Every U.S. voting-eligible citizen must make sure they can and will vote in the next election to change the future for this country.

Bob Henning, Branch 53

Oklahoma City, Oklahoma

This June, like every June for the last 20-plus years, Branch 458 presented a graduating senior with the branch's Memorial Scholarship. It has been one of my greatest honors during my time with the NALC to be a monthly donor to this scholarship. I have always been a huge proponent of education.

Both my parents and one of my grandmothers were teachers. Additionally, my grandfather was a professor at Texas A&M before moving to Oklahoma to raise a family. Before being hired by USPS, I planned to be a teacher. I was scheduled to take my educator certification test when USPS called. Now, I train our new stewards on how to represent our members. I am an Academy facilitator and an on-the-job instructor. So, in a way, I guess I still became a teacher.

I tell my carriers, "If you don't know your rights, you don't have any rights." Unfortunately, nowadays it should be changed to, "If you don't know your actual rights, you don't have any." Too many people rely on social media for advice, and as the saying goes, "You get what you pay for." Social media is free; your union membership is not. If you don't like the answer your steward or branch officers are giving you, contact your national business agent (NBA). Keep in mind that just because you disagree with it doesn't make it incorrect, no matter what social media tells you.

Finally, NALC recently notified Branch 458 that we finished first in our category for the total number of pounds collected for the food drive. Although it feels good to be No. 1, all members who participated in the food drive should feel proud. We help struggling people every day with our efforts. Let's make next year even better!

Eric E. Beu, Branch 458

Phoenix, Arizona

Greetings from Arizona and Branch 576! We are in our hot season, where temps can exceed 110 degrees in the shade, routinely. This “dry heat” is still *hot*! It is all about hydration!

Our members deal with it, just like many of you deal with the sub-zero temps and snow during your winters. You just make the best of it and deliver the mail.

I have decided to retire from my editor job.

My vision issues from macular degeneration have slowly deteriorated, and I find it harder and harder to keep up with my duties. I am doing OK and still manage to golf with a lot of help from my fellow golfers, who watch my ball flight. I am so grateful for what vision I still have. At 74, I am just getting a little worn out and feel it is time to let a younger member take over.

My first appointment as editor was around 1984 for about six years. I then got very busy with the NALC and finally ended up as a Region 4 regional administrative assistant from 2002 until 2010, when I retired.

When I returned home to Arizona, I was asked to be editor by a friend and have enjoyed it off and on since for another 12 years. I appreciate the support of the membership and our branch leadership over these years.

I have met hundreds of great people since coming to the Postal Service in 1977 as a mail handler and transferring to carrier in 1980.

I have tremendous respect for the NALC and its members. I am glad we have our union in these times of uncertainty! Our future depends upon our strength and unity! Best wishes to all!

Al Linde, Branch 576

Portland, Oregon

The local negotiation period has passed, and I, like many others around this country, can breathe a sigh of relief that the whirlwind of negotiations is over. In Branch 82, we represent 14 installations, and each of them decided to open negotiations this session. Some of those installation heads had agendas, while others were clearly forced to open in order to challenge LMOU language and weren't exactly sure why. They must have had some national training, because many of them had the same exact talking points that had nothing to do with locals, the 22 items, or the process at all. For most of them, it was their first time, and they didn't really know what to do. From what I have heard from other branches, it was largely the same everywhere.

At Branch 82, we also had goals we wanted to achieve, and aside from a few obstinate postmasters and difficult management bargaining teams, we met a lot of those objectives. I want to thank my team that helped throughout this process.

Every branch is different. Some have one local to focus on, some have several, like Branch 82, and other larger merged branches have a voluminous amount to get through. Whatever situation your branch is in, I want to say congratulations to those negotiators for getting through it, and thank you for stepping up to do the work.

For us here at Branch 82, management is imposing something out of every LMOU. That means the fight continues on to arbitration. This is nothing new. Like every time before, we will be ready. Local negotiations happen every contract, and they will come again soon. It is not easy, it can be a lot of work, but it's also an opportunity—an important one at that.

