

The Postal Record

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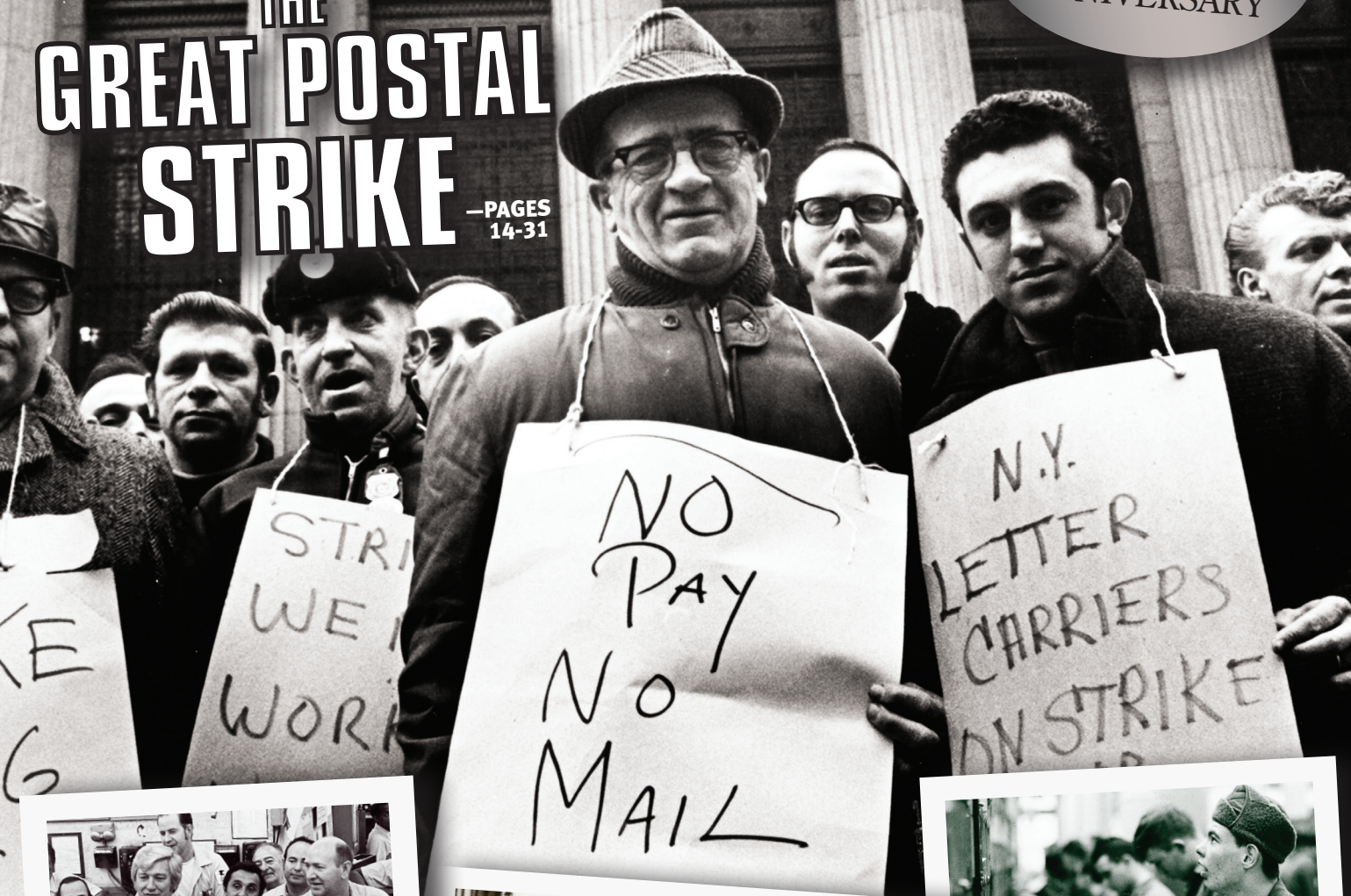
The monthly journal of the NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF LETTER CARRIERS

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CELEBRATING
THE 50TH
ANNIVERSARY

THE GREAT POSTAL STRIKE

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House votes to end pre-funding mandate

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NALC celebrates 50 years of gratitude for the strikers of 1970



Fredric V. Rolando

America's postal service and the jobs of hundreds of thousands of postal workers. These events are designed to express the deep gratitude all letter carriers feel toward the heroes of 1970.

And heroes they were. Imagine the audacity of risking it all and taking on the government of the United States, which not only banned strikes by federal employees but also required them to pledge not to even talk about the right to strike. (Our union also successfully challenged the constitutionality of this "no strike loyalty oath" on First Amendment grounds in 1970, but that's a story for a different day.)

I urge each and every member to learn about the strike by taking in this month's cover story (see page 14), reading our official history (*Carriers in a Common Cause*, which can be found on nalc.org), or watching our previous video on the strike (youtube.com/watch?v=qEW-Te-jKgo). Why? Because the collective-bargaining rights we enjoy today were won by that strike and are directly responsible for vaulting letter carriers and other postal employees from near poverty into the middle class.

Indeed, the settlement negotiated between President Richard Nixon and the NALC (in coalition with six other postal unions and the AFL-CIO) to end the strike actually provided not only immediate wage increases, but also a shift from *collective begging* (lobbying Congress for pay hikes) to *collective bargaining* with binding arbitration to ensure fair results. The strike literally created the modern Postal Service, improving pay, raising the quality of service and limiting partisan politics in the management of the postal system. No longer would

This issue of *The Postal Record* celebrates the 50th anniversary of the Great Postal Strike of 1970. And it's just the beginning. This month, we will hold a very special tribute dinner for the brave members, brothers and sisters all, who risked their jobs and possible legal ramifications to make a stand for fair pay and union rights in the Post Office Department. They did it by going on strike. Then, at the Honolulu convention, we will premiere a new documentary that will highlight how the national strike, which began in New York City and spread across the country, helped transform

postal employees go years without a pay increase due to political gridlock. No longer would local postmasters be chosen by politicians. Because of the strike, letter carriers and other postal workers finally secured a voice at work and the power to contest adverse management decisions.

These victories are not just theoretical or historical. They are current and real in 2020. We are enjoying the fruits of the successful 1970 strike right now in the latest round of collective bargaining. Because letter carriers led hundreds of thousands of postal workers to go on strike in 1970, we don't have to go on strike today to win fair pay and better working conditions. We are now once again using the binding arbitration process won as a result of the wildcat strike of 1970 to secure a new national agreement with the Postal Service.

In February, the NALC and the Postal Service jointly hired arbitrator Dennis Nolan to serve as the chairman of a tripartite arbitration board (with union and management arbitrators filling out the three-member panel) that will rule on our current contractual dispute.

Let us celebrate 50 years of progress.

Last year, when tens of thousands of teachers across West Virginia, Oklahoma and Arizona showed the courage to stage their wildcat strikes, it reminded me that the spirit of America's letter carriers in 1970 is alive and well today. What was true in 1970 is true in 2020: Workers need unions and a powerful voice in the workplace to make real economic progress. They need collective action and solidarity to achieve a semblance of justice at work.

The current administration has called for taking away our collective-bargaining rights, returning us to collective begging. We will honor the strikers of 1970 as we fight vigorously to preserve the collective-bargaining rights that these amazing men and women fought to secure.

House adopts NALC's top priority

Although we no longer call our lobbying efforts "collective begging," they continue to be important. Congress still decides policy on our pensions and health insurance. On Feb. 5, a bipartisan majority of the House of Representatives supported the USPS Fairness Act, a bill to repeal the disastrous retiree health prefunding mandate of 2006—NALC's top legislative priority this year. Thanks to all the NALC activists who convinced both Democrats and Republicans to support this bill by a vote of 303-106. See the story on page 4.



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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Health Benefit Plan
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MIKE GILL
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NATIONAL BUSINESS AGENTS

Region 1: BRYANT ALMARIO
(California, Hawaii, Nevada, Guam)
3105 E. Guasti Road, Suite 200
Ontario, CA 91761
909-443-7450

Region 2: NICK VAFIADES
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Vancouver, WA 98683
360-892-6545

Region 3: MICHAEL B. CAREF
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4979 Indiana Ave., Suite 203
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630-743-5320

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12015 E. 46th Ave., Suite 550
Denver, CO 80239
720-828-6840

Region 5: MICHAEL BIRKETT
(Missouri, Iowa, Nebraska, Kansas)
1828 Craig Road
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1300 Godward St. NE, Suite 2600
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Meridianville, AL 35759-2038
256-828-8205

Region 9: LYNNE PENDLETON
(Florida, Georgia, North Carolina, South Carolina)
1101 Northchase Parkway SE, Suite 3
Marietta, GA 30067
678-942-5295

Region 10: JAVIER BERNAL
(New Mexico, Texas)
23760 Hwy. 59 North
Kingwood, TX 77339
281-540-5627

Region 11: MARK CAMILLI
(Upstate New York, Ohio)
5445 Beavercrest Drive, Suite 7
Lorain, OH 44053
440-282-4340

Region 12: DAVID J. NAPADANO
(Pennsylvania, South and Central New Jersey)
Four Neshaminy Interplex, Suite 111
Trevose, PA 19053
215-824-4826

Region 13: VADA E. PRESTON
(Delaware, Maryland, Virginia, West Virginia, Washington, DC)
P.O. Box 2660
Ashburn, VA 20146
703-840-2010

Region 14: RICHARD J. DICECCA
(Connecticut, Maine, Massachusetts, New Hampshire, Rhode Island, Vermont)
1208A V.F.W. Parkway, Suite 201
West Roxbury, MA 02132
617-363-9299

Region 15: LARRY CIRELLI
(Northern New Jersey, New York, SW Connecticut, Puerto Rico, Virgin Islands)
347 W. 41st St., Suite 102
New York, NY 10036-6941
212-868-0284

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Our history



**Philip
Dine**

One lawmaker I reported on closely was a Blue Dog Democrat from rural Missouri named Ike Skelton. His family had a long record of military service, and though childhood polio prevented him from serving, he was seen by members of both parties as *the* congressional expert on all things military.

Ike, who rose to chairman of the House Armed Services Committee, periodically compiled a reading list of 50 or more books on the military, and it was regarded as required reading by politicians to four-star generals to Pentagon officials. It included ancient writings, such as those of Chinese military strategist Sun Tzu from 2,500 years ago.

Knowledge of history was, in Ike's eyes, indispensable for a leader.

When he was a young county prosecutor, his mentor was fellow Missourian Harry S Truman (yes, the lack of a period after 'S' is correct; it stood for nothing). What set Truman apart, Skelton told me, "was his understanding of history, which was the key to his wisdom. He could see around the corner....And consequently, his decisions were good."

Well, this *Postal Record* issue brims with history—history relevant to each of us, as NALC marks the 50th anniversary of the Great Postal strike of March 1970. It will, we hope, bring back vivid recollections for those who participated; inform the rest of us about the events; explain how those brave actions brought us rights, respect, benefits and security; inspire us to carry on this legacy in our own ways; and offer ideas about the strike's impact on the broader labor movement.

Asked about the strike, Thomas Kochan, MIT professor of industrial relations and former consultant to the U.S. secretary of labor, focused on an intriguing aspect—the role of the labor secretary at the time, in contrast with the air traffic controllers' strike 11 years later.

"I distinctly remember in that 1970 strike that you had a secretary of labor named George Shultz. He's the one who went to [President Richard] Nixon and said, 'This is a national disaster for us. We've got to get this done.' Nixon said, 'Well, go do it.' Shultz went on to mediate."

Shultz, a World War II Marine veteran, would become only the second American to serve in four cabinet posts, including secretary of state.

The importance attached to the labor secretary's position back then mattered, Kochan said. "I think that's a tribute to a really effective secretary of labor, one who has the ear of the president, and one who can moderate the political instincts of whoever's in the White House."

This led a Republican administration, following a disruptive strike, "to say we're going to put something in place that avoids it in the future, with some respect for collective bargaining and the rights of workers to join a union."

"You didn't have that in 1981."

Indeed, when President Ronald Reagan fired the air traffic controllers, sending labor into a downspin, his anti-union labor secretary had a quite different historical distinction—he later resigned as the first cabinet officer in history to be indicted while in office.

Another academic has a unique perspective; Lowell Turner was a 22-year-old collections driver in San Francisco, two weeks on the job. "I showed up at work," he said. "The guys were standing around in front of the garage, talking about whether we should clock in or join the picket line. A couple of bosses started yelling at us, 'Hey, it's time for work.'

"Someone said, 'Let's strike!' Someone else said 'Wait, what are the issues?' A short guy with a New York accent said, 'There's only one issue—are we going to support our brothers in New York or not?' That really connected us with the national solidarity of the strike," Turner said. "When the guys decided we're going to strike, I said 'Right on.' I was out there on the picket line. It was a really formative experience for me.

"For me, it's been a lifelong inspiration."

Turner later was shop steward and chief steward, turned his branch's newsletter into an award-winner, went to night school to study the labor movement he served during the day, earned a Ph.D. and spent three decades educating Cornell University students about labor.

"I owe my career to [the strike]," he says.

Asked whether the postal strike inspired today's bold actions by teachers and other public employees, Gene Carroll of Cornell's Worker Institute, responded: "When history is known, it has significance. If it's not known, it doesn't have significance. I think that's the essence of why labor history is important."

In other words, keeping the strike's memory—and lessons—alive is critical, not only for us but for labor writ large.

EDITORIAL STAFF:
Director of Communications and Media Relations Philip Dine
Designer/Web Editor Mike Shea
Writer/Editor Rick Hodges
Writer/Editor Jenessa Wagner
Editorial Assistant Clare Foley

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News from Washington

House passes USPS Fairness Act; White House proposes budget cuts

The halls of the Capitol were bustling this past month: The impeachment trial in the Senate ended, the White House submitted its Fiscal Year 2021 budget request to Congress, the House of Representatives voted for the strongest pro-labor legislation in years and, most importantly to letter carriers, the USPS Fairness Act cleared the House with broad bipartisan support.

