



# NALC CONVENTION CHRONICLE

THURSDAY, JULY 24, COVERING THE **THIRD SESSION**, WEDNESDAY, JULY 23

## A DAY FOR STRENGTH, SAFETY AND SOLIDARITY

**T**he third day of Convention Week saw delegates come together to stand up against conservatives in Washington who strive to destroy the middle class, stand shoulder to shoulder with postal and other labor unions, and stand together to make sure we all stay safe on and off our jobs. In Philadelphia, it was truly a day for brotherly love.

### TELLING LABOR'S STORY

NALC President Fredric Rolando called the convention to order at 10. Performing "The Star-Spangled Banner" to get the day started was Seattle Branch 79's Austin Cooper. Southeast Pennsylvania Merged Branch 725 President Jim McCullough led the Pledge of Allegiance, followed by an invocation from Fr. Michael Reilly, pastor of South Philadelphia's St. Richard of Chichester Roman Catholic Church.

The day's first speaker was Ed Schultz, host of "The Ed Show" on the MSNBC cable TV network as well as host of his eponymous nationally syndicated radio show.

"There is no greater defender of unions and no stronger warrior for workers anywhere in the media than Ed Schultz," President Rolando said.

Greeted by a standing ovation from the delegates, Schultz described himself as a friend and advocate for letter carriers.

"I'm for the workers," Schultz said. "I know the righties are not, and that's just the way the world is turning right now."

But change is coming, he said. "The politicians who thought they had a better way for America? They're all losing. And they might defeat us individually, but they will never do that collectively.



**Top:** The 'Stop Staples' rally held after the afternoon workshops

**Above right:** Ed Schultz

**Right:** Two injured carriers embrace after the safety and health presentation

"You have my commitment that I will be there for you," he said to cheers and applause. "We will tell the story. We will make the change. And we will save the Postal Service and restore it to where it's got to be."

Before Schultz left the stage, President Rolando led an enthusiastic letter carrier cheer for him. Later, delegates approved a motion from the floor to make Schultz an honorary member of the NALC.

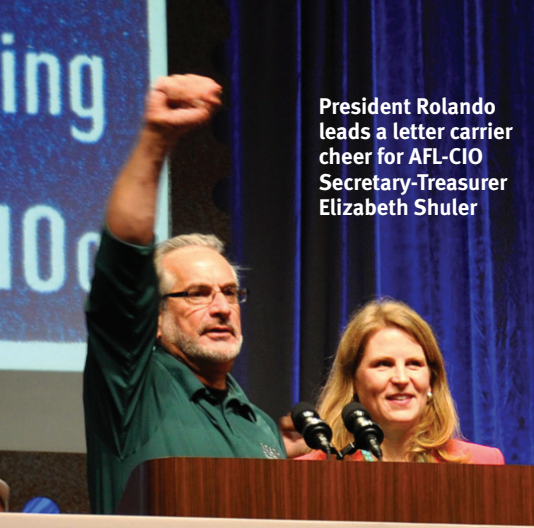
### HEALTH AND SAFETY

Rolando shifted gears to discuss what he called "a very important topic for letter carriers and the NALC: Protecting the health and safety of letter carriers.

"Over the past year," he said, "I have tried to talk about two very alarming







**President Rolando leads a letter carrier cheer for AFL-CIO Secretary-Treasurer Elizabeth Shuler**

threats to carriers that have been on the rise in recent years.”

Describing suicide as a heart-breaking problem, the president noted that although suicide does not arise primarily or exclusively from workplace pressures, “I think we need to talk about this problem and figure out what we can do to help.”

The second health and safety issue is an “unacceptable increase” in park point accidents, the president said. These are where carriers are struck by cars or trucks while they work the mail from the back of their postal vehicles.

He then invited NALC Director of Safety and Health Manuel Peralta to come to the stage to drive home the threat of unsafe park points.

Peralta noted that there had been a workshop that morning on this very topic. “But we feel this issue is so important that we wanted to come before the whole convention to raise the issue,” he said.

The director went on to relate the story of Los Angeles Branch 24 letter carrier Anthony Dunn, who was struck by a car while standing at the rear of his vehicle. Dunn died from his injuries the following morning.

“Had his vehicle been parked in a safe location,” Peralta said, “and not in ‘the most efficient’ location chosen by management, Anthony would be among us as a delegate to this convention.”

The director said that before Dunn’s death, NALC had demanded that management address unsafe park points. It took Dunn’s tragic passing for management to listen and to work with the union to organize a national park point safety standup talk.