David Norton, Branch 82

Providence, Rhode Island

As we are in the midst of the summer months, I'd be remiss not to continue mentioning heat safety. For the summer months, that means taking breaks when needed, seeking out shade to park in, and staying hydrated, to name a few things.

Heat safety is even more critical than usual due to the changes in the OTDL, with carriers working longer days than ever. Management will continue to discuss this, but ultimately, it's our responsibility to ensure we take both heat safety and all safety measures seriously.

We all know that management often talks about safety, but they rarely practice what they preach. It's up to us to take care of ourselves.

Well, I don't have too much more to add, so until next time, be safe and be good.

Lastly, this is a reminder that Branch 15 meetings will resume in September.

Anthony Turcotte, Branch 15

Racine, Wisconsin

You can't breathe and swallow at the same time. Try it. It's physically impossible. Turning your attention to the Arctic for a moment: Male penguins woo their mates with pebbles. Ya, pebbles. Yet our future mates get wooed with pebbles that cost us two months' salary.

Who would have guessed the “Big, Beautiful Bill” passed with very little debate. The bill was destined to pass just to stroke one man's ego. The upside of this was that, due to the relentless, hard-fought efforts from the NALC and

branches throughout the nation, all provisions affecting federal workers' retirement benefits, particularly the postal workforce, had been scratched from the Senate bill prior to heading back to the House. The House included disastrous cuts to our benefits before the Senate ruled those proposals violated the Byrd Rule, limiting reconciliation legislature to topics that are budgetary in nature. Always trying to pull a fast one on hardworking Americans and the federal workforce.

Not a lot going on around these parts. Summer is pretty quiet around this neck of the woods. I'm getting the hang of this retirement thing I got going on. During my “working” days, I always had a plan. A detailed structure for my day. Any deviation of said plan could result in chaos, confusion and anarchy. Now, with a little push, I'm living by the seat of my pants. Making my own rules. Violating none of them. That's how I'm rolling these days.

My branch articles are moving. No COA yet, but the moving vans are lining up. Transitioning with either the September or October branch article, I will be vacating the Branch Items section and moving to the Retiree Reports, which are located *juuuust* prior to the Branch Items. Stay tuned.

Chris Paige, Branch 436

Rockville, Maryland

We are ready to escalate our remedies for Federal Employees' Compensation Act (FECA) violations after receiving two new arbitrations. Arbitrator Sims wrote in an award dated May 25: “Management failed to notify the grievant in writing that her injury claim was being controverted. Furthermore, management did not provide a legitimate reason for the controversion. Management is instructed that, when receiving and/or processing employee claims for Workers' Compensation, it must abide by the applicable provisions of the National Agreement, the *Employee and Labor*

COLA: Cost-of-living adjustment

- The projected accumulation toward the fifth regular COLA under the 2023-2026 National Agreement was **\$728** in July following the release of the June 2025 consumer price index (CPI). The fifth COLA will be based on the increase in the CPI for urban wage earners index (CPI-W) between the base index month and July 2025, less any previously calculated COLAs, and will be payable the second full pay period following the release of the July 2025 index.
- The projected 2026 COLA for the Civil Service Retirement System (CSRS) is

2.3 percent, and for the Federal Employees Retirement System (FERS), **2.0 percent**, following the release of the June CPI. The 2026 COLAs will be finalized with the publication of the September 2025 CPI in October 2025.

- The 2026 projected COLA under the Federal Employees' Compensation Act (FECA) is **2.2 percent** following the release of the June CPI. This COLA will be based on the change in the CPI between December 2024 and December 2025.
- Visit nalc.org for the latest updates.

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Relations Manual, the *Handbook EL-505*, all consistent with Law.”

And, Arbitrator Talmadge issued an arbitration decision on June 27, stating that “management falsified clockrings by putting the Grievant in for LWOP, but not code 049. Management is instructed to make the change to 049 within 14 days with a copy to the local president. This will allow the Grievant to be paid by the Department of Labor for her injury using a CA-7. Management WILL COMPLY with the provisions and laws of OWCP (Office of Workers’ Compensation Programs) including, but not limited to, EL-505, ELM chapter 540, articles 13 and 21 and 20 CFR 1 (Code of Federal Regulations.)”