House votes to repeal pre-funding mandate

On Feb. 5, the House passed the USPS Fairness Act (H.R. 2382). The bipartisan bill seeks to repeal the mandate that the Postal Service pre-fund retiree health care decades in advance. The vote was 309 to 106 with 222 Democrats and 87 Republicans voting to repeal the mandate, with 105 Republicans and Rep. Justin Amash (I-MI) opposed. Only 14 members did not vote (13 of them were co-sponsors of the bill).

During consideration on the House floor, several lawmakers spoke in support of the bill.

Transportation and Infrastructure Committee Chairman and H.R. 2382 lead Peter DeFazio (D-OR) criticized the pre-funding mandate included in the December 2006 Postal Accountability and Enhancement Act (PAEA). “You can’t make this stuff up—in a Christmas Eve bill with no legislative consideration in an otherwise non-controversial bill, a provision was stuck in to say that the Postal Service should pre-fund 75 years of health benefits for retirees,” he said. “So yes, this will help relieve pressure on the Postal Service and on rates.”

He explained the bipartisan nature of H.R. 2382. “This doesn’t score in any way. So that’s why we have 300 biparti-

san sponsors, and I urge my colleagues at long last to undo this stupidity.”

Bill lead Rep. Brian Fitzpatrick (R-PA) also urged passage. “This bipartisan bill will restore USPS financial health by shoring up that funding, and it ensures that it has the resources to improve the postal service for all Americans,” he said.

“The U.S. Postal Service Fairness Act, [of] which I’m a very proud co-sponsor, would make a small but very important change to help address the dire financial condition of the Postal Service,” House Oversight and Reform Committee Chairwoman Carolyn Maloney (D-NY) said. “The oversight committee and Chairman [Gerry] Connolly, in particular, is working on comprehensive legislation to do just that.”

“This is righting a wrong [that] Congress created in the dead of night in a lame duck session in 2006...putting a burden on the Postal Service no other entity on the planet is required to meet, and we have an obligation, having created that problem, to fix it,” said Gerry Connolly (D-VA), chairman of the oversight panel’s Government Operations Subcommittee.

“That’s why we’re working on bipartisan legislation to have a comprehensive reform bill. And I’m looking forward to that bipartisan solution. But that doesn’t mean we stop everything and fix nothing. This may not return the Postal Service to solvency, but it takes a liability off the books that hurts them, that makes it harder for them to recover and to figure out how to adjust to changes in technology and marketplace.”

“Unfortunately, the Postal Service today is forced to play by a different set of rules and those are unfair,” Rep. Rodney Davis (R-IL) said. “This mandate has caused severe cuts, and damages the Postal Service’s ability

to invest in new delivery vehicles. I’ve always been a steadfast supporter of the Postal Service and its workers. I look forward to working with my colleagues on this issue and other important pieces of legislation that impact our postal unions, such as opposing the privatization of the Postal Service and protecting the six-day delivery, door-to-door service and our rural post offices... We need to make sure that our postal service remains viable.”

“This does not solve everything, but boy, I’ll tell you this, this solves a lot and it buys us time to craft those other pieces that that need to come together as well,” Rep. Stephen Lynch (D-MA) said. “We should not allow the perfect to be the enemy of the good. This is a solid change here.”

“The Postal Service is facing many challenges, but it is taking several important steps to provide new services mandated by [the] modern economy,” Rep. Mike Bost (R-IL) said. “Unfortunately, it can’t accomplish these reforms with one hand tied behind its back. The Postal Service is the only entity with this requirement. I doubt that any federal agency would be able to meet its goals and obligations to citizens and taxpayers if they were likewise required to pre-fund their health benefits.”

“Get rid of this stupid pre-funding and give them more flexibility about the services they can provide,” Rep. Earl Blumenauer (D-OR) said. “Why aren’t we using the U.S. Postal Service to help us with the census? These people know who lives in the neighborhood. Why are we hiring temporary employees? ... I appreciate the bipartisan support, and maybe it’s time we get our act straight to help them fulfill their full potential.”

Others speaking in favor of the legislation included Reps. Jan Schakowsky (D-IL) and Brenda Lawrence (D-MI).

Passage of H.R. 2382 is a tremendous achievement for letter carriers and the broader postal community. This is the first major piece of legislation tackling postal issues that has passed the House since the 2006 passage of PAEA. The hard work of letter carriers across the country made passage possible.

“Letter carriers should be proud of their hard work to educate members of Congress and gain their support on this very important issue,” NALC President Fredric Rolando said. “House passage is a major victory in the battle to address the pre-funding mandate, but our work is not done. We must now turn our attention to the Senate.”

If you have not yet done so, please consider reaching out to your member of Congress, if they voted for H.R. 2382, to thank them for their support. The more that letter carriers can emphasize how important this vote to repeal the pre-funding mandate was and how much we appreciate our allies in Congress, the better off we will be should future legislative fights arise down the road. If you are unsure how your representative voted on this bill, you can check the NALC Legislative Action Center, accessible via nalc.org.

It is now up to the Senate to take action on S. 2965, the bipartisan companion bill. Letter carriers should carry this momentum through to the Senate and be ready to engage and educate their senators and staff on the need to repeal the pre-funding mandate. Fact sheets and talking points are available on the NALC Legislative Action Center.

White House releases FY 2021 budget proposal

The Trump Administration released its \$4.8 trillion Fiscal Year 2021 budget proposal on Feb. 10. With regard to the

U.S. Postal Service, as in previous budget requests the White House proposal includes:

“...changes to how rates are set for products that are deemed outside the universal service obligation; changes to delivery processing, mode, and frequency; increased use of private sector partners; more closely aligning Postal Service employee wages with those of other Federal employees; licensing access to the mailbox; and providing additional Government services at retail locations. In addition to Government-wide changes to health and pension programs that will reduce Agency operating costs, the Budget also proposes to re-amortize the payments to the Retiree Health Benefits Fund, including those payments missed in previous years, based on the Postal employee population at or near the retirement age.”

Major provisions affecting NALC members in the White House budget request are similar to past years. They are outlined below.

Postal Service

- **“Reform the Postal Service”** The budget asks for more than \$90 billion in cuts to USPS operations and workforce compensation over 10 years. Changes are based on the recommendations of the White House Postal Task Force, which include: cuts to postal employee pay; eliminating the USPS mailbox monopoly; opening the private sector up to mail sorting; and implementing a new rate-setting system, which would allow for increased rates on packages and services deemed “non-essential.”
- **USPS Privatization not included.** In his FY20 request, the president included a proposal by the Office of Management and Budget (OMB) that

called for reforming and restructuring the federal government, including privatizing the Postal Service. Privatization of the Postal Service has not been included in this year’s request.

Federal Employees Retirement and Health Benefits

- **Pay increase lags behind inflation.** While the administration’s prior two budgets called for a federal workforce pay freeze, this budget proposes a 1 percent across-the-board pay increase for federal employees, while recommending a 3 percent increase for military personnel. Inflation rates in the United States have risen from 2.1 percent in the president’s first year in office to 2.3 percent for 2019. Legislation introduced in the 116th Congress by House and Senate Democrats called for a FY21 pay raise of 3.5 percent.
- **Increase FERS contributions.** For active federal and postal employees covered by the Federal Employees Retirement System (FERS), the budget calls for gradually equalizing employee and agency payroll contributions for pension benefits. This would raise the pension contributions of letter carriers by 1 percent of pay a year for up to six years, resulting in a take-home pay cut of up to \$3,700 annually after six years for active letter carriers. The exact impact would depend on when FERS employees were hired.
- **High-5 average.** The proposal calls for reducing Civil Service Retirement System (CSRS) and FERS pension benefits for new retirees by basing annuities on workers’ highest average yearly salary over five years (high-5) instead of over the highest three years (high-3).

- **Eliminate annuity supplement.** It also would eliminate the annuity supplement that covers the gap for employees who retire under FERS before they qualify for Social Security benefits at age 62.
- **Slash COLAs.** For all retirees, the administration's budget calls for eliminating or reducing cost-of-living adjustments (COLAs). For current and future annuitants under FERS (which covers any employee hired after 1984), the budget would eliminate basic annuity COLAs entirely. For those under CSRS, COLAs would be reduced by 0.5 percent each year. These changes would devastate the finances of retirees who rely on annual COLAs to keep up with the cost of living.
- **Reduce the TSP's G Fund interest rate.** This proposal includes a change to the government bond fund ("G" fund), the largest and most popular investment vehicle available in the Thrift Savings Plan. Millions of active and retired G Fund investors would receive a reduced rate of return. The new rate would be tied to the interest rate on 90-day Treasury bills instead of an average of medium- and long-term Treasury bond rates. This proposal would take \$10.5 billion in retirement investments from federal employees, retirees, active military personnel and veterans over the next 10 years.
- **Higher premiums for workers.** For both active and retired federal employees, the budget proposes modifying the federal government's contribution to the Federal Employees Health Benefits Program (FEHBP) so that federal employees pay more into the program. Although details

for how the new calculations are not specified, previous proposals called on federal employees to pay an additional 7 percent, cutting significantly into their monthly take-home pay. A 7-percentage point cost shift (similar to what was proposed last year) for a \$20,000-per-year family health plan would raise retiree contributions by about \$1,400 annually. FEHBP contribution levels for active letter carriers are set by the terms of the collective-bargaining agreement with USPS. While the proposed budget wouldn't immediately affect these contribution percentages for active letter carriers, it likely would have an effect on future negotiations on this issue.

Department of Labor

- **Budget cut.** Much like the White House's proposals for FY20 and FY19, the Department of Labor would see a \$1.3 billion, or 11 percent, budget cut in 2021, through the elimination of programs deemed "duplicative, unnecessary, unproven or ineffective."
- **Training cuts.** The budget once again slashes funding for training workers who lose their jobs as a result of lay-offs or natural disasters. Other job training funds for Native Americans and seasonal migrant workers would be completely defunded.
- **Union monitoring.** One of the few increases in the DOL budget would go to the office that monitors union activities. The DOL's Office of Labor-Management Standards would get a 16 percent boost, to \$50 million next year. The budget states that it would "support more audits and investigations to uncover flawed officer elections, fraud, and embezzlement."

It is important for letter carriers to urge their representatives in Wash-

ington to reject attacks on the federal workforce as well as on the Postal Service and its networks.

NALC will continue to update letter carriers on the process, as additional budget details are released and as the House and Senate begin their budget considerations.

House passes worker-friendly PRO Act

On Feb. 6, the House passed the Protecting the Right to Organize (PRO) Act (H.R. 2474), legislation that would increase protections for workers' rights to organize and bargain for higher wages, better benefits, safer working conditions and more.

The 224 to 194 vote saw 219 Democrats and 5 Republicans vote for the PRO Act, while 7 Democrats, 186 Republicans and Justin Amash (I-MI) opposed it.

"House passage of the PRO Act is a powerful statement of support for workers, and we are thankful to the members of Congress who stood up for the American people by supporting this legislation," President Rolando said. "All Americans deserve the right, not simply to stand together and negotiate a fair return on our work, but to have that right protected and enforceable through the court of law. For too long, corporations and the wealthiest few have been prioritized to the detriment of our nation's labor force."

Passage of this bill follows years of stagnant wages for the majority of Americans, poor working conditions and attacks on unions and workers' rights by corporate special interests and their representatives.

Senate passage of the companion bill (S. 1306) is unlikely due to Republican control of the chamber and their opposition to the legislation.

Search for a new PMG continues

Postmaster General Megan Brennan, who had announced her intent to retire effective Jan. 31, agreed to delay that retirement as the search by the USPS Board of Governors (BOG) for her successor continued.

“We are grateful to the postmaster general for her continued commitment to the Postal Service, and share her confidence in the Postal Service’s strong leadership team members who will ensure that we continue to deliver for the American people,” BOG Chairman Robert Duncan said.

Potential nominee for USPS BOG

On Jan. 6, the president nominated William Zollars of Kansas to be a member of the USPS BOG for the remainder of a seven-year term expiring on Dec. 8, 2022.

Zollars previously was president and CEO of YRC Worldwide, Inc., a U.S. holding company of freight shipping brands. Prior to that, he was an executive at several other transportation and supply chain management companies.

His name has been sent to the Senate Homeland Security and Government Affairs Committee.

PRC publishes revised notice of proposed rulemaking

In early December, the Postal Regulatory Commission (PRC) issued a revised proposed rulemaking for the system that regulates the rates and classes of the Postal Service’s Market Dominant products. This follows an initial proposed rulemaking in December 2017 that was not implemented. The new proposal is based partly on comments received following the initial rulemaking. NALC’s comments figure prominently in the new filing.

PAEA required the PRC to review the existing rate and classification system of Market Dominant products after 10 years. The review’s mandate is to determine whether the legislated rate-setting system is achieving the objectives set forth in PAEA: to create a “flexible, stable, predictable and streamlined ratemaking system that ensures the Postal Service’s financial health...and maintains high quality service standards and performance.”

According to the PRC’s initial proposed rulemaking in December 2017, the system was not meeting these goals.

The first proposed rule, which would have liberalized the price cap to allow rates to rise by up to two percentage points more per year than the increase in the Consumer Price Index, was not finalized, in part because of vacancies on the PRC. The last of those vacancies was recently filled.

NALC is pleased to see the PRC return to this important review, and we are participating fully in this process. NALC’s goal is to strengthen our nation’s universal postal service. After reviewing the proposed rulemaking’s impact, we submitted our comments on Jan. 30; they can be found at nalc.org.

USPS quarterly financial report

The Postal Service’s financial report for the first quarter of Fiscal Year 2020 underlines the need for congressional action on common-sense legislative reform. The first step toward such reform is the USPS Fairness Act, which a large bipartisan majority of the House voted for on Feb. 5.

The entire first quarter loss—\$748 million—stems from the unfair obligation placed on the Postal Service by Congress in 2006 to pre-fund future retiree health benefits decades in

advance. That mandate cost the Postal Service \$1.2 billion in the first three months of the fiscal year.