“The hazard has not ended,” Peralta said. “Since Anthony’s death, more letter carriers have been struck.”

The director then introduced to delegates seven such carriers who traveled to Philadelphia to be a part of the convention:

Columbus, OH Branch 78’s Doug Poole; Spokane, WA Branch 442’s Keith Wagner; Garden Grove, CA Branch 1100’s Joel Cabrera and Lydia Ray; Denver, CO Branch 47’s Dan Hohenstein; New Hampshire Merged Branch 44’s Dave Betts; and Pawtucket, RI Branch 55’ Timothy Fournier.

“We can help prevent these kinds of accidents by insisting that the standup talk be given often and by taking action to convince our members to be vigilant about the safety of the park points,” Peralta said.

The director then asked Wagner to say a few words.

“I speak for this group as well as for Manny and the safety team,” Wagner said. “We’re selfish; we don’t want anyone else to join this club. You need to take this message home, and you need to scream it as loudly as we scream it.”

Delegates gave the seven injured carriers in front of the stage a standing ovation and a letter carrier cheer.

Returning to the podium, President Rolando said letter carriers should ask themselves two questions each day: How do I keep myself out of harm’s way? And am I doing enough to protect the safety of letter carriers in my station?

“As union activists, we must work toward making a safer work environment every day,” the president said.

Delegates called for several moments of silence to honor fallen carriers.

## NOMINATIONS

Shortly before noon, President Rolando turned to the next order of business, as required by the *NALC Constitution*: calling for nominations for national office. President Rolando ceded the chair to Executive Vice President Timothy O’Malley, since the first nomination was for the office of president. O’Malley called for nominations, and two were forthcoming from the floor—for Fredric V. Rolando of Sarasota, FL Branch 2148, and for David Noble of Washington, DC Branch 142.

Returning to the microphone, President Rolando sought nominations for all remaining offices, which were offered from the floor as follows (uncontested nominees were elected by consent; contested nominees are listed in alphabetical order):

### Executive Vice President (contested)

—Catherine Jones, Minneapolis Br. 9  
—Timothy C. O’Malley, Philadelphia Br. 157

### Vice President (contested)

—Deidre Beal, South Florida Br. 1071  
—Lew Drass, Huntsville, AL Br. 462

### Secretary-Treasurer

—Nicole Rhine, Lincoln, NE Br. 8

### Asst. Secretary-Treasurer (contested)

—Sharella Spikes, South Florida Br. 1071  
—Judy Willoughby, Tallahassee Br. 1172

### Director of City Delivery

—Brian Renfroe, Hattiesburg, MS Br. 938

### Director, Safety & Health (contested)

—Travis Lober, Arizona Merged Br. 1902  
—Manuel L. Peralta Jr., Garden Grove Br. 1100

### Director of Life Insurance

—Myra Warren, Dallas Br. 132

### Director Health Benefit Plan

—Brian Hellman, New York City Br. 36

### Director, Retired Members (contested)

—Ken Ring, Minneapolis Br. 9  
—Ron Watson, Corvallis, OR Br. 1274

### National Trustees (three positions; contested)

—Erica Bloom, South Florida Br. 1071  
—Lawrence D. Brown Jr., Los Angeles Br. 24  
—William Haller, St. Petersburg, FL Br. 1477  
—Brett Israel, Fort Lauderdale, FL Br. 2550  
—Randall L. Keller, Mass. Northeast Mgd. Br. 25  
—Mike Gill, South Florida Br. 1071

### Region 1 NBA

—Christopher Jackson, Garden Grove Br. 1100

### Region 2 NBA

—Paul L. Price, Portland, OR Br. 82

### Region 3 NBA (contested)

—Michael Caref, Chicago Br. 11  
—Tony Hutson, Galesburg, IL Br. 88

### Region 4 NBA

—Roger Bledsoe, Oklahoma City Br. 458

### Region 5 NBA

—Mike Birkett, Dubuque Br. 257

### Region 6 NBA (contested)

—Patrick C. Carroll, South Macomb, MI Br. 4374  
—Gary Smith, Grand Rapids Br. 56