I want to end with two quotes.

“Terrible things are happening outside. Poor helpless people are being dragged out of their homes. Families are torn apart. Men, women, and children are separated. Children come home from school to find that their parents have disappeared.” —*Diary of Anne Frank*, Jan. 13, 1943

Bruce Springsteen recently said this about Trump and his administration: “America is currently in the hands of a corrupt, incompetent and TREASONOUS administration. The last check on power, after the checks and balances of government have failed, ARE THE PEOPLE, you and me.” Well said, Bruce!

In the struggle—

Kenneth Lerch, Branch 3825

Royal Oak, Michigan

On Saturday, June 28, Violet Bidinger was in her backyard shed looking for a cooler on a hot summer day. She stumbled and fell to the shed floor. She was unable to lift herself back up, so she began yelling for help. Her daughter and granddaughter were inside the house with the windows closed, and they could not hear her shouting. There were no neighbors close enough to hear. She lay helplessly on the ground for 15 minutes waiting for a miracle.

Tayseer Kassab, a Hazel Park letter carrier and member of Branch 3126, was delivering his route that day. As he approached Ms. Bidinger’s house, he heard her cries for help. He entered the back yard, but he could not see anybody at first. He investigated further and found his injured patron lying amidst the scattered items in her shed. Mr. Kassab then banged on the door to alert her family inside the home, who had no idea until then that their mother was in trouble. Ms. Bidinger was brought inside her home to be assessed. With a few scrapes and cuts and a bruised ego, she had suffered only minor injuries in the fall.

Ms. Bidinger called the Hazel Park Post Office on Monday to relay this story to Postman Kassab’s direct supervisor. She was so grateful to have been helped by her letter carrier. Of course, Mr. Kassab made no mention of this to his fellow employees or his supervisor. It was no big deal. This is just what we, as letter carriers, are expected to do as we walk our appointed rounds. Random acts of kindness, and in this case, a bit of selfless heroism. Just another day in the life of this Hazel Park carrier and Branch 3126 member. You make us proud, Tayseer Kassab. Thank you for your service!

Paul Roznowski, Branch 3126

St. Louis, Missouri

Well, the One Big Beautiful Bill is now a reality, and if you’re a billionaire, you’re probably dancing in the streets since you have the most to gain with your permanent tax cuts. For the rest of America, hold on to your hats—it’s going to get ugly.

I’m sickened by those who thought that their support of a 34-time convicted felon was somehow going to be better than supporting a highly educated opponent who vowed to stand with the working men and women of this country. It only took six short months for the United States to be a laughing-stock to the world and instantly destroy universal alliances with world leaders.

This “Big, Beautiful Bill” jeopardizes health care under Medicaid for over 17 million Americans and grants tax breaks for billionaires who hardly need another handout. Meanwhile, highly armed Gestapo forces are scattered throughout the country, openly arresting American citizens based on the color of their skin and arbitrarily throwing them out of the country or imprisoning them in makeshift concentration camps without due process and with impunity.

Where are our elected officials? Where are the courts? This isn’t America. This is 1930s Nazi Germany, and it’s not imagined—it’s real.

Our country is now a pariah. Virtually every European country has issued travel bans and restriction warnings to its citizens *not* to travel to the United States for fear of being detained upon arrival. What effects do you suppose that will have on our economy? I suspect the same crushing effects our tariff policies will have on the American consumer pocketbooks.

And, just in case anyone thinks that none of these actions will affect them directly: The president appointed a postmaster general from our competitor who brags about union-busting. God help us all.

Tom Schulte, Branch 343

St. Paul, Minnesota

Branch 28 doesn’t hold a general membership meeting or a stewards meeting in July, so there’s not as much to report on. The June general meeting did see the passage of a resolution to call for a special convention to prepare for the upcoming contract negotiation. The majority of our members decided that it would be good to get the full membership on

board and make sure everybody has a voice in the bargaining platform we take to management as negotiations begin.