This mandate, which no other public agency or private company in the country faces, imposes a crushing financial burden on the Postal Service. It accounts for most of the Postal Service’s losses over the past decade, creating an artificial financial “crisis” that threatens services and prevents needed investments.

The bill passed by the House (H.R. 2382) would repeal the mandate. NALC calls on the Senate to quickly pass its version of the same legislation (S. 2965) to remove this onerous obligation on America’s Postal Service. This would set the table for other consensus reforms and allow the Postal Service to continue to provide the American people and their businesses with the industrial world’s most-affordable delivery network.

The USPS, which receives no taxpayer money and funds itself through earned revenue, is rated by the public as the most-trusted federal agency and enjoys strong political support from both sides of the aisle.

In the media

President Rolando was quoted by Barron’s in a story on Feb. 7 on the USPS quarterly report.

NALC Chief of Staff Jim Sauber was quoted in an *American Prospect* magazine story on Jan. 13 about the Postal Service, the search for a new postmaster general, postal finances and the fight against privatization.

John Paige, past president of the Idaho State Association, had letters to the editor published by the *Idaho Statesman* (Jan. 19), *Idaho Press Tribune* (Jan. 19), *Coeur d’Alene Press* (Jan. 19) and magicvalley.com (Jan. 14), largely about voting by mail. **PR**

Still time to register for food drive

The March 9 deadline for branches to register for the 28th annual Letter Carriers' "Stamp Out Hunger" Food Drive is fast approaching. This year's food drive is on Saturday, May 9, so time is running out to register and prepare.

Branch presidents can register quickly by using the "Member's Only" portal at nalc.org. Once they've logged in to the portal, they can simply select the "Food Drive" button, enter the information into the fields, and select "Complete Registration."

Branch registration locks in a branch's order for food drive reminder postcards, so **it is important for branches to register as soon as possible to ensure proper allocation of postcards.**

Branches also should search for local sponsors of specially branded food drive bags. Such bags are a win-win, helping to significantly drive up totals of food collected while also putting the sponsor's name right next to the familiar and trusted Stamp Out Hunger logo, creating a positive association for both the sponsor and the Postal Service. For information on ordering bags, go to the online food drive toolkit at nalc.org/food.

The toolkit also contains contact information for regional and state food drive coordinators. If a food drive coordinator encounters problems working with local managers on food drive logistics, the branch president or the regional food drive coordinator can lend a hand.

Food drive partners

This year's food drive national partners are the U.S. Postal Service, the United Food and Commercial Workers International Union (UFCW), the National Rural Letter Carriers' Association,

the AFL-CIO, United Way Worldwide, the Kellogg Co., CVS Health and direct-mail marketing companies Valassis and Valpak.

Thanks to NALC's partnerships with UFCW and Valpak—the company behind those familiar coupon-stuffed blue envelopes—every postal customer will receive a reminder postcard in the mail a few days before May 9.

Why the food drive matters

Tens of millions of Americans, including many elderly people, military veterans and children, are uncertain where their next meal will come from. Many turn to local food pantries for help. But food pantries can face critical shortages in summer, when holiday donations have been depleted and the absence of school meal programs brings additional need for food.

That's why food pantries—and the hungry—look to letter carriers to deliver each spring.

The annual letter carrier food drive, held the second Saturday in May, helps replenish community pantries, shelters and churches nationwide.

"Letter carriers know the great need in communities throughout the country," NALC President Fredric Rolando said. "Our food drive can make the difference between someone going hungry and someone being nourished."

Last year, active and retired letter carriers, with the help of thousands of volunteers and NALC's partners, collected 75.7 million pounds of food, bringing the 27-year total to 1.75 billion pounds.

Food drive art unveiled

Beginning with a close relationship between cartoonist Bil Keane and his letter carrier, Keane's popular "Family



Circus" comic strip has been associated with the Stamp Out Hunger Food Drive since the first food drive in 1992.

Following Bil's death in 2001, his son Jeff has followed in his father's footsteps, creating and donating special artwork to help spread the word about the annual event. This year's drawing will no doubt find its way onto many promotional items, including posters, T-shirts and yard signs—not to mention food drive bags.

The cartoon and other promotional artwork are available in the food drive tool kit. Remember, the "Family Circus" cartoon was a gift from Jeff Keane and can be used to publicize the food drive; no permission is needed.

Merchandise available

You can find a one-stop online shop for wearable and promotional food drive-related items at stampouthungerstore.com. Branches or individuals can easily order union-made T-shirts, hats, yard signs, buttons and more to help promote the drive.

You can view, like and share the latest news and updates about the food drive on Facebook at facebook.com/StampOutHunger and on Twitter at [@StampOutHunger](https://twitter.com/StampOutHunger). **PR**

Deadlines set for national convention

Delegate eligibility lists for the 72nd biennial national convention in Honolulu have been mailed to all branches. The lists must be completed and returned to Secretary-Treasurer Nicole Rhine's office at NALC Headquarters no later than June 18 for branch representatives to be registered as delegates to the convention. The convention is set for Aug. 17-21.

All proposed amendments to the *NALC Constitution* to be submitted for consideration at the convention must be received by Rhine's office by June 17. That date is 60 days in advance of the convention, as prescribed by the *Constitution*. Proposed amendments will appear in July's *Postal Record* for the membership to review.

Resolutions to be considered by delegates also must be received by the June 17 deadline in order to be printed in the Resolutions and Amendments book provided to delegates. Resolutions received after June 18 still may be considered at the convention.



Branches wishing to sell items in the designated branch sales area during the convention must contact Rhine's office to secure guidelines and forms.

The completed forms must be returned to Headquarters by June 18.

Go to nalc.org for more convention news. **PR**

Election Notices

Colorado

This is official notification under Article V of the *NALC Constitution* that nominations and elections for the following positions for the Colorado State Association will take place on the following dates: April 17-18. The position of director of retirees will be the only position for election, due to a presidential ruling from NALC President Rolando and a conflict in Colorado state bylaws and the *NALC Constitution*. The position may only be held by a member in good standing who has retired from the U.S. Postal Service. This position will be for a term of one year, beginning April 18, until the election of all officers for the state of Colorado can take place in 2021. Nominations will be accepted from the floor during the first day of business on April 17.

John Woolley, Rec. Sec.

Wisconsin

This is official notice to all members of the Wisconsin State Association of Letter Carriers that on May 15 and 16, nominations and election of the following officers/executive board members will take place at the state convention being held in Fond du lac, WI: president, vice president, secretary, treasurer, director of retirees, and five executive board members (one from each of the four districts; the fifth board member is from the state at large and will serve as the director of communications). The term for all offices will be two years.

There will also be the nomination and election of two alternate delegates-at-large for the 2020 National Convention to be held in Honolulu, HI.

All nominations will come from the convention floor on May 15 and the election will take place May 16; the installation of officers shall be immediately preceding the close of the convention.

Robert D. Ahnen, Sec.

Regarding Election Notices

The Constitution for Government of Federal and Subordinate Branches requires that notice be mailed to members no fewer than **45 days before the election** (Article 5, Section 4). Branch secretaries must remember the time difference between deadline for submission of notices—the 10th of the month—and publication of the subsequent issue of the magazine, e.g., January's deadline is for the February publication.

To submit by mail: Mail to The Postal Record, 100

Indiana Ave. NW, Washington, DC 20001-2144. Include the following information: type of item (Election Notice), where it comes from, the person sending it, and how to contact the sender.

To submit by e-mail: Send to postalrecord@nalc.org with the branch city and state as the subject. Include the same information as listed above. If you do not receive an acknowledgment that your e-mail was received, please call *The Postal Record* at **202-662-2851**.

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

Honoring heroic carriers

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 concerned letter carriers.

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

At the scene of a fire, a carrier takes control

On July 31, 2019, while Hazelwood, MO Branch 5847 member **Mark Luebbert** was delivering his route, he turned a corner and noticed that smoke was coming from a house on the street. He pulled up his LLV to investigate further and saw one of his customers sitting in his SUV as several feet of flames shot out of the hood of the vehicle.

Luebbert ran up to offer his assistance. "It wasn't really that bad of a fire at the time," he recalled, so he told the man to back the car down the driveway and get it out of the carport before the garage caught on fire. However, the man seemed very confused—he told the carrier he couldn't get the car to start but was incapable of communicating whether he had called 911. Once the carrier ascertained that the man had not called emergency services, he made the call himself.

"As I'm on the phone [with the dispatcher], the ceiling of the carport caught on fire," the carrier said. It burned so rapidly that Luebbert had to manage the situation quickly, especially since he heard barking and realized that the owner's two dogs were trapped in the house. The carrier told the customer to go in and rescue the dogs, but the customer emerged from

the house with a small fire extinguisher instead. The fire was getting big enough that Luebbert realized they had to get away from the house, but the owner went back into the carport with a hose to continue trying to put the fire out.

"By now, the whole house is engulfed in flames," Luebbert remembered, but he didn't want to abandon the man who had gone inside the burning building. The 911 dispatcher told the carrier that he could try to rescue the owner if he thought he could pull him out. "The front door was already hot to the touch," Luebbert said, but he entered the house again and physically yanked the man out of the doorway. The carrier added, "I can't even describe how hot it was; we were surrounded by flames."

As they ran down the driveway, a police officer pulled up—he was surprised by how fast the fire was burning and asked the carrier to run to the neighbors to make sure they weren't home and in the path of danger. While the officer and Luebbert were running from house to house, they noticed that the owner was trying to get back inside the house again. They stopped him once again, just before the SUV that had originally caught on fire exploded. "The carport basically split in half," the carrier said.

At this point, firefighters had arrived, and police officers asked Luebbert to leave for his own safety. The homeowner survived without any injuries; sadly, both dogs perished in the fire.

When asked about his extraordinary bravery, Luebbert disclaimed, "I had no time to think, I just acted. I feel like anybody would have done the same." The 12-year carrier continued, "[Letter carriers] are in your neighborhoods every day... we know when something is wrong and will assist in any way we can. A house can be rebuilt, a man's life cannot."



Candis Wolff

Carrier sniffs out dangerous gas leak

On Nov. 25, 2019, Waterloo, IA Branch 512 member and CCA **Candis Wolff** was delivering mail to one of the last houses on her route. As usual, she walked around the side of the house to reach the mailbox, but this time, "all I could smell was [natural] gas" coming from the home, she recalled.

Alarmed, the CCA returned to her truck to call her supervisor, who in turn contacted the energy company. In the meantime, Wolff was concerned about the house's occupants. She walked back up to the home and started knocking on doors and calling out, hoping to arouse anyone inside.

When she did not receive a response to her knocking, she returned to her route and went back to the post office. However, she still felt uneasy about the situation, and so the CCA went back to the house after clocking out. "I was just worried that somebody was in the house sleeping, and wouldn't get out in time," she said.

When she got back to the house, Wolff was relieved to see an emergency

technician from the energy company. “He told me that the leak had been very bad, and that if the tenants had come home and lit so much as a cigarette, the whole block probably would have gone up,” she said. He thanked her for probably saving the house and the residents’ lives.

The situation was very personal to Wolff, as her sister and two of her sister’s children had died in a house fire in 2018. Since then, the one-year carrier and her husband have given away many smoke and carbon monoxide detectors to families in need, to prevent similar tragedies. For Wolff, the most important takeaway from the situation was “just knowing that if somebody had been in [the house], they would have been OK.”

Carrier rouses homeowner from burning building

Rochester, NY Branch 210 member and CCA **William**

Blish was out delivering mail on July 12, 2019, when he heard a smoke detector going off inside a resident’s home. “I thought it was odd,” he said, so he started knocking on the door to make sure everything was all right. When he looked closer, he saw smoke coming out of the house and called 911.

A neighbor who also had noticed the fire came over and expressed con-



William Blish shakes hands with his station manager during a ceremony to commemorate his heroic action.

cern that the homeowner might still be inside. Together, the neighbor and Blish managed to rouse the owner, who had been asleep inside the house, and waited for the fire department. When firefighters arrived, he continued on his route.

The carrier underplayed his heroic actions, stating, “A lot of crazy stuff happens on the routes in the city. You just have to learn how to handle everything that comes your way.” **PR**

Eye on the elderly

While doing his usual delivery at the home of one of his elderly customers on Sept. 4, 2019, Mon-Yough, PA Branch 332 member **Ross Trunzo** noticed that the mail had not been picked up from the previous day. Since this customer, an older woman who lived alone and “usually came out with a walker,” typically picked up the mail and greeted the carrier, he became concerned. When a second day passed without the woman getting her mail, he decided to check up on her. He contacted the neighbors and asked if they had seen her recently. They had not, and they became worried about her welfare as well. Together, the carrier and the neighbors knocked on the door—and when no one

answered, they contacted the police. After the police arrived, they opened the door and found the woman unconscious in her bathroom. She was rushed to the hospital, where she made a full recovery before moving to an assisted living facility. The neighbor later wrote to Trunzo, expressing her thanks and passing along the gratitude of the woman’s family for his determination to make sure that his customer was safe. The 27-year carrier was modest about his intervention, and stated that he was simply happy that everything had turned out all right. He added, “As letter carriers, we are the eyes and ears of the elderly.”

For several Saturdays in a row, Garden Grove, CA

Branch 1100 member **Melissa Williams** brought the mail of one of her customers directly to the elderly woman’s door. The customer had broken her leg and hip and lived alone, so the carrier wanted to make it easier for her to get her mail, rather than leaving it in the woman’s curbside box. On Friday, Oct. 11, 2019, Williams decided to take the mail up a day early, since she knew she would not be working that Saturday. But when she approached the customer’s door, she saw that it was ajar. “I thought it was odd,” the carrier recalled, so she went into the house to make sure her customer was all right. After she entered, she found the woman lying on the floor. She ran over to the customer, who

was disoriented and unable to speak. Williams called 911 and waited with the woman, keeping her as comfortable as possible until emergency services arrived. At the hospital, it was discovered that the woman had had a stroke; she had been lying on the floor for about 16 hours. The woman’s son was not due for a check-in for a few days, so her predicament could have been deadly. Thanks to the carrier’s actions, the customer was discovered in time to receive the medical attention she needed, and able to make a full recovery. Williams was thankful that her intuition helped save a customer. “As letter carriers, we know when something’s not right,” she said. “It’s just lucky I was there.” **PR**

Customer Connect adds up for USPS

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

In New York, the connection makes the sales pitch

For the past 10 years, Flushing, NY Branch 294 member **Patrick Flynn** had been picking up more than 100 Priority Mail packages per day from National Battery. "They do all kinds of batteries: car, motorcycle, wheelchair, you name it," the carrier explained.