### Region 7 NBA

—Chris Wittenburg, St. Paul Br. 28

### Region 8 NBA

—Peter S. Moss, Gulf Coast Mgd., MS Br. 1374

### Region 9 NBA

—Kenneth Gibbs, Brunswick, GA Br. 313

### Region 10 NBA (contested)

—Kathy Baldwin, Beaumont, TX Br. 842  
—David Pratt, Albuquerque, NM Br. 504

### Region 11 NBA

—Dan Toth, Lorain, OH Br. 583

### Region 12 NBA

—William J. Lucini, Philadelphia Br. 157

### Region 13 NBA

—Timothy W. Dowdy, Virginia Beach, VA Br. 2819

**Director of City Delivery Brian Renfroe celebrates Nicole Rhine’s election as the next secretary-treasurer.**



## Region 14 NBA

—John J. Casciano, Boston Br. 34

## Region 15 NBA

—Lawrence D. Cirelli, New Jersey Mgd. Br. 38

## ELIZABETH SHULER

President Rolando then introduced AFL-CIO Secretary-Treasurer Elizabeth Shuler. “The winds of change are blowing in the labor movement,” he said, “and Liz is surely part of that fresh new breeze.”

“As important as your work is to every family and business in America,” Shuler said, “millions of people count on you for what you do besides deliver mail.” She specifically cited letter carriers’ work with the Muscular Dystrophy Association and our annual national food drive.

“As letter carriers, you’re fortunate,” she said. “You have the benefit of a strong union. That’s not the case for most people.”

Shuler also said that the upcoming mid-term elections are very important. “If we want to elect the right leaders for working families,” she said, “and if we want to build support for the things that make America work, like the Postal Service, we’ve got to engage all working people—working voters.”

Rolando then introduced the NALC’s delegates to the AFL-CIO convention held last September: Ingrid Armada of Providence, RI Branch 15; Denise Brooks of Medford, OR Branch 1433; Anita Guzik of Los Angeles, CA Branch 24; Steve Hanna of York, PA Branch 509; Charles Heege of New York, NY Branch 36; Lloyd Doucet Jr. of New Orleans, LA Branch 124; and Elise Foster of Chicago, IL Branch 11. Guzik presented the delegation’s report.

## BACK TO BUSINESS

The delegates then discussed resolutions related to the National Agreement. Delegates voted to approve two resolutions after the sponsors agreed to changes recommended by the Executive Council, and also approved a resolution calling for USPS to provide traffic cones for postal vehicles to improve safety. The delegates upheld the Executive Council’s disapproval of a resolution related to time limits on emergency placements and another calling for USPS to give letter carriers a percentage of the funds brought in by the Customer Connect program.

Rolando then introduced Stephen Sombrotto, son of former NALC President Vincent Sombrotto, who passed away last year. Stephen Sombrotto shared memories of his father and his family’s experiences with the NALC. “We’ve always looked at

**The following national agreement resolutions were approved by the delegates at the National Convention. They will now be part of the official position of the NALC in future contract negotiations.**

- include CCAs in Article 10 and allow CCAs to carry over the maximum amount of leave.
- add significant other in the definition of a family member for Bereavement Leave.
- include CCAs as eligible employees to receive military pay.
- earn sick leave while on military duty.
- CCAs receive holiday scheduling premium.
- eliminate Article 12.1.
- allow for mutual exchanges between CCAs.

- negotiate a higher employer contribution to the cost of premiums for CCAs who want to participate in any health plan beyond self only.
- CCAs receive a retirement account with matching contributions from the Postal Service.
- apply Article 25 to CCAs.
- CCAs receive their yearly uniform allotment on the same method as career carriers.
- provide postal vehicles for CCAs traveling on the clock from station to station.
- discontinue the Postal Service’s use of Managed Service Points.
- a 204b must be working in their own installation in order for provisions in Article 41.1 to apply.

NALC members as our stepbrothers and stepsisters,” he said. “The letter carriers will always be attached to our lives and our families.”

The delegates gave Sombrotto a letter carrier cheer.

## CREDENTIALS COMMITTEE

Rolando handed the microphone to Credentials Committee Chairman Rod Holub of Manhattan, KS Branch 1018, who introduced the members of the committee:

Rick Abbarno of West Palm Beach, FL Branch 1690; Craig Bishop of Sacramento, CA Branch 133; Marie Didier of Elmhurst, IL Branch 825; John Dyce of Youngstown, OH Branch 385; Ethel Ford of Houston Branch 283; Robbie Gardiner of Fort Wayne, IN Branch 116; Sonny Guadalupe of New York City Branch 36; Christine Guziejewski of Brick Town, NJ Branch 5420; Kyle Inosencio of Grand Rapids, MI Branch 56; Cindy Kirby of Denver Branch 47; Terry Long of Redwood Falls, MN Branch 2013; John Oross of Dayton, OH Branch 182; Lynne Pendleton of Central Florida Branch 1091; Tony Perconte of Scotch Plains, NJ Branch 4102; Grace Pery of South Florida Branch 1071; Brian Simmons of Southeast Massachusetts Merged Branch 18; Amy Steffens of Fargo-West Fargo, ND Branch 205; Mike Wahlquist of Salt Lake City Branch 111; Greg White of Gulf Coast Mississippi Branch 1374 and Delano Wilson of Silver Spring, MD Branch 2611.