Otherwise, like much of the nation, we’ve been dealing with the extreme heat. Coupled with our aging vehicles and middling heat training, it’s a recipe for disaster. Everybody should make sure our newest brothers and sisters know to take heat breaks whenever we need them, and not just in authorized break locations. Like the scanner messages are so fond of reminding us, we’re in charge of our safety!

Solidarity forever!

Kaylee Veazey, Branch 28

Seattle, Washington

We’re losing our letter carrier—ouch! He’s retiring. Congratulations, I guess. Happy for him, sad for us. And when I say “us,” I mean everybody who was lucky enough to have someone so conscientious and dedicated to the delivery process as their carrier. I’m going to miss Ray mainly because he was the impetus for a lot of good stories. He was my moleman. My guy on the inside with a great sense of humor and high eye for irony when it came to management’s duplicity, and out-and-out stupidity.

I truly wish Ray the very best, as he was the epitome of what I always wanted to be as a letter carrier. He handled the harassment, the almost daily walk-arounds, and the petty nitpicking by the pettifoggers with humor and grace. As a letter carrier, you can never be fast enough to please those clipboard holders. Hold my beer. Those do-nothings who could readily double as a doorstop. Those people who do most of their work with their mouths. Those lightweights who lift nothing more strenuous than a coffee mug. Those quick to criticize and slow to praise angst inducing wasters.

We’d meet on the street and Ray’d begin to chuckle, “You won’t believe it. You can’t make this stuff up.” Then he’d fill me in with the backstory about mail thievery at Westwood Station—evidently because some brainchild of management required that the DPS mail be left out on the loading dock so that the carriers could not get access to it early. However, it provided easy pickings for the homeless who decided to steal it at will. We’d laugh and shake our heads—will wonders never cease?! They’re ceasing for me, as the Ray Man is riding off into the sunset.

Dan Nokes, Branch 79

Southeast Michigan

Despite very hot and humid conditions, on Sunday, June 22, more than 250 Branch 2184 members, families and guests enjoyed a splendid afternoon of fun and union solidarity at our annual picnic. The fine work of our branch picnic coordinator, Erik Venzke, and all of our volunteers helped to ensure another successful event. We were also treated to the presence of two special guests, NALC Vice President James Henry as well as NALC activist and podcaster Corey Walton. The two union brothers mingled with our members throughout the afternoon, answering questions and sharing their visions for our union’s direction and future.

The Trump regime’s “big, beautiful bill” has been passed by Congress and signed into law. The excellent work of NALC activists was in-



Royal Oak, MI Br. 3126 carrier Tayseer Kassab with Violet Bidinger, a postal patron he rescued after a fall.

valuable, as always, for helping to ensure that the final version of what is still a very bad piece of legislation did not include proposed attacks on the retirement benefits of letter carriers and federal employees. However, it should be noted that it was not NALC activism alone that defeated these attacks, but also that of other postal and federal unions, employee organizations and their members. This was a combined and concerted effort made by many, and fortunately it was successful.

Additional attacks on postal and federal workers will most surely be forthcoming from what is a viciously anti-federal employee regime. In the future, it would be more helpful to directly coordinate NALC's response with the other postal unions and also with all other federal employee organizations, as well as to appropriately recognize and share the credit when our combined efforts are successful, as they were this time.

Joe Golonka, Branch 2184

Southeast Pennsylvania Merged

The heat is on (both literally and figuratively). We always talk about safety, but we sometimes forget to practice what we preach. We must look out for each other like no time before. Our membership has changed drastically. Therefore, we can't simply assume carriers know how to deal with the elements like we have over the years. That, coupled with management shoving pivots down our throats, presents an insurmountable challenge.

Please remember to use comfort stops as needed to avoid heat-related events. If you need to take extra time to cool down, be sure to contact management to let them know of your situation.

Many of the new contract provisions kicked in on July 1. The new Overtime Desired List (ODL) lists allow choices that many carriers were asking for. To have the same ODL experience as before, just sign both lists.