Patrick Flynn

However, over the past year, Flynn had noticed that the number of packages he was handling for the company was decreasing. He realized that the company had been shifting the package volume over to UPS and FedEx. The carrier, who had a friendly relationship with the owner after delivering there for so many years, decided to make his pitch. "I told him, we can give you a better deal," Flynn recalled.

Once he got back to the office, he filled out a lead and "sent the business agent down there," the carrier said. The business agent demonstrated how

USPS could help National Battery reduce its shipping costs, and the owner decided to switch back to using the Postal Service for the bulk of its packages. "Now I'm back to doing several pickups there a day," Flynn said.

The carrier explained that he thinks the clincher to making a successful sales pitch as a letter carrier is the personal connection. "We have a one-on-one relationship with [the store owners]," he said. "We can see what their needs are, and show that we can meet them." He added: "It doesn't matter if it's a mom-and-pop store or a big business—it's just all about the connection."

Thanks to Flynn's ability to foster those customer relationships, his lead retained and generated more than \$1.4 million in estimated revenue for the Postal Service.

A chatty carrier talks his way into a huge sale

For as long as he has been on his route, Hudson Valley Merged Branch 137 member **Stephen Sciarra** has loved to chat with his customers. "I go into all my businesses," the 34-year carrier said. "I talk to the owners and we build up a rapport."

One day, he was talking to a customer, Kevin Meehan, who always had a large number of packages he shipped out during the week. His online-based company sells a variety of health and beauty products, as well as vitamins and natural supplements. But Sciarra knew that Meehan was splitting his package volume between USPS and FedEx.

During this conversation, the carrier decided to finally make his shipping pitch. Sciarra told him, "I'm more reliable than FedEx." Meehan agreed to listen, so the carrier filled out a lead and sent over a business agent.

The agent explained how Meehan could save money and increase transit times using USPS. He was convinced, and switched more than 125,000 packages over to the Postal Service. Now, "I have to take half my route out, since there's so many packages on Monday," Sciarra laughed.



Stephen Sciarra

The carrier said that letter carriers are invaluable to the Postal Service when it comes to making sales pitches. "We see [the customers] every day," he explained. By putting a face to USPS's great service, carriers can show the customers just what they have to gain by switching. "Be nice, be yourself, be reliable," Sciarra concluded. "That's how I've gotten every lead."

The carrier's friendliness and reliability have certainly paid off: his lead generated more than \$970,000 in new estimated revenue for the Postal Service. **PR**

PUTTING ON HIS OTHER GLOVES



After a long day, letter carriers sometimes feel like we've taken a beating, but it's nothing compared to **Benny Sinakin**.

At age 22, the Philadelphia, PA Branch 157 member has a 5-0 record as a professional boxer, and he's just getting started.

"I see myself as a world champion," Sinakin said. "I love this sport."

Sinakin's secret to success is perseverance, both in and out of the ring. The daily grind of training comes easy for this member of a family of boxers—his father, Lincoln "Pops" Sinakin, is a former fighter who now manages his son. Benny's grandfather, great uncle and brother also boxed. Benny first put on boxing gloves at age 12.

"My training and all that stuff that other people might hate, it's not difficult for me to get up in the morning and want to go do it," he said. "I've been doing it since I was so young, it's a part of me now." As a CCA, he wrapped his training regimen of long runs, exercises and shadow boxing around a 10-to-11-hour day, six days a week work schedule. Sinakin said that walking a route doesn't hinder his training regimen, because he loves to train.

His tenacity earned Sinakin, who competes in the light heavyweight division, the nicknames "Bulldog Benny" and "The Jewish Bulldog." Sinakin's father, a native Philadelphian, is Jewish; his mother hails from the Caribbean island of Saint Vincent.

Sinakin embraced the second nickname by fighting with a Star of David and "TJB" emblazoned on his trunks. He takes his faith into the ring in other ways—before each fight, Sinakin and his team circle together as he and his father recite the *Shema*, a Jewish daily prayer, in Hebrew and English. Sinakin

then recites a prayer of his own: "Please give me the strength of Samson; please give me the courage of King David; and please give me the wisdom of King Solomon."

After two consecutive victories in Philadelphia's Golden Gloves amateur boxing tourney as a teenager and a 16-4 amateur record, Sinakin turned professional in 2018. Three of his five victories were knockouts. His next bout is scheduled for March 7 at Philadelphia's Metropolitan Opera House, aka the Philly Met.

Sinakin recalls a moment in his fourth fight, also at the Philly Met, that demonstrated his bulldog character.

"He was a very, very experienced fighter, and I ended up getting knocked down," he said of his opponent. "But when I got back up off the canvas, it showed what type of fighter I really am." After standing up and shaking it off, Sinakin won a unanimous decision and the adulation of the fans.

"Walking through the crowd and hearing everyone talk about it," he said, "was like a surreal moment for me."

To pay the bills, Sinakin worked construction for a while before joining the Postal Service in 2018, shortly before his first professional fight.

"I wanted a better-paying job with benefits and a union," he said. "It's one of the best things I ever did."

Before recently converting from CCA to career status, Sinakin worked in Philadelphia's 30th Street station. When he started his job, he instantly felt the love from his postal co-workers.

"It's like a giant family over there, everyone supports everyone—I have nothing but great things to say about my time at 30th Street Station," he said. "A lot of people from the Post Office came out to my fights and supported me." **PR**



Benny Sinakin

Sinakin won his pro debut against Alex Lara on Oct. 2, 2018.



NEITHER SNOW NOR RAIN NOR HEAT NOR GLOOM OF NIGHT

THE GREAT POSTAL STRIKE



CELEBRATING THE 50TH ANNIVERSARY

Shortly after midnight on a chilly March 18, 1970, New York City Branch 36 letter carriers moved police sawhorses left over from the recent St. Patrick's Day parade into position along the 45th Street side of the Grand Central post office and started picketing. By 1 a.m., the 51st Street police station reported that 30 picketers were there. An hour later, police reported 15 picketers outside the Murray Hill Station at 205 East 33rd St. What would become known as the Great Postal Strike—an illegal wildcat strike that threatened the jobs, pensions and even freedom of scores of America's mail carriers—had just begun.

With letter carriers and other postal workers on duty at 12:01 a.m. in Manhattan and the Bronx, news of the work stoppage spread quickly. Almost immediately, more than 25,000 postal clerks and drivers—members of the giant Manhattan-Bronx Postal Union (MBPU)—agreed to honor the picket lines and refused to go to work, bringing postal operations to a halt.

By the time the morning commute was under way, radio and newspapers throughout the city were reporting lines with hundreds of picketers. What had begun in Manhattan was spreading throughout New York City's other boroughs—Brooklyn, Queens, the Bronx and Staten Island—as well as Long Island and portions of upstate New York, and into New Jersey and Connecticut.

Those first strikers had been afraid that no one would join them, and that the strike would quickly be put down. They had good reason to be concerned, as that's exactly what had happened six months earlier. But as the strike spread to Boston

Opposite page: New York City Branch 36 letter carriers at the picket of the General Post Office on March 18, 1970.

Photo by Neal Boenzi, *The New York Times*

Right: President John F. Kennedy signs Executive Order 10988 on Jan. 17, 1962. NALC President William Doherty (l) looks on.



Branch 34, Philadelphia Branch 157, Detroit Branch 1, Cleveland Branch 40, Pittsburgh Branch 84, San Francisco Branch 214, Minneapolis Branch 9, St. Paul Branch 28, Colorado Branch 47; Chicago Branch 11 and beyond—news the Branch 36 members cheered as they heard it on their radios—they knew that this time was going to be different. The nation was finally forced to pay attention to the inequities that had been piling up for a long time.

THE ROAD TO THE STRIKE

Before 1970, the Post Office Department was a cabinet-level department and the postmaster general was appointed by the president of the United States. Because it was a federal agency, letter carrier pay and benefits were determined by Congress. If letter carriers wanted a raise, they needed to convince Congress to pass legislation giving it to them, or they needed to convince the president to issue an executive order. Similar to today, legislation could languish and die in Congress or be vetoed by the president, which meant that letter carriers could go years without increases. When raises did come, they were often already behind the rate of inflation.

Throughout the 1950s and '60s, as the United States expanded its economic muscles and private-sector employees saw their buying power greatly increase, letter carriers fell further and further behind. Many carriers were struggling just to remain above the poverty line.

By the time of the 1970 strike, many carriers in New York City or their spouses had to work two jobs just to survive. Wages were so low that in some states, carriers were eligible to receive food stamps, Medicaid and other assistance designed for the poor.

Not only were carriers paid low wages, they had few representational rights. Until 1962, there was no collective-bargaining agreement between the union and the Post Office that spelled out the rights and obligations of both parties, and there was no grievance procedure. Even though President John F. Kennedy had recognized NALC as the organization that would represent city letter carriers in grievance discussions and in negotiations for a national contract, bargaining still excluded wages, hours and fringe benefits. And there was no mechanism for compelling the department to make an agreement or to honor it.

Morale fell so low that many carriers were leaving the Post Office for better jobs in the private sector. By 1967, it was difficult to find people willing to work as carriers.

In the August 1968 *Postal Record*, a Cincinnati, Ohio letter carrier expressed what was on the minds of many:

Our members are sick to death of the "you have to take what they dish out" attitude. Do we have to continue to take it? ... Resolutions may be introduced [at the upcoming NALC convention], and if accepted, could give our membership the right to "carry a big stick." This would not be the first time the subject of the right to strike was brought up at conventions. The difference is, this year the delegates may just be mad enough to do something about it.

With some of the union's national leaders urging members to embrace

I was one of the strikers. I got hired in mid-February 1970...After three weeks and one paycheck, we went on strike. I had joined NALC on my third day of training.

I called my father, who was a Rheingold beer truck driver, and asked what should I do. He said if you are a union member, then you strike.

Next morning, I was on a picket line in Broadway Station in Long Island City, across the East River from Manhattan. We picketed for about a week, then discovered the strike was over.

When I reported for work, management told me, "No, you are on probation, so you wait until we tell you to come back." I was notified to report on April 13, 1970. I lost over a month's seniority, but was happy to be back to work with my health benefits.

—George T. Mangold, Long Island City, NY Branch 357

“militant unionism,” letter carriers were becoming increasingly vocal during the summer of 1968. Alarmed, in July the Post Office Department issued a strike contingency plan to all regional directors, field postal inspectors and local postmasters in first-class offices.

At the national convention in Boston

in 1968, a resolution was put forward that called on the union’s national officers, “whenever it becomes necessary to do so...[to] use [the strike] weapon for the welfare of its members.” However, national and local leaders were concerned about the legality of authorizing a strike, and a weaker resolution was passed in its place—instructing NALC’s national officers both to “investigate fully the legal and legislative technicalities” of giving the government employees the right to strike and to study the “feasibility of removing the no-strike oath” required as a condition of postal employment.

By that winter, things got worse when newly elected President

Richard Nixon announced on Feb. 12, 1969, his administration’s intention to increase postal pay by less than 3 percent, well below the rate of inflation, which exceeded 5 percent. By May, Nixon announced his solid support for abolishing the Post Office as a cabinet-level department and replacing it with a self-supporting postal corporation, something all of the postal unions had opposed when put forward by the prior administration, that of President Lyndon Johnson.

NALC and the other postal unions believed that the nation’s postal service should remain a public service directly accountable to the people. Furthermore, NALC feared that if Congress were to lose its leading role in making postal policy, the union would lose the one powerful weapon it had developed over the years: lobbying lawmakers.

When Nixon finally issued an executive order to increase postal pay by only 4.1 percent effective on July 1, 1969, NALC President James Rademacher, recognizing how short tempers had become, sent an open letter to all members the same day urging them to “cool it”—to not engage in slow-downs or sick-outs—because the union had a comprehensive legislative battle plan to win a better increase. In a bid to pressure Congress for an improved pay package, he also announced a court challenge to the “no-strike” oath.

MILITANT NEW YORK

Rademacher’s call to “cool it” likely came in direct response to what was happening in New York Branch 36, the union’s largest with 7,200 members in Manhattan and the Bronx. New York had become a city of strikes, with a string of successful work stoppages by municipal government workers:

At 18 years old, I became a letter carrier in 1963 in downtown Jersey City, NJ, right across the Hudson River from Manhattan. By 1970, I had my own two-trip route, which included an hour lunch.

When we heard that the carriers in New York City had gone out on strike that morning, we were amazed and curious. I convinced a much older carrier to drive over there with me on our break to see for ourselves what was happening. We were able to witness hundreds of brave carriers and talk with many who were breaking the law and demanding better and fair working conditions.

We drove right back home and notified our branch officers of what we had witnessed firsthand. Our president immediately called an emergency meeting that night, and by a unanimous vote, we joined the strike the very next day. Many were very nervous about losing their jobs and pensions, and so was I, but seeing that these brave men with many years’ experience were willing to take a stand, most holding two jobs in order to provide for their families, I realized how little I was risking, being so young and so new to the job.

We set up picket lines at all our stations the very next day. No carriers went to work, the clerks and other unions would not cross our picket lines and most of the public respected us as well. Our postmaster came out and ordered us back to work, and promised that we’d all be fired if we did not. We shouted him down, and no mail moved that whole week.

—Walter M. Padulo, Jersey City, NJ Branch 42

teachers, transportation workers and sanitation workers. All had won gains in wages, benefits and working conditions. New York postal workers felt that it was now their turn.