Holub gave the committee’s final report, stating that 6,276 delegates representing 588 branches from all 50 states, the District of Columbia and Puerto Rico were in attendance, along with 72 at-large delegates and 28 national officers.

## E-ACTIVIST NETWORK

Rolando then gave awards for e-Activist Network participation. The winners were: Branch with the highest percentage of e-Activists with 50 to 99 members—Pearl City, HI Branch 4682, 85 percent; branch with the highest participation, 100 to 499 members—Eugene, OR Branch 916, 72 percent; branch with the highest participation, 500 to 999 members—Royal

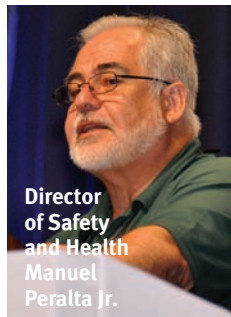
Oak, MI Branch 3126, 60 percent; branch with the highest participation, 1,000 to 1,999 members—Kansas City, MO Branch 30, 33 percent; branch with the highest participation, 2,000 to 3,999 members—Philadelphia Branch 157, 28 percent; branch with the highest participation, 4,000 or more members—South Florida Branch 1071, 26 percent; state with the highest participation—Alaska State Association, 42 percent; and region with the highest participation—Region 5 (Missouri, Iowa, Nebraska and Kansas), 27 percent.

## MARK DIMONDSTEIN

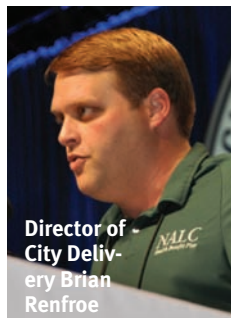
The delegates viewed a videotaped greeting from American Postal Workers Union President Mark Dimondstein, who thanked letter carriers for their participation in the Postal Union Alliance, the four postal unions that are working in unison to protect the Postal Service and postal jobs, including the struggle to save six-day delivery and stop closure of postal facilities.

“The Postal Union Alliance is a vital step in the process of building a grand alliance with the people of this country in defense of the public’s Postal Service, in defense of their national treasure,” he said.

As an expression of solidarity, Rolando announced that following the end of the



Director of Safety and Health  
Manuel Peralta Jr.



Director of City Delivery  
Brian Renfroe



Director of Retired Members  
Ron Watson





Above: Phil Rubio (l) and Calvin Ramsey.  
Right: Stephen Sombrotto



day's session, delegates would rally against the arrangement between the Postal Service and Staples that outsources postal clerk jobs. At the "Stop Staples" rally, letter carriers signed a petition that was delivered to a Philadelphia Staples store; a video of the events was sent to the APWU convention being held this week in Chicago.

### HISTORY LESSONS

The delegates then enjoyed a film made from restored color footage taken at the NALC's 32nd biennial convention held in Milwaukee in 1939, the year NALC turned 50.

Rolando next welcomed former letter carrier Phil Rubio, associate professor of history at North Carolina A&T University, to the mic. Rubio described in his book, *There's Always Work at the Post Office*,

how postal jobs have offered upward mobility to African Americans. Rubio has asked convention delegates who participated in the strike of 1970 to provide him with their recollections.

Next, Rolando welcomed author and playwright Calvin Ramsey to the podium. Ramsey

explained the historical framework of his children's book, *Ruth and the Green Book*,

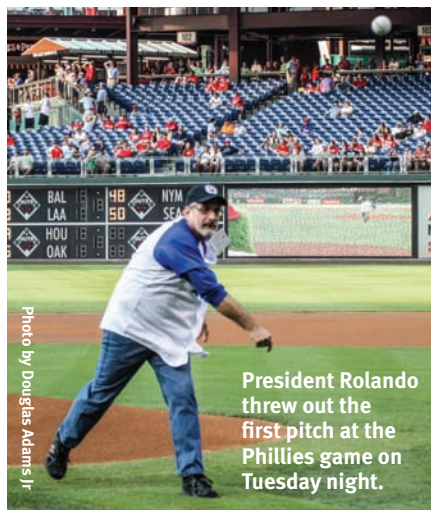


Photo by Douglas Adams Jr.