The New Employee Experience Retention and Mentoring Program (NEERMP) has rolled out. The goal is to retain new employees by giving them good training, along with a schedule that allows for growth and stability. Each carrier will only work in their office in the beginning, have a scheduled day off, have a schedule that allows for familiarity, and limited hours until they reach a certain number of weeks. They will be assigned a mentor who will be there to advise, talk to, and sit in on 30/60/80-day reviews, among other things. We must all buy into this program for the betterment of our future leaders.

When management places a carrier on emergency placement (EP), they must ask if the carrier wants to use their annual leave (pending the outcome of their case). Previously, management would use EP to financially demoralize carriers ("I'll make that %\$#* miss a mortgage").

We don't die; our fighting spirit only multiplies.

Eric Jackson, Branch 725

Staunton, Virginia

Thanks to the perseverance of President Stoney Caricofe, Rep. Ben Cline (VA-6) set up a 30-minute meeting to discuss letter carrier issues. Rich Hotz and I also attended the meeting. Unfortunately, the meeting was set during the workday and other carriers were working and could not attend.

Several NALC priority pieces of legislation were discussed. Here are the congressman's positions:

- H.Res. 70, Oppose Postal Privatization—Supports a public Postal Service serving all areas, along with modernization and improvements to make it more efficient.
- H.R. 1065, Protect Our Letter Carriers Act—Supports and will direct his staff to co-sponsor.
- H.R. 1522, Federal Employees Fairness Act—Supports the concept but concerned about the cost. Will research and revisit with us.
- H.R. 3170, Access to Workers' Comp (more choices of medical providers)—Supports this concept. We believe we can get him to sign on.

He was impressed by our food drive efforts. If we remind him of the drive next year, he and his office will participate.

Unfortunately, Congressman Cline has stopped having public town hall meetings, as have many elected officials. Don't give up! Keep on requesting meetings directly by contacting the Washington, DC, and local offices. Use multiple methods of communication, including emails and phone calls. Fill out the scheduling request form on their official congressional web pages.

When you get a meeting with either the representative or staff, be prepared. Print out the fact sheets located on the NALC/Government Affairs/Legislative Action page and leave them behind. After you've familiarized yourself with them first, of course. Be polite, professional, concise, firm, informative and in street clothes. Ask for commitments and follow-up. Fill out the lobby report located on the same page and mail it to NALC HQ.

Letter carriers are good at fighting to have their voices heard. Don't stop now.

In solidarity—

Cindy Connors, Branch 513

Toledo, Ohio

Branch 100 hosted 112 golfers at our annual Charles Cohen golf tournament for MDA. Thanks to the many volunteers who helped Butch Wuwert and Andy Adkinson make the event enjoyable for all. The heat was on, but all the golfers kept hydrating. Barbecue chicken and ribs were served following the steamy round of golf. The team from Kenwood Office had the lowest score and two teams split the skins. If my team hadn't birdied the last hole, we would have split the mystery score prize. We look forward to next year's outing.

The grievance backlog continues. We have over 200 at the DRT awaiting a decision. Then

there's the 450 pending scheduling for arbitration. And we're averaging four arbitration dates a month. And there appears to be no light at the end of the tunnel.

Numerous problems continue at most of the stations that had a COR inspection. The one that troubles me most is the daily undelivered mail. With the clear and present danger of the survival of the Postal Service, now is not the time to have patrons complaining to their representatives that their mail is not getting delivered. L'Enfant Plaza better wake up or it will all be gone!

Our delegation to the legislative conference in Washington, DC, was an event they will never forget. The train from Baltimore to DC was substantially delayed due to a breakdown caused by the extreme heat. After an evening of sightseeing, they returned to their hotel only to find it had been evacuated due to a bomb threat. Their flight home was again delayed, then canceled, forcing them to rent two cars and drive back to Detroit airport. Oh, what memories they will have.

Ray Bricker

Tri-Valley, California

The schedule 2025 local negotiations and implementation period (May 27 through June 26) has passed. In most of our offices, there were little to no changes in the local memorandum of understanding (LMOU). However, there were a few managers who had concerns about their respective LMOU. Nevertheless, our negotiation team for the branch did not intend to open any negotiations to make changes to the current LMOUs with management. And if any of the offices failed to reach an agreement, management may impasse its concerns for a resolution to arbitration. Our team is more than ready to dispute management's assertions that the current LMOUs are inconsistent or in conflict with the National Agreement through the appeal process.