On Sunday, June 20, protests erupted all over the city, with the largest held outside the Manhattan General Post Office, where more than 2,000 letter carriers and postal clerks shouted “Strike! Strike! Strike!” while carrying signs saying “Nuts to 4.1” and “Pay, Not Peanuts.” One protester even brandished a hand-written sign, “How about an all-out sick call.” Meanwhile, 400 postal workers protested at the Grand Central Post Office in mid-town Manhattan, where they chanted “No Mail Monday” and “I’m Sick Monday.” On the steps of the Brooklyn Post Office, a mass protest turned ugly when the police intervened and two carriers were arrested.

On that July 1, almost all of the letter carriers and postal clerks at the Kingsbridge Station in the Bronx called in sick. In response, the New York City postmaster followed the instructions from the strike contingency plan. Supervisory personnel were called in as scabs, postal inspectors launched an investigation of the action, and all absent workers were given 24 hours to answer charges that they had engaged in an illegal activity. The very next day, while all 56 letter carriers and 16 clerks at Kingsbridge were being suspended, 16 of the 36 letter carriers in the Throggs Neck Branch called in sick, and they too were suspended almost immediately.

Even though all of the employees returned to work after most had served a two-week suspension, Branch 36’s rank-and-file letter carriers wanted the union to do more for the punished workers. Although the branch already had reached a settlement with postal

management allowing those carriers to use their annual leave during the two weeks they were suspended, at a special meeting members demanded that the branch also pay the suspended carriers two-thirds pay, an action that the New York Metro Area Postal Union representing the clerks at the two Bronx stations already had taken. Branch 36’s leaders convinced members to vote the motion down at the time, and did the same throughout the fall, but the members who supported the Kingsbridge and Throggs Neck carriers began to build a network of like-minded carriers.

In an effort to keep the lid on, Rademacher traveled to New York in August for a special meeting of Branch 36. He told cheering carriers that pay legislation was certain to pass within the next six weeks, and that if it didn’t, he would personally lead a strike. He urged calm in the meantime.

Six weeks came and went and Branch 36 members were far from calm. An article in *Time* magazine later described the December branch meeting: “Stamping their feet and clapping their hands, members of Branch 36 broke up their December meeting with raucous cries of ‘Strike! Strike!’ ”

Despite his promise to strike if legislation wasn’t enacted, Rademacher said later that he felt that the threat of the strike, and not the strike itself, was the weapon of choice to force Congress to approve a decent wage



Top: Forty letter carriers from Brooklyn Branch 41 who had applied for welfare in 1969.

Above: NALC called for Congress to pass a pay bill in 1962. Before the strike, letter carrier wages could only be increased by an act of Congress or a presidential executive order.



NALC President Rademacher (r) met with President Richard Nixon (l) on Dec. 18, 1969.

for his members. He feared that if a strike were called, only a few members might go out. So, in December 1969, when Nixon asked Rademacher to meet privately with him to forge a compromise on postal pay and postal reform, the NALC president went to the White House.

At this meeting, Nixon agreed to support a 5.4 percent pay increase effective Jan. 1, 1970. In return, Rademacher endorsed the idea of an independent “postal authority” which, because the strike ban was retained, would bargain with postal unions over wages, hours and working conditions, with binding arbitration as a last resort for issues the parties could not resolve.

Postal strikers at the 369th Regimental Armory in New York City refusing to return to work.

Photo by Jack Manning, *The New York Times*



But the Nixon-Rademacher compromise just incensed the Branch 36 carriers, and at their January 1970 meeting the members rejected the branch leadership’s endorsement of the pact and also finally passed the proposal to compensate the suspended Bronx carriers. But that was nothing compared to the March 12 meeting.

On that day, a House committee had approved a bill reflecting the Nixon-Rademacher compromise; shortly after, at the regular branch meeting, Branch 36 President Gustave “Gus” Johnson was interrupted as he delivered a report about the Nixon-Rademacher bill. Although the branch’s executive board had earlier directed stewards to tell carriers to oppose calling for a strike, angry carriers exploded with shouts of “No, no! Not enough! Strike! Enough talk! Strike!” and demanded a strike vote. Raucous debate verging on a brawl ended with an agreement to meet again on March 17, and hold a strike vote at that time.

THE STRIKE VOTE

By some accounts, nearly 4,000 letter carriers attended that special strike meeting at the Manhattan Center; emotions ran so high that when the meeting did not start on time, many carriers banged on the doors to be let in.

Branch leaders, opposed to a strike, challenged members’ credentials. Only six voting booths were set up, and the voting took so long that one attendee estimated that more than 1,000 carriers became discouraged and left without voting.

Despite the persistent calls for a work stoppage, the possible consequences for letter carriers were serious. Not only could they lose their jobs because they were striking against the

federal government in direct violation of the law, they also faced fines of \$1,000 and felony charges of up to a year in prison. Those who were military veterans and longtime carriers could lose all of the time earned toward a civil service pension.

The tension in the room was palpable as carriers waited after voting to find out the results. At about 10:30 p.m. the voting stopped and, after some 30 minutes of tabulating, the results were announced: 1,555—yes; 1,055—no. NALC's largest local had chosen by a 3-to-2 ratio to strike against the government regardless of whether the national union joined the strike.

Branch President Johnson announced that the branch would be on strike at 12:01 a.m. on March 18. "There will be no mail delivery tomorrow in New York," he said, adding, "Your voice has been heard tonight."

On stage with him was Brooklyn Branch 41 President Jack Leventhal, who promised that his branch would go out on strike, too, as well as MBPU President Moe Biller, who vowed that his members would not cross the picket line. This meant that 25,000 postal clerks and drivers would be joining Branch 36's and Branch 41's carriers.

The support of clerks was vital, as carriers could refuse to deliver the mail, but people could simply go to the post office and collect their mail there. With clerks and drivers honoring the strike, the whole postal system became inoperable.

Only an hour later, letter carriers moved the sawhorses into position and started picketing. That day the *New York Daily News* declared on its front page, "Strike Hits Manhattan, Bronx Mail" and *The New York Times*' front page said, "Mail Carriers Go on Strike in Manhattan and Bronx."

By that afternoon, almost no postal workers had crossed the picket line in the city's five boroughs. The strike spread into New Jersey, Massachusetts, Connecticut, Pennsylvania, Ohio, Illinois, Michigan, Wisconsin, Minnesota, Colorado and California. Within five days, the strikers numbered more than 200,000 (out of 739,000 workers) in 671 post offices.

Vincent Sombrotto, a rank-and-file Branch 36 member who had held no office before the strike, was one of the most vocal leaders and was there as the first picket line went up, providing oak tag from the back of his truck for signs. He recalled later how being on strike was empowering for the carriers: "Bill Braginetz said it best... 'For the first time, I finally feel like a human being,' he told me with tears in his eyes on the afternoon of March 18, 1970, as we walked up and down East 45th Street in front of the Grand Central Station post office."

TAKING ON THE GOVERNMENT AND NALC LEADERSHIP

Almost immediately after Branch 36 set up its picket lines, the Nixon administration began maneuvering to break the workers' revolt. Government lawyers in New York obtained an injunction ordering a return to work. But Branch 36's strikers defied the order.

The March 30, 1970 edition of *Time* magazine described the strike's effect on government and businesses as devastating. "Many of the country's largest corporations are headquartered in [New York City]; most depend upon the mail for conducting their business," it explained. Wall Street considered shutting down trading because of the lack of mail service, but decided not to.

As the strike extended across the country, NALC President Rademacher



Vincent Sombrotto (second from l) was one of the most vocal leaders of the strike contingent in Branch 36.

I was a member of the Hollywood, FL branch and a shop steward. Between March 18 and 23, 1970, there was a branch meeting in Hollywood... I led the charge to strike; however, the vote was to wait for Miami, FL Branch 1071 to strike—if they did, we would follow... .

The carriers around the nation who went on strike returned to work about March 23, 1970. Shortly thereafter, the PM of Hollywood, PM Williams, a political appointee, called me in his office and said I was the leader of the action to go out on strike and I was a communist and it would be treason to go out on strike. Williams said he would find a way to fire me... .

About a couple weeks later, he did fire me, saying I was an unsafe driver. I was out over six months, no pay, and came back to work after Williams retired.

—Matty Rose, South Florida Branch 1071

Des Plaines, IL Branch 2076 went out on strike on Friday morning, March 20, 1970.

On that morning at 5 a.m., the carriers took a strike vote and all the carriers voted to strike... Picket lines were set up at the three Des Plaines stations. A formal vote was taken at 4 p.m. with more than 100 carriers in attendance, and the vote was unanimous—not one dissenting vote.

The branch president organized a picket schedule of carriers around the clock to stop incoming mail trucks from delivering to the post office. The carriers were successful, as the truckers honored the picket line. Supervisors would try to lead the trucks into the post office, and when the truck drivers saw the picket lines, they would drive away. Carriers were assigned shifts of four hours to man the picket lines...

The special delivery union and the clerks' union supported the carriers' strike and honored the picket lines. We had a lot of support from Des Plaines residents and businesses. Because of all the carriers and clerks sticking together on the strike line, a settlement was reached and the carriers returned to work."

—James Sauer, Des Plaines, IL Branch 2076

was caught between his loyalty to his members and his concern for the union's future. He understood all the reasons why his members had walked off their jobs, yet he feared that if he assumed leadership of the wildcat strike, making it official, the government would totally crush the union—bankrupt it with fines, padlock its offices, strip away its jurisdiction, jail its officers and fire its members. Rademacher later would acknowledge that there are times when workers have no choice but to strike—he simply felt that the morning of March 18 was not such a time.



As the strike took on steam that first day, Postmaster General Winton Blount embargoed all mail going in and out of New York City; at the White House, Nixon's chief of staff, H.R. Haldeman, wrote in his notes, "Start of a postal strike today that could spread beyond New York, [President] wants to be sure we do what we could."

On March 20, Haldeman wrote that Nixon's "first reaction was for really tough stand, examine the law, if people can be fired, fire them, if troops can be moved, move them. Wants to do something now... not worried about the mail, it's the principle."

Washington was abuzz with leaders trying to end the strike, from Nixon and the White House to Rademacher at NALC Headquarters, from the secretary of labor to AFL-CIO President George Meany. But on March 21, at a Branch 36 meeting of nearly 6,000 members at the Harlem Armory, Branch President Johnson—who had quickly pivoted from opposing the strike to being a strike leader—read out a court order demanding that the letter carriers return to work, along with a telegram from Rademacher that outlined an agreement between him and the secretary of labor. In a vote, the branch decided emphatically to continue to strike.

Television cameras captured the action and broadcast it to the nation. The public was largely sympathetic to the letter carriers' plight, recognizing their low pay and their status in the community. A Gallup poll conducted during the strike found 80 percent of Americans supporting a postal pay raise, 41 percent backing an independent postal agency, and 62 percent behind the use of troops to move the mail. A post-strike survey showed support for the strikers at 61 percent with only 25 percent opposed. Recognizing the largely positive image of letter carriers in society, news magazines started referring to the strike as the "Revolt of the Good Guys."

Trying to escape his dilemma and end the crisis, Rademacher first attempted to persuade the strikers to return to work. After being told by the

Nixon administration that negotiations would begin once the strike ended and only then, the NALC president carried this message to an emergency meeting of the presidents of the union's 300 largest branches on March 20 in Washington, DC. He personally urged the presidents to call their members back to work so he could pursue negotiations, and in a spirited, noisy session, hundreds of local leaders accepted the idea with this proviso: If agreement wasn't reached in five days, Rademacher would lead a nationwide strike.

The next day, Saturday, March 21, Rademacher sent a telegram to all 6,500 NALC branches outlining that plan. But the back-to-work appeal had virtually no impact on the picket lines, because for many of the strikers, the wildcat strike was aimed as much at the union's failures as at the government's. At a meeting of Branch 36 the same day, the members voted almost unanimously to stay off the job. In the rest of the country, branches voted to walk out, stay out or schedule a walkout should Rademacher's five-day deadline pass without an agreement.

His efforts at persuasion having failed, Rademacher turned on the strikers. At a press conference Sunday, March 22, he charged that the New York City walkout had been instigated partly by "subversive" elements—members of the left-wing Students for a Democratic Society. That charge would haunt Rademacher for years after the strike, and he later said that he had received bad information. The NALC president also threatened Branch 36's leaders with expulsion from the NALC, and sent national officers out to the field to quash support for the strike.

But on the picket lines, most striking carriers and clerks were listening

to neither the administration's nor Rademacher's promises, for despite the pleas from the national union, fewer than 60 of the approximately 200 branches out on strike returned to work. President Nixon, with business interests clamoring for action and the impact of the strike rolling across the country, went on the offensive in a bid to end the crisis.

CALLING IN THE TROOPS

On March 23, in a nationally televised address, Nixon took his case to the American people. He issued Proclamation 3972, declaring a national emergency, along with Executive Order 11519, calling on the military to move the mail.

He ordered the deployment of 26,000 troops from the Navy, Marine Corps, Naval Reserve, Marine Corps Reserve, Air Force, Air Force Reserve, Air National Guard, Army, Army Reserve and Army National Guard and directed the secretary of the defense "to take such action as he deems necessary."

In the address, Nixon said that he sympathized with the strikers and their legitimate grievances, including "inequities in postal pay and benefits." He said that he aimed "to eliminate the source of those grievances, that is, the obsolete postal system itself, a system that no longer serves its employees, its customers, or the country as it should." He added that despite his sympathy for the strikers and his belief in creating a better system, he would not tolerate public-sector employees



Some of the coverage of the postal strike in March, 1970





Top: The mail began to pile up as letter carriers and postal clerks went out on strike in Chicago.

AP Wide World Photos

Above: A soldier from Fort Dix, NJ sorts mail at the Brooklyn General Post Office.

Photo by: Barton Silverman, The New York Times

interfering with essential services. “What is at issue then is the survival of a government based upon law,” he said.