President Rolando threw out the first pitch at the Phillies game on Tuesday night.

which tells the almost forgotten story of the *Green Book*, published by letter carrier Victor Green before the civil rights era, which listed places where traveling African-Americans could find places to eat, sleep, use restrooms or get medical care without facing discrimination. The delegates thanked both Rubio and Ramsey with letter carrier cheers.

### COMMITTEE REPORTS

Rolando then invited the Board of Trustees to the microphone. Trustees Chairman Lawrence D. Brown Jr. of Los Angeles Branch 24, assisted by trustees Randall Keller of Northeast Massachusetts Merged Branch 25 and Michael Gill of South Florida Branch 1071, gave the trustees' report.

Next, Rolando introduced the members of the Band Committee—Chairman Charles Sexton of St. Louis Branch 343 and Ernest Phillips of Cleveland Branch 40—who gave their committee's report.

Rolando recessed the convention at 3:14 p.m.

**Correction:** Yesterday's *Chronicle* gave the wrong winner of the award for the branch with 1,000 or more members that had the highest rate of organization of CCAs. The winner was Hartford, CT Branch 86.

# NALC AUXILIARY



WEDNESDAY, JULY 23

The Milwaukee, WI Letter Carriers' Band, under the direction of Bill Berlyn, welcomed delegates to their Wednesday session with lively sounds of music including a special rendition of "On Wisconsin" as retiring NALCA Board President Linda Kirby and Secretary Marie Rasmussen entered the room. Accompanied by the Milwaukee Letter Carriers' Band, Greg White (Branch 4475, Forest, MS), sang the National Anthem.

President Kirby reconvened the meeting at 9 a.m. The Moment of Grace was led by NALCA Assistant Secretary George Anna Myers (Auxiliary 4, Kansas City, MO). The minutes of the previous day were approved as presented.

NALCA President and Greetings Committee Chair Linda Kirby (Auxiliary 465, Kenosha, WI) reported on the greetings given to the NALC convention delegates. Kirby reminded carriers about the importance of having spouses and significant others as well as retirees joining the Auxiliary because "their fight is our fight." President-elect Cythensis Lang (Auxiliary 2517, Mobile, AL) also spoke as a member of the greetings committee and reminded carriers that the 125th

anniversary video failed to mention that through 106 of their 125 years of existence, the Auxiliary has been there as their support, and at times, their voice.

NALCA Secretary Marie Rasmussen (Auxiliary 430, Racine, WI) presented the We-Care We-Share awards for 2013-2014 as follows: NALCA President Linda Kirby, NALCA Vice President Cythensis Lang, NALCA Secretary Marie Rasmussen, NALCA Treasurer Pam Fore, NALCA Assistant Secretary George Anna Myers, Maria Zakrzewski (Auxiliary 79, Colorado Springs, CO), Carrie Strobl (Auxiliary 413, Green Bay, WI) and Tonya Lloyd (Auxiliary 111, Austin, TX). Rasmussen congratulated all who achieved membership and encouraged other members to think about their donations to COLCPE through We-Care We-Share and the important ways these funds are used for political awareness and activity.

Carrier Corps gold members were announced as follows: Vicki Cotton (Auxiliary 2720 Tulsa OK), Mary Gibson, Pam Fore and Rachel Mitchell from Auxiliary 2621, Lakeland, FL, Linda Kirby, Marie Rasmussen, George Anna Meyers, Cythensis Lang and

Maria Zakrzewski (Auxiliary 79, Colorado Springs, CO).

The Organizer's Report for 2013-2014 was presented by Cythensis Lang. Auxiliaries reinstated since last convention include Belfort, PA, Swansboro, NC, Elizabethtown, KY, Yakima, WA, Odessa, TX, New York, NY, Santa Clara, CA, Kirkwood, NY, Puyallup, WA and Aurora, CO.

NALCA Secretary Marie Rasmussen facilitated an open forum with delegates on ways to bring awareness about the auxiliary to carriers and union leadership (on all levels) and with that, increase membership, viability and sustainability. Discussion was healthy and many excellent comments and solid ideas were brought up. All notes garnered from the discussion will be used by the newly elected board to enter into the "brand transformation" of this organization to carry us forward as supporters of the NALC.

The meeting was recessed at 10:15 for delegates and guests to attend the Auxiliary-sponsored activity of a Duck Tour and luncheon.

—M. Marie Rasmussen, NALCA Secretary