First and foremost, I want to thank Region 1 RAA Jeffery Frazee for providing LMOU negotiation training. I also want to thank NALC's Contract Administration Unit for providing an updated guide to local negotiations. Jeff's training, along with the guide help our negotiation team, including me (lead negotiator), navigate through a time-consuming/intense process of negotiating at the local level in the best interest of letter carriers.

Since the start of full collective bargaining in 1971, letter carriers' contractual rights and benefits have been negotiated at the national level. However, some subjects have been left to the local parties to work out according to their own preferences and particular circumstances. Article 30 of the National Agreement lists 22 subject items that parties may negotiate locally to create an LMOU.

Lastly, a special thanks to our branch team members: Executive Vice President Albert Reyes, Senior Vice President Alex Lopez and Vice President Rochelle Harvey. Without all of your stellar efforts throughout the LMOU negotiations, the branch could have not succeeded like it has for over the last quarter-century during this process. Great job.

James C. Perryman Jr., Branch 2902

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

Joseph R. Walker	Monroe, LA	Br. 136
Donald F. Jewett	Worcester, MA	Br. 12
John R. Poodiack	Binghamton, NY	Br. 333
Thomas E. Bunyard	Oklahoma City, OK	Br. 458
Philip L. Holloway	Oklahoma City, OK	Br. 458
Bobby D. Moore	Oklahoma City, OK	Br. 458
Ronnie E. Palmer	Oklahoma City, OK	Br. 458

60-year pins

Michael L. Matuciana	Oak Park, IL	Br. 608
Donald F. Jewett	Worcester, MA	Br. 12
Jack E. Barton	Binghamton, NY	Br. 333
Anthony N. Biconish	Binghamton, NY	Br. 333
Gerald C. Holden	Binghamton, NY	Br. 333
Charles E. Campbell	Oklahoma City, OK	Br. 458

Virgil G. Wake	Oklahoma City, OK	Br. 458
Donald F. Wisel	Oklahoma City, OK	Br. 458

55-year pins

Lloyd Furlong	Belleville, IL	Br. 155
Daniel C. Sharpe	Oak Park, IL	Br. 608
Joseph M. Castagnetta	Monroe, LA	Br. 136
Milton D. Haddock	Monroe, LA	Br. 136
Darrell G. White	Monroe, LA	Br. 136
Wayne A. Gorman	Austin, MN	Br. 717
Wayne L. Garrelts	Kearney, NE	Br. 312
Richard L. Larson	Kearney, NE	Br. 312
Donald S. Papiernik	Kearney, NE	Br. 312
Jake Reess	Lebanon, NH	Br. 1633
Robert E. Horne	Rocky Mount, NC	Br. 1321
Pender R. Lilley	Rocky Mount, NC	Br. 1321
William C. McCutcheon	Rocky Mount, NC	Br. 1321
Moody T. McKinney Jr.	Rocky Mount, NC	Br. 1321

J. T. Sharpe	Rocky Mount, NC	Br. 1321
Donald E. Tyler	Rocky Mount, NC	Br. 1321
Elmer L. Vann	Rocky Mount, NC	Br. 1321
Wayland S. Woolard	Rocky Mount, NC	Br. 1321
Allan R. Skavlem	Grand Forks, ND	Br. 517
John R. Moreland	New Philadelphia, OH	Br. 711
James D. Russell	New Philadelphia, OH	Br. 711
Donald E. Landis	Oklahoma City, OK	Br. 458
Stephen A. Riggs	Oklahoma City, OK	Br. 458
Lamar H. Wilson	Oklahoma City, OK	Br. 458

50-year gold cards and pins

Shelton B. Morgan	Monroe, LA	Br. 136
John W. Phillips	Monroe, LA	Br. 136
Carl A. Calarco	New York, NY	Br. 36
John R. Moreland	New Philadelphia, OH	Br. 711
James D. Russell	New Philadelphia, OH	Br. 711
Sidney W. Simmons	Dallas, TX	Br. 132