Postmaster Blount then informed the press that there would be no negotiations “with people who are in the process of violating the law.” He called on the strikers to return to work and on Congress to pass legislation combining a fix in postal pay with postal reform.

The troops were ineffective: They never moved much mail, as shipments had been embargoed across the country, and the military units lacked the skills possessed by craft workers. Several troop workers reported that they had not been given the training necessary to understand how to sort the mail, were sabotaged by carriers who had pulled the labels off their cases when they went out on strike, or were not motivated to move the mail. In fact, many letter carriers had to leave the picket lines because they were called up to do their second job: military reservist.

Still, Nixon’s use of soldiers as scabs, his implied threat to send troops to other cities, the mounting legal pressure and threatened fines, the criticism of the wildcat action by AFL-CIO President George Meany plus Rademacher’s appeals and claims

of progress, convinced many postal workers to return to work. But not the strikers in New York City.

It was only when the officers of Branch 36, relaying information provided by the union’s national leadership, assured the striking letter carriers that an agreement had been reached with the administration that seemed to meet nearly every demand that the carriers and clerks in New York City put down their picket signs and returned to work. The strike ended on March 25.

In fact, however, no such agreement existed, for what became known as the “phantom package” was simply NALC’s proposal—a retroactive 12 percent pay increase, fully paid health benefits, an eight-year pay scale, collective bargaining with binding arbitration and full amnesty for the strikers. Whether this was a deliberate deception, as many believed at the time, or a misunderstanding, the effect was an end to the strike.

The New York carriers never formally voted to return to work, but the eight-day revolt was over. First to go out and last to go back, New York City’s letter carriers had shown a resolve and courage that would not be forgotten.

THE STRIKE’S LEGACY

As soon as the New York strikers returned to their jobs, Rademacher and other postal union leaders, assisted by the AFL-CIO, began round-the-clock negotiations with the Post Office Department. By April 2, the parties reached an agreement they thought would satisfy the demands of the carriers and clerks who, at great personal risk, had defied both the federal government and their national leaders.

The “Memorandum of Agreement” (MOA) expressed the postal unions’

and the Department's accord in four basic areas: pay increases totaling 14 percent—6 percent retroactive to Dec. 27, 1969, and an additional 8 percent effective whenever a postal reform bill was enacted; support for the establishment of an independent postal authority; collective bargaining over wages, hours and working conditions with unresolved issues to be settled through final and binding arbitration; and “compression” of the time required for postal workers to reach the top step of their grade level from 21 years to eight.

Congress quickly approved the 6 percent retroactive pay increase, and this became law on April 15. Obtaining congressional approval of the remaining elements of the MOA proved more difficult, and it was not until Aug. 12, 1970 that the Postal Reorganization Act became law.

Letter carriers and other postal workers had, at long last, achieved full collective bargaining with their employer. Rademacher himself would be partly vindicated, for as the decades ahead proved, the postal reform legislation he had supported brought collective bargaining to postal employees, freeing them from “collective begging”—the total dependence on their elected representatives for pay increases.

Rademacher led the NALC's bargaining team on the very first national agreement with the new Postal Service in 1971. Not only did that contract provide for wage increases and a cost-of-living adjustment—the first ever for postal employees—it also contained a “no lay-off” clause that prohibited the Postal Service from laying off carriers and other bargaining-unit employees “on an involuntary basis.” These became cornerstone rights and benefits for letter carriers ever since.

“The salary part of it was always important,” Rademacher recalled in an interview several years ago. “It's important to everybody. But looking ahead, collective bargaining means salary. To me we needed the pay, but collective bargaining was the future of the union.”

The strike propelled Sombrotto to election as Branch 36 president and eventually as president of the entire NALC. He brought the same leadership skills to the national level, where in his 24 years in that position he negotiated contract after contract that helped improve and solidify the pay and benefits of letter carriers. Sombrotto also oversaw the transformation of the union, both financially and in the representation and services the union provides to its members, until his retirement in 2002.

In a video on the strike's 40th anniversary, Sombrotto said the strike “gave you a feeling that you were something. You can speak up and you can do things that make it better for yourself and for others.”

Indeed, only through the strike could carriers have achieved substantial economic and legislative gains. The long struggle of letter carriers for dignity and justice had taken a major step forward. The strike was a largely uncoordinated, spontaneous uprising of aggrieved workers longing not only for economic justice but also for a voice and a recognition of their dignity and humanity. **PR**

When I was hired in December of 1963, I was designated a part-time flexible, with no guarantee of hours, and my hourly rate was \$2.16 per hour. I was not eligible for overtime—it was \$2.16 per hour whether it was my first hour of duty or my twelfth... .

A week after the initial walk-out, Palo Alto Branch 1019 called a special meeting to be held in the vacant field next to the then-East Meadow carrier station. There were about 90 percent of the carriers of Palo Alto at this meeting. The meeting contained anger, frustration, resolve and fear... .

Our branch president, Al Lee, instructed the carriers who supported the strike to move to his left and those who vote not to support the strike to move to his right. The vote to strike was about 170 to 20 to support the strike. And now it's on!

—John Spencer, Palo Alto, CA Branch 1019



NALC President Rademacher signs the first collective-bargaining agreement on July 1971 as PMG Blount (l) looks on.

UNDERSTANDING THE STRIKE'S BROADER IMPACT ON LABOR

We know the significance the Great Postal Strike of 1970 had, and continues to have, for letter carriers and other postal employees. It gave us collective-bargaining rights, a path to the middle class and a new employer—the United States Postal Service. It also gave NALC and letter carriers a special sense of accomplishment that reverberates to this day.

But, with the benefit of a half-century perspective, what are the strike's links to, and impact on, the broader labor movement? Assessing historical meaning always is a complex task—and the Great Postal Strike was a unique occurrence with multiple moving parts.

Timing and location are critical to understanding the strike's genesis and impact.

"New York City was ahead of the curve in terms of public-sector union strength," said Gene Carroll of Cornell University ILR School's Worker Institute and adjunct professor at the City University of New York, where he teaches public-sector union history.

New York City Mayor John Lindsay's first day in office in 1966 was marked by a transit workers' strike that shut down the largest U.S. city, Carroll notes; two years later, a bitter teachers' strike closed city schools and sanitation workers waged a massive strike.

If letter carriers in New York took inspiration from a 1960s environment featuring increasingly aggressive public-sector unions, their strike took things to a new level in the 1970s.

The fact that the postal walkout occurred "just as the public-sector movement was beginning to hit its stride," said Joseph McCartin, professor of labor history at Georgetown University, makes it "one of the most important events in the labor movement's history over the past century."

"It set the tone for the whole

public-sector worker movement," he said. "The postal strike opened up a possibility of expansion, growth and militancy. It energized other public-sector workers and helped establish the fact that militancy could win substantial gains for those workers."

Over the new decade, McCartin said, "You see a big growth in public-sector workers going out on strike to win their demands, even in cases where it was illegal, as it was illegal for postal workers."

Two momentous trends just beginning when the postal strike occurred—involving the economy and labor movement—would magnify its effect.

Economically, the country had been doing well in the post-World War II era. U.S. corporations faced few challenges, with Europe rebuilding and Germany and Japan reeling from wartime defeats. But by the late 1960s, American companies were seeing profit rates slow as global competition increased while, for the first time in a century, U.S. imports exceeded exports.

Faced with a changing world, U.S. corporations realized they couldn't control globalization but that "one thing they can control is their workers," said Lane Windham, author of *Knocking on Labor's Door*, about private-sector union organizing in the 1970s. Windham, former AFL-CIO media outreach director, earned a Ph.D. in history and has served on the board of directors of the Labor and Working Class History Association.

Companies began reducing benefits while pushing back on unions by using strike breakers and violating labor laws at the very time an increasingly diverse workforce was "demanding full access to the American Dream," Windham said.

Private-sector unions and workers, now taking it on the chin, responded. "The entire decade of the 1970s is re-

ally one of class conflict, of blue-collar battles," Windham said. "Working people fought and they lost, and their unions came under immense fire"—setting the stage for decades of rising income inequality and weakened private-sector unions to this day.

But the public sector was less susceptible to the shipping of jobs overseas and other corporate actions harming private-sector unions and intimidating workers. In addition, the number of public employees was rising, as government expanded with President Lyndon Johnson's Great Society initiatives. So public-sector unions began to grow even as private-sector unions were starting to decline, meaning that the postal strike occurred "right at a moment that was a fulcrum in labor history," Windham said.

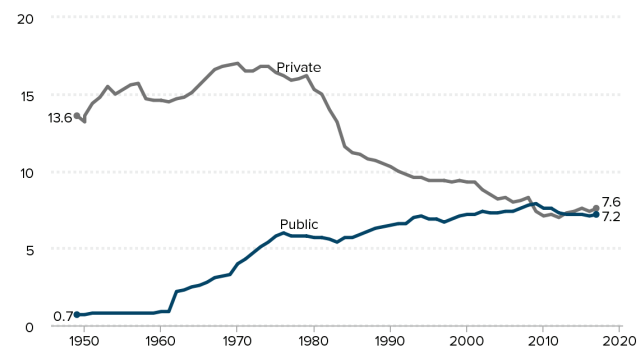
Public-sector unions catapulted over their private-sector counterparts in union density in the 1970s.

The postal strike focused particular attention on the public sector, given the number of workers involved, the nationwide reach, letter carriers' daring in ignoring the prohibition against striking—and the outcome. "Here's an example of a group of workers in the beginning of the decade who took on their employer and won," Windham said.

The strike lent momentum to considerations in states and localities about providing collective bargaining and other rights for public-sector unions, said John Russo, a founding member of the Center for Working-Class Studies at Youngstown State University and now a visiting scholar at Georgetown University's Kalmanovitz Initiative for Labor and the Working Poor.

"It played a very pivotal role in that period, in helping establish collective bargaining at the state and local levels for public employees," Russo said. "It gave a type of energy to teachers and state and county municipal

Union members by sector, 1949–2017 (in millions)



Source: EPI analysis of Current Population Survey Outgoing Rotation Group microdata and Labor Research Association data

Economic Policy Institute

social workers and nursing home workers, which helped link labor rights, civil rights and women’s rights within the burgeoning public-sector movement, she said.

And yet, while progress for public employees took place on state and

labor and have grown in importance throughout the late 20th century and into the early 21st century.”

Moreover, she said, labor’s history serves as an inspiration for future generations: “Workers are empowered when they are able to reclaim their history.”

As public-sector unions face threats in Wisconsin and other states from Great Recession-related financial austerity, privatization and legislation targeting collective-bargaining rights, the use of strikes has resurfaced, particularly among teachers.

“Looking back from the perspective of 50 years,” McCartin said, “nobody would have predicted back in 1970 the tremendous growth in the public sector. The teachers’ strikes might have an impact in our times similar to what the postal strike had 50 years ago. What the strike showed is how...even in a difficult situation workers can come together and make a big change.”

Lowell Turner, who recently retired after decades teaching labor at Cornell University’s ILR School, was a young San Francisco letter carrier when he joined the 1970 strike.

“What that showed was what people can accomplish when they stand up for themselves,” Turner said. The current “wave of strikes, by teachers and others,” reflects “a similar situation to what we faced back in 1970, with no respect, low pay—and then the lid came off.”

“That spirit of militancy, when it’s necessary, that’s never going to die,” he said. “It might have gotten beaten down by the [air traffic controllers’ strike], by 40 years of union busting and decline in terms of the numbers, and yet people are still willing to strike when need be.”

Labor’s “institutional memory” of the postal strike inspires workers even today, Turner said. “The upsurge in labor militancy we see now reflects the same phenomenon: beaten down, fight back.” **PR**

employees. With state or city or school boards that had laws that prohibited that type of public-sector bargaining, it helped push that discussion, which was already moving, toward collective bargaining in the public sector.”

At the federal level, those with postal oversight in Congress watched closely, said Jennifer Klein, Yale University professor of labor history.

“The massive postal workers’ strike really caught their attention: How long are we really going to leave public-sector workers out of what has become the norm; employment with dignity, with security, labor standards, negotiation rights?” Klein said. The 1970 strike was “on the crest of public-sector unions’ push for inclusion in the New Deal benefits that had been applied to the private sector 30 years earlier,” and so was vital “in getting the attention of representatives in the House who were responsible for this, and even in the Senate.” Officials also worried about the prospect of continuing “disruptive strikes” in the public sector.

As a result, Klein said: “That really does get on the political agenda in the early 1970s.”

The postal strike encouraged aggressiveness among public-sector unions for hospital workers, sanitation workers,

local levels, a federal equivalent to the National Labor Relations Act was not realized for public employees, partly because of conservative pushback.

Moreover, President Ronald Reagan’s 1981 firing of striking air traffic controllers emboldened employers and put labor on the defensive, accelerating its decline in membership and clout.

Does that mean the postal strike’s broader impact quickly dissipated, with the letter carriers’ bold action inaugurating a decade of activity and the air traffic controllers’ defeat bookending the period?

The short answer is no.

The growth in prominence and power of public-sector unions, sparked in part by the letter carriers’ actions, provided the labor movement—including the private sector—with solidarity and resources that sustained it in tough times.

In fact, the rising number of unionized public employees and shrinking number of private workers in unions crossed lines in 2010—making government workers the majority within the labor movement for the first time.

“It was extremely important that the letter carriers won and postal workers got the kind of contract they got,” Klein said, “because as private-sector unionism has declined, public-sector unions have become the bedrock of organized

NEW BOOK TELLS STRIKE HISTORY, SHINES LIGHT ON CURRENT CRISIS

A new book is being released to coincide with the 50th anniversary of The Great Postal Strike and letter carriers' stories are a big part of it. The book, *Undelivered: From the Great Postal Strike of 1970 to the Manufactured Crisis of the U.S. Postal Service*, was written by Philip Rubio, a former 20-year letter carrier who became a history professor.

It's not the first book Rubio has written about the mail; previously he wrote *There's Always Work at the Post Office: African American Postal Workers and the Fight for Jobs, Justice and Equality*.

"It was in the back of my mind to write about the 1970 wildcat strike while I was still writing *There's Always Work at the Post*

Office," Rubio said. "I was always amazed that this groundbreaking rank-and-file action had been largely forgotten—even by labor historians."

But he didn't want the book to focus exclusively on the strike, seeing a connection to the Postal Service's current financial crisis. "The crisis is something I argue in the book was politically manufactured, originating with the 2006 Postal Accountability and Enhancement Act (PAEA) during the George W. Bush administration, not the rise of the internet. The idea of how the strike, the subsequent reorganization of the Post Office into the USPS and the 2009 crisis were connected came to me after I started writing."

Rubio attended the 2014 NALC Convention in Philadelphia to conduct interviews with 55 letter carriers who had been involved in the strike. The picture the interviews paint is one of a rich tapestry that includes differing opinions and experiences.

"Carriers told me of strike debates and votes held in union halls, bars, swing rooms or even on the work-room floor," he said. "Some of these debates and votes started in the weeks preceding the strike, while others happened spontaneously."

In addition, he did research into the archives of the USPS, NALC, American Postal Workers Union and others, with help from current and retired postal employees and union staff members.

"The strike was a game changer with unintended consequences," Rubio said. "It compelled the federal government to provide collective bargaining to the postal unions and forced the unions to instill greater internal democracy."

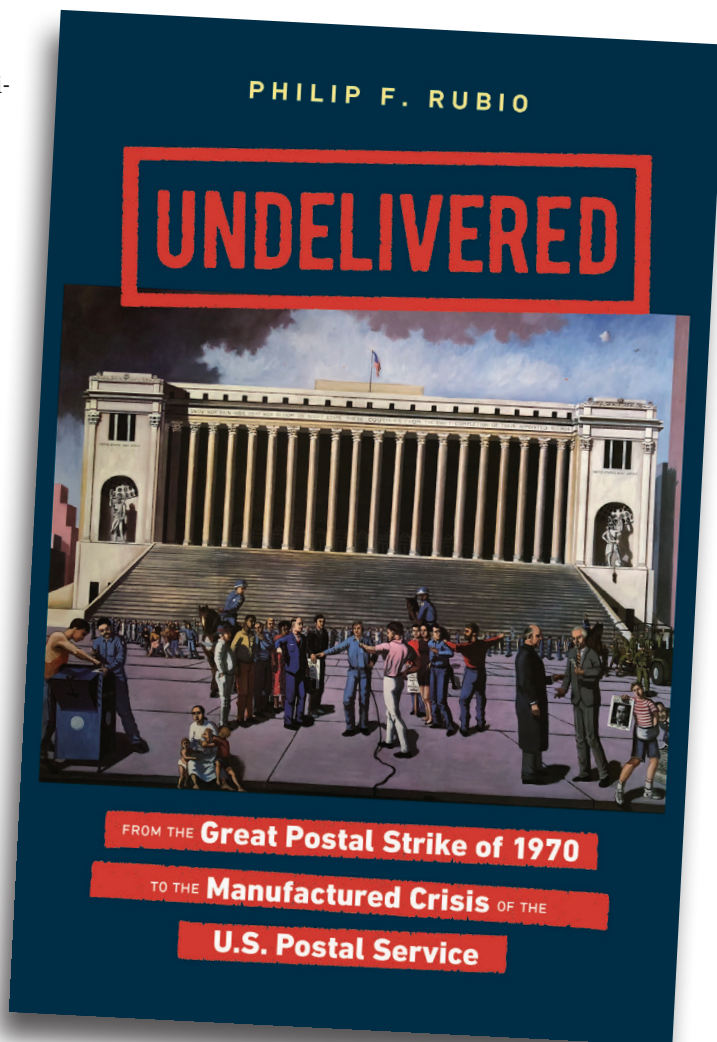
"But forces in government and the private sector that favored a diminishing of union power tried to take advantage of the sudden whopping debt the

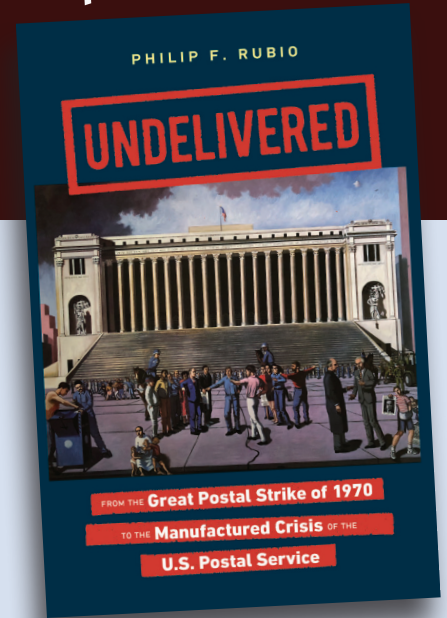
PAEA imposed on the government/corporate USPS to create a narrative of an obsolete Postal Service and redundant postal workers. The postal unions began using that rank-and-file spirit of 1970 to mobilize members and the public to push back."

The book is available through The University of North Carolina Press at uncpress.org/book/9781469655468/undelivered. Rubio and his publisher have allowed NALC to print the following excerpt (on pages 27-31) in advance of its publication. **PR**



Philip Rubio





The First Picket Lines

Just after midnight, Branch 36 and MBPU picketers at GCSPPO moved the “sawhorse” wooden police barricades still in place from the St. Patrick’s Day parade the day before onto the sidewalk in front of the building. The police barricades thus became an innovative as well as a symbolic and defiant way of establishing a solid object complement to what would soon become moving picket lines across the city that included homemade signs in English or Spanish. These picket lines would grow across the city and much of the United States. Vincent Sombrotto, who became a leading figure in the strike, had grown up in East Harlem (then called “Italian Harlem”) and been neighbors with Frank Orapello. Sombrotto had served in the Navy during World War II, had started working at the post office in 1947 at Christmas, and “made regular” (become a full-time career employee) in 1949. A route that he carried out of GCSPPO was renamed for him in 2014 (Branch 36’s Manhattan office building and the NALC national headquarters in Washington, D.C., are both also named after him.) At the time of the strike, he was a forty-six-year-old father of six who drove a truck as his second job. In many ways, Sombrotto became the iconic public face of the strike. Sombrotto remembered getting oak tag out of the back of his pickup truck to make picket signs along with Eddie Morris and Charlie Springer, and watching “about a hundred” letter carrier routers, clerks, and mail handlers coming out of the building while those coming to work respected the picket line. Cleveland Morgan, twenty-seven at the time and married with two children, proudly shared this recollection: “We went over to Grand Central, Sombrotto, some more guys that went over there, put up the [saw]horses ... and that morning ... we were picketing....It was history!”

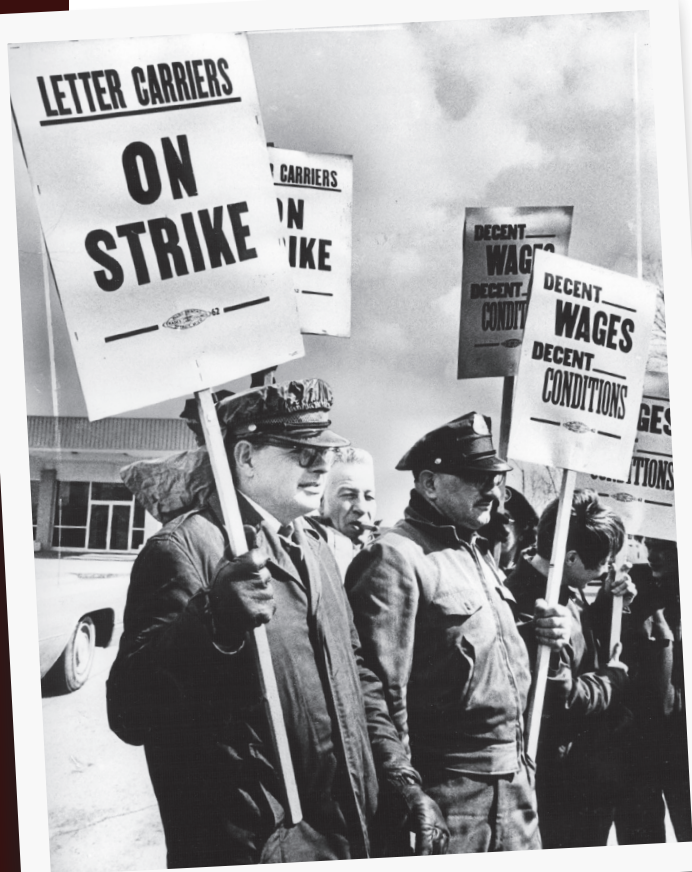
Picket lines in New York were also going up in Brooklyn and the Bronx. Branch 36 member John Phelan had voted to strike the night before at the Manhattan Center and has this recollection: “I showed up before 6 a.m. at ... Morris Heights Station on Jerome Ave. in the Bronx” with “a couple dozen” other carriers and clerks “just milling around. We knew we had to set up a picket line but we had no ‘on strike’ signs.” Phelan’s solution to the problem was to bang on the “cargo area doors” until the station manager, Sandy Brewer, came out. “I asked for some assistance: poster paper, crayons or felt tip pens and broomsticks.... Surprisingly, within a short period, Mr. Brewer showed up with a load of material.” Stories of supervisor cooperation during this strike are common, though not universal by any means. Phelan’s conclusion is the same as other strikers I have spoken to: “Maybe Mr. Brewer figured that whatever we would get in pay or benefits he would get more, and he was right.”

Also striking that first day were carriers at the Central Islip Post Office in Long Island, New York, according to local branch member Jaime Rodriguez. Rodriguez, who is Puerto Rican, had been a member of Branch 36 before transferring to Long Island—as were most carriers in that small branch (now part of Long Island Branch 6000). He described the tension after hearing that Branch 36 had voted to strike. “While we cased mail the conversation on the floor was: do we go out with Branch 36 or do we wait it out?” Their supervisor, he said, actually gave them time to meet in the swing room to discuss it, “and after a go-around we decided to join Branch 36.”

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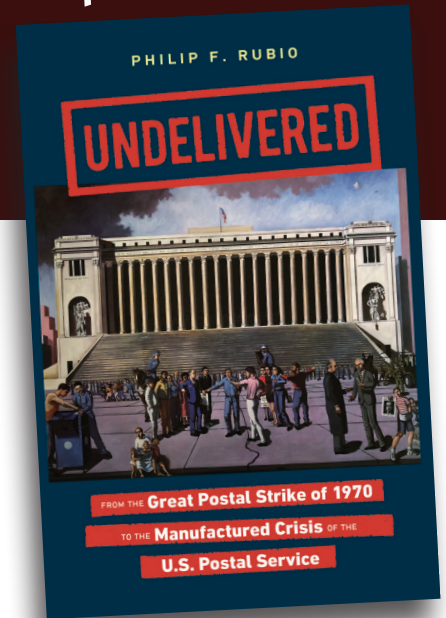
NALC Branch 2184's picket line at the Dearborn, Michigan Post Office
Photo by: Ira Rosenberg, *Detroit Free Press*



Also striking on Long Island, in Massapequa, was Matthew Illicete, then the branch secretary of NALC Branch 4202 (now merged with Branch 6000). Forty-two years old, he had eighteen years of seniority and was married with five children. Initially opposed to the strike, he nevertheless joined it after the branch voted to strike at their meeting hall. “We actually walked out of the post office,” he said, while the station supervisor was taking their pictures. All the carriers walked out, with the clerks joining some days later. In Jamaica, Queens, the NALC Branch 562 had about 600 members. Anthony Parrotta said, “We knew it was coming,” and tells of union delegates instructing carriers to walk out of the office that morning. But in Flushing, Queens, Thomas Idoyaga, who had emigrated from Cuba in 1957 at the age of twenty-two, recalls that the strike came “as a total surprise” to his Branch 1094. As soon as they heard the news, they walked out, calling a meeting to vote to strike on Thursday. Branch 3795 (now

part of Branch 38 merged) in Springfield, New Jersey, went out that day also, remembers Dave McDonald, who said they took a vote in the post office swing room. Much to their surprise, their “conservative” Italian-American branch president called for a strike vote that he advocated, and they voted “unanimously.” They got support from almost all residents, although the postmaster’s wife drove by and yelled, “Get back to work you scumbags!” In Paterson, New Jersey, Murray Ross was president of NALC Branch 120 at the time of the strike, and declared with pride that “in New Jersey we were the first to go out on strike and the last to go back.” He added an observation that many NALC strikers voiced: “In my opinion the strike was also against the NALC and the New Jersey State Association,” and for that reason Ross believes he “was not very popular with the national and state association officers.”

Across the country in San Jose, California, Mexican-American letter carrier Hector Gallardo was listening to music on the radio that morning while “casing” mail. Gallardo had been working at a sub-station in East San Jose at the time, having transferred from nearby San Francisco, where he was born in 1942. His father had been a union machinist who himself had been on strike more than once during his career. Still a “sub” and a “floater” (carrying regular carriers’ routes on their days off) at the time, Gallardo was married “with two kids, one on the way,” he said. He remembers that the music he was listening to on the radio that morning was interrupted with a “news flash of the New York City carrier strike. It was like a tidal wave!” He tried calling the branch president, but got no answer, so he walked out along with about twenty-five other carriers. Meetings were called later at the branch hall that he described as “hot” with “people letting off steam.” Rank-and-file members were at odds with local officers, and “most military retirees were afraid of losing their pensions....Everybody was caught off guard, but everybody was united” after the strike vote.