In Memoriam

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

Armando A. Garcia	Br. 1902	AZ Mgd.
Rosemarie Curran	Br. 1100	Garden Grove, CA
Ronnie A. Markham	Br. 1100	Garden Grove, CA
Arnold M. Celzo	Br. 1111	Greater E. Bay, CA
Peter L. Provencial	Br. 133	Sacramento, CA
Marion McMackin	Br. 70	San Diego, CA
Sue S. Vang	Br. 737	Santa Ana, CA
Burt T. Krivanec	Br. 1427	Santa Clara, CA
Fred O. Hayes	Br. 913	Grand Junction, CO
Dan D. Workman	Br. 913	Grand Junction, CO
Hollis E. Stone	Br. 324	Greeley, CO
Alexis Delgado Jr	Br. 32	Bridgeport, CT
Norris K. Ivory	Br. 599	Tampa, FL
Priscilla D. Archer	Br. 11	Chicago, IL
Christopher M. Carter	Br. 343	St. Louis, MO

Robert Jones	Br. 4739	Wheeling, IL
Allen R. Lauer Sr.	Br. 116	Fort Wayne, IN
Michael A. Ragan	Br. 39	Indianapolis, IN
Ralph L. McDaniel	Br. 479	Terre Haute, IN
Cuqita Boyd	Br. 14	Louisville, KY
Thorning D. Knight	Br. 25	MA Northeast Mgd.
John F. Lowry	Br. 2184	Southeast MI
David T. Swatosh	Br. 9	Minneapolis, MN
Farley L. Kuehn	Br. 28	St. Paul, MN
Francis L. Kathe	Br. 8	Lincoln, NE
Matthew J. Rorie	Br. 41	Brooklyn, NY
Dennis J. Barrett	Br. 137	Hudson Valley Mgd., NY
Bryan Bravo	Br. 137	Hudson Valley Mgd., NY
Joseph F. Ceresse	Br. 562	Jamaica, NY

Wendy W. Wrenn	Br. 4122	Roxboro, NC
Deneen R. Coleman	Br. 43	Cincinnati, OH
Elia Meeks-Johnson	Br. 82	Portland, OR
Linda Yaras	Br. 284	Erie, PA
Gregory S. Brake Jr.	Br. 157	Philadelphia, PA
Michael J. Freedman	Br. 157	Philadelphia, PA
Albert T. Harlow II	Br. 439	Greenville, SC
Philip A. Marburger	Br. 439	Greenville, SC
Theodore J. Scharer	Br. 62	Chattanooga, TN
Stephen S. Crawford	Br. 1110	Johnson City, TN
Charles M. Dailey	Br. 283	Houston, TX
Beverly D. Malone	Br. 283	Houston, TX
Timothy D. Ainsworth	Br. 79	Seattle, WA
Robert J. Maule	Br. 2	Milwaukee, WI

Mutual Exchanges

CT: Newington (3/22) to Milwaukee, WI area. Regular city carrier. Hartford bid cluster; overtime available. Close to Boston, New York, beaches. Regulars only. Marcus, 406-531-6483.

FL: Tampa (10/22) to Myrtle Beach, SC area. City carrier. Town and country, FL office 33615, 11 district of-

fices, OT+. Tanner, 706-631-1962.

MI: Grand Rapids (1/14 and 4/14) to St. Petersburg, FL. Two regular city carriers seeking a mutual exchange to the Tampa Bay, FL, area. Janet, 616-822-4558 (call or text).

UT: Salt Lake City (7/20) to Los Angeles, CA. 626-636-0762 (call or text).

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., August's deadline is for the September 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. Include your name, address and branch number. Begin each ad with your state abbreviation, city and seniority date.

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.

DOHERTY & DONELON SCHOLARSHIPS

Deadline: This form must be returned to NALC Headquarters no later than December 31, 2025.

Eligibility

- Applicant must be the son, daughter or legally adopted child of a letter carrier NALC member in good standing—active, retired or deceased. Stepchildren and grandchildren are eligible if they live with the letter carrier in a regular parent-child relationship.
- Applicant's parent must be a member in good standing of NALC for at least one year prior to making application.
- Applicant must be a high school senior when making application and must submit the form provided at right, signed by the NALC member and an officer of the member's NALC branch. This form must be returned to NALC Headquarters by December 31, 2025.

Requirements

- All applicants must take the Scholastic Assessment Test (SAT) or the American College Test (ACT) in either their junior or senior year. A copy of the official scores from the administering organization must be received at NALC Headquarters by midnight, March 31, 2026. (Computer-generated print-outs of test scores will not be accepted.)
- All biographical questionnaires and secondary school reports must be received at NALC Headquarters by midnight, March 31, 2026.

Regulations

- Scholarship is to be used toward pursuing undergraduate

degree at an accredited college of recipient's choice.

- Winners may accept other college scholarship assistance in addition to the NALC award.
- Any change of schools or course of study must be done only with the permission of the NALC Scholarship Committee.
- A transcript of grades must be forwarded to the committee at the end of each school year.
- If winner suffers certified serious illness, scholarship will be held in abeyance for not more than one year.
- If unusual conditions are going to require an interruption in schooling, recipient must state reason(s) in writing to the Scholarship Committee and request that the scholarship be held in abeyance. Request(s) will be reviewed by the Committee and a decision rendered.
- If the NALC member is suspended by their local NALC branch or enters supervision, scholarship will be canceled.

Terms of awards

- The official scholarship judges will award one William C. Doherty Scholarship in each of the five USPS regions and one John T. Donelon Scholarship. Winners are judged on the basis of secondary school records, personal qualifications and test scores. As in the past, the scholarship judges will consist of experienced persons in the educational field. Decisions of the judges will be final.

- Doherty Scholarship awards will be \$4,000 per year and the Donelon Scholarship award will be \$1,000 per year. Each scholarship is renewable for three consecutive years thereafter, provided the winner maintains satisfactory grades. Award money will be deposited annually with the college. It will be credited to the winner's account to be drawn upon under the rules and regulations that the college has established for handling scholarship funds. Award money is to be used for required college fees, including room and board and transportation fees.
- Children of NALC national officers are not eligible.

In honor of NALC's president from 1941 to 1962, the **William C. Doherty Scholarship Fund** will again award five \$4,000 scholarships to children of members in good standing. The **John T. Donelon Scholarship Fund** will award one scholarship in honor of Donelon, longtime NALC assistant to the president. Applicants must be high school seniors and must meet all of the following eligibility criteria to be considered.

SCHOLARSHIP APPLICATION

Date _____ (PLEASE PRINT CLEARLY)

Please send instructions as to how I can compete for a scholarship award. I am a senior in the 2025-26 school year.

I am the ☐ daughter ☐ son ☐ active
☐ stepdaughter* ☐ stepson* ☐ of ☐ retired
☐ granddaughter* ☐ grandson* ☐ deceased

letter carrier _____

of Branch No. _____ City _____ State _____

My name is _____

My address is _____

City _____ State _____ ZIP _____

Phone No. _____

Signature of NALC parent member
(or spouse if deceased)

Last 4 digits of Social Security No. _____

Signature of branch officer

Printed name of branch officer

Title _____ Date _____

This form must be returned no later than Dec. 31, 2025, to the NALC Scholarship Committee, in care of the National Association of Letter Carriers, 100 Indiana Ave. NW, Washington, DC 20001-2144.

** Stepchildren and grandchildren are eligible if they live with the letter carrier in a regular parent-child relationship.*

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.

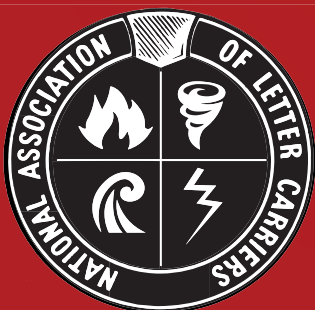
NALC response teams throughout the country are activated to go to disaster locations and offer assistance to NALC members and their families who live in the same household. Basic supplies, including uniforms and food, are available for those who need assistance.

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**