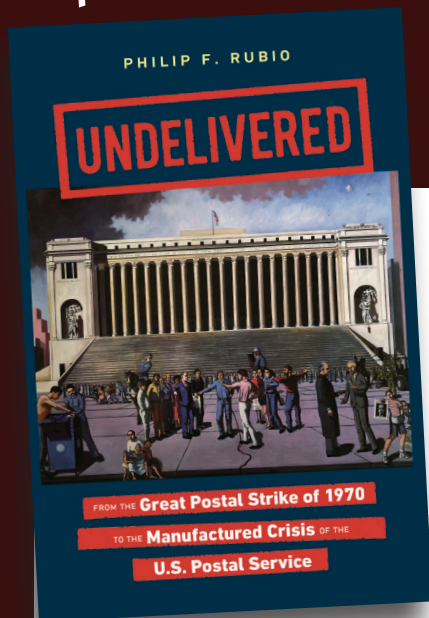
Also on strike in San Francisco was Alfred Chircop, a special delivery carrier, who reflected on some ironic advice his father gave him while he was deciding the previous year what kind of job to apply for: “I had a choice to make in 1969 at the age of 19. I could join the Teamsters Union—I was making \$4.44 an hour as a lumper (casual)—or join the Post Office for \$2.95 an hour. My father advised me to take the Post Office job because there were no strikes or layoffs. Less than a year later we were on strike!”

Back in New York City, Mother Nature was not being kind to picketers. There had been a cold early-spring rain all day—something most letter carriers were used to—with temperatures topping out in the upper thirties. If all eyes (and ears) of the nation’s postal workers were on New York, in the city itself picket lines were growing with carriers, clerks, and mail handlers, while the numbers crossing those lines were thinning to a trickle. “Only a handful of Tour I personnel showed up for work that evening,” Tom Germano reported. “Two actually went into the post office, the rest joined the picket line. At about 1:00 a.m. the last pickets abandoned the lines. As far as the GPO strikers were concerned, the first day had gone well.”

Yet if history was being made that day at midtown Manhattan post office picket lines, there was also plenty of dramatic labor activity that night a few blocks away at the Statler Hilton on West Thirty-Third Street and Seventh Avenue. “It was fabulous! Everybody was on fire!” is how Eleanor Bailey, an African American GPO clerk, recalls the raucous meeting Wednesday night at the Statler Hilton. At least one-quarter of the MBPU’s massive membership packed the Statler ballroom, even spilling out onto the street. Most members had refused to cross carrier picket lines since the first day of the strike. Bailey, known for stopping strikebreakers from sneaking into the GPO, even warned her father, who worked as a GPO mail handler and had gone to work after the strike began. “Dad,” she told him, “I promise you—cross the picket line, I will break your legs!”

Paul Daniels was a member of NALC Branch 227 in Meriden, Connecticut, a small town halfway between Hartford and New Haven. He describes a raucous branch meeting at the Knights of Columbus Hall on Willow Street that went on for roughly five hours on the night of Thursday, March 19—following a contentious meeting the previous night. Daniels was one of those who had been pushing for a strike. The story he tells resembles that of many other striking postal union branches and locals:

We were split between the young kids that wanted to go on strike, and the older carriers that had legitimate concerns about their pensions. They didn’t know if they were gonna go to jail. They didn’t know if they were gonna lose their pensions. And losing their pensions was one of their biggest arguments they made for not going on strike....And I’ll tell ya, people at that time cared about each other. They weren’t at each other’s throat over old and young. They were making legitimate arguments about their legitimate positions, and at the end of the day they were letter carriers. And I’ll tell you what happened. We voted on the second day of the special meetings. We had votes and votes, it kept getting voted down, no strike....But I wasn’t gonna give up. So the last day, the day of the



strike when we're gonna go out ... about eleven o'clock that night ... everybody's tired ... and they just want to go home....It's about eleven-thirty at night. Last motion, one more motion: "I make a motion we go on strike only if Hartford [Branch 86] goes on strike." ... How in the hell would you know what's going in Hartford? Guy's got a portable radio. Everybody's getting up and getting ready to go home ... and he says, "Hartford just went on strike!" What? Boom! Everybody sit down! "In accordance with the motion that was just passed we're on strike as of midnight tonight!" Nobody was prepared for that....There was four people that went out at midnight and started picketing....And the next morning in Meriden, no one came to work. No one crossed the picket line."

Paul Daniels later wrote in the branch's journal, the *Union Courier*: "There was no vote to return to work. When the sheriff finally caught up with President McAllister and served the Restraining Order, McAllister advised the membership that we had made our point and we should return to work on Monday March 23rd which we all did with our heads held high." Meanwhile, Ernest Salamone was vice president at the time of Hartford NALC Branch 86. It had about 100 members—one of the largest in the state. About three-quarters of the branch supported the strike, and clerks honored their picket line. Twenty-nine years old at the time of the strike, Salamone said that "they arrested some of us picketing on High Street," but they went back on the picket line upon release, and became what he called "the only branch in the country that was fined" for conducting an illegal strike.

Nineteen-year-old letter carrier and Branch 157 member James Reilly was there that Friday morning in southwest Philadelphia. His story sums up the seeming randomness, combined with real-life dramatic discussions and actions—along with frequent lower-management ambivalence—that made labor solidarity work at street level:

I come from a family of old union people. So I was brought up "union strong, union this, and union that." And being a PTF at that time, you didn't have a steady schedule. Right from the jump I got involved with the union. I talked to the guys. I seen guys older than me—one guy had seven kids. He actually had to collect welfare, food stamps, to make payments, to make it through. This is in Paschall Station in Philadelphia....So my father drives me to work that day. And I was scheduled to come in at 8:30 [a.m.]....The guys were already out on picket. Everybody was out at my station, walking around Paschall Station. I looked at my dad. He says, "Well, what are you gonna do?" I said, "Well, I'm not gonna cross." He said, "Good, good." And then the shop steward came over said, "Jimmy, you better get in there, you're still on ninety-day probation." So I looked at my father. And he said, you know, "What are you gonna do?" I said, "I don't know." This steward said, "Jim, you better go in ... You better go in or they're gonna fire you. *We* can be fired—[but] they'll definitely fire *you*." So reluctantly I went in....My manager was an ex-carrier. He goes, "What do you want to do?" I said, "I don't want to do nothing." He says, "Alright, just sit over there." So, I sat there for four hours, getting my four hours in and I left, and I went out and picked up my picket sign and joined my brothers."

In Minnesota's Twin Cities, St. Paul went out Thursday, March 19, and Minneapolis followed the next day. Minneapolis letter carrier Mark Schindeldecker started at the post office in 1968. Married with children and in his mid-twenties, at the time he "had nothing to lose," with wages so low he thought he qualified for food stamps. He recalled that, inspired by Branch 36 and others already on strike, NALC Branch 9 in Minneapolis had their strike meeting that Friday night, and began picketing the next day. "I stayed in town and made all the strike signs for the Nokomis Station," he recalls. "It took me most of the night! I showed up in the morning with all the signs and I still had my postal uniform on. Found out from inspectors we couldn't wear our uniforms. I went down to my dad's house and borrowed his pants, size 42. I couldn't find a belt anywhere! The moral of the story is—try holding onto a strike sign and your pants at the same time."

Meanwhile, Barry Weiner of New York Branch 36, who said that prior to the strike he was a "sixties social radical" who had not considered the union "militant enough," provides a snapshot of what the mood must have been like on the first picket lines in New York City. They were waiting to see who, if anyone, was going to follow them out on strike around the country:

It was easy to be "rah rah rah" leading up to the strike. But once you're there, now we're walking the picket line and we're thinking to ourselves, "Is anyone else in the country gonna go out on strike?" And we're listening to the news with these transistor radios. And at first we heard Brooklyn went out. Yay! Then we hear some branches in New Jersey it's reported are going out on strike. Yay! But that didn't really surprise us that much because we knew that on the East Coast there were a lot of people who were in the same financial situation....Then we started hearing Boston, Philadelphia. On the West Coast, a couple of branches like L.A., San Francisco. We weren't really surprised about that....I then heard on the radio that Minneapolis and St. Paul went out on strike. And I said to the people that I was picketing with ... we're gonna win this thing. I think we've got them. Because if they're going out on strike in the heartland of America, then this thing is gonna spread everywhere, and we're gonna wind up prevailing."



History of pre-funding health benefits



**Brian
Renfroe**

You have likely read, in other parts of this magazine or on the NALC website, about the recent passage of H.R. 2382 in the House of Representatives. This bill would repeal the requirement for the USPS to pre-fund future retiree health benefits, which has caused most of its financial losses in the last decade. Plenty of information is available about the bill and our outlook as we seek postal reform to improve the financial situation of our employer. In this month's column, I want to give you some background and information on how this mandate to pre-fund came to be.

The mandate that the USPS pre-fund retiree health benefits became law with the passage of the Postal Accountability and Enhancement Act (PAEA). This wasn't the first time the idea of pre-funding future retiree health benefits had been suggested. In the years prior to the PAEA, the head of the Government Accountability Office called on Congress to require all federal agencies, not just the Postal Service, to pre-fund their future retiree health benefits. Pre-funding future retiree health benefits is essentially setting money aside for employees before they retire and even before they are hired or become eligible to retire. This is akin to paying a mortgage for a house that isn't yours yet.

This proposal to have the entire federal government pre-fund future retiree health benefits was shot down, likely because it didn't make much sense (just as it made no sense for USPS to pre-fund). But the idea didn't die. At the time, the Postal Service was a cash cow, partly due to 2003 legislation that had allowed the Postal Service to stop overfunding the Civil Service Retirement System (CSRS). This resulted in billions of dollars of savings by allowing the Postal Service to pay the true cost of CSRS, and not the previously over-inflated value.

So along came the PAEA, which was passed in December of 2006 during a lame-duck session (as elections had already been decided, but the new representatives had not yet started their terms). Not only did the PAEA require the Postal Service to start pre-funding future retiree health benefits, it set out an accelerated schedule of 10 years to make all of the payments.. And so began an era where the Postal Service, unlike any other federal agency or any private corporation, was required by law to start making payments in excess of \$5 billion per year to pre-fund future

retiree health benefits.

To make matters worse, the Postal Service was making payments that went on to sit in a fund of low-yielding Treasury securities. Meanwhile, the rising health care costs were outpacing the returns of the low-yielding securities. So naturally, the amount required to fully pre-fund the future retiree health benefits was growing faster than the money the Postal Service had set aside in the fund could grow from interest.

These pre-funding payments have stretched the Postal Service's finances, all while we faced the Great Recession which led to a decline in mail volume, further hurting the Service's ability to maintain the roughly \$5 billion annual payments. Over the years the Service has attempted many cost-cutting measures in other areas in order to compensate for these significant, erroneous payments. This came in the form of efforts to reduce delivery, such as ending Saturday delivery, closing processing plants and shuttering many local offices, and reducing staffing. Fortunately, many of these misguided efforts that only hurt the Postal Service were prevented, mostly thanks to the work of the NALC and you, our members. Regardless, it has been a long and difficult journey for the Postal Service and all its dedicated employees forced to shoulder the burden of the pre-funding mandate.

During the years, attempts have been made to repeal and mitigate the pre-funding requirement through various legislative efforts. Some of these efforts included methods to reduce health benefit costs, increase revenue, expand services and even repeal the pre-funding mandate entirely. Some would say previous efforts have failed, since no legislation was enacted into law, but I would disagree. NALC members have used every opportunity we've had to educate representatives of both parties on the issue and potential solutions. In today's climate, it is very difficult to build bipartisan support on any issue, but you have done just that.

H.R. 2382, a bill known as the USPS Fairness Act, was passed with overwhelming bipartisan support in February. There is no doubt the work of thousands upon thousands of letter carrier activists that made your voices heard played a huge role in building support for this bill over the last few months. But our work does not stop here. The bill still needs to be passed in the Senate and signed into law by the president. There will be challenges ahead to accomplish that, but I know we will be up to the challenge.

Final report on the national ratio cases



**Lew
Drass**

I wrote about this case a few years ago. We finally have reached the point of closing the national case, so I figured it would be a good idea to give you a final report.

This case originated in 2013, when the Postal Service began refusing to convert CCAs to career status in installations where there were residual vacancies (jobs that had been posted and came down as a “no bid”) and no PTFs or transfer requests. There was no set procedure on how all this would work at that time.

The case is Q11N-4Q-C-13212958. USPS brought this case to the national level on June 7, 2013. The issue as framed by USPS is: *Whether the Postal Service is required, notwithstanding the conversion ratio under Article*

73.A, to convert a City Carrier Assistant (CCA) to full-time career status under the following circumstances: A residual vacancy exists in an installation that is not under Article 12 withholding, there are no available part-time flexible, full-time unassigned regular, or full-time flexible city letter carriers in the installation, and the installation employs CCAs?

Affected branches began to file grievances to get CCAs converted to career status in May of 2013. When USPS brought this issue to the national level on June 7, it framed the issue as referenced above. This caused all the local grievances filed on this issue to be held in abeyance pending the outcome of the national case.

The number of grievances held for this dispute grew to 414 that summer. Meanwhile, we continued to negotiate with USPS for a process to fill the residual vacancies that existed at the time. On Aug. 30, 2013, the MOU Re: Residual Vacancies–City Letter Carrier Craft (M-01824) was signed. This Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) was designed to balance facilitating transfers and converting PTFs with promoting CCAs to career status. M-01824 evolved through time with a series of MOUs (M-01834, M-01856 and M-01876).

The MOU Re: Full-time Regular Opportunities - City Letter Carrier Craft is now part of the 2016-2019 National Agreement (pages 159-162). Please note that PTFs created as a result of our new contract are not eligible to transfer in accordance with paragraph two of this MOU. The provisions of paragraph two apply only to the PTFs who were not converted to full-time status under the Jan. 10, 2013 Das award.

New PTFs created under the terms of the 2016-2019 National Agreement and the two CCA Caps national settlements (M-01892 and M-01906) are eligible to transfer under paragraph three of the current MOU Re: Full-time Regu-

lar Opportunities - City Letter Carrier Craft.

We agreed on terms for a settlement in late 2017 that was applied to each of the grievances held for this dispute. The principles of this settlement were really pretty simple. We agreed to function as if we had signed the MOU Re: Residual Vacancies – City Letter Carrier Craft (M-01824) on May 24, 2013 instead of on Aug. 30, 2013, when this MOU was actually signed.

If M-01824 had been signed on May 24, 2013, there would have been a 21-day national posting of all residual vacancies in the country from June 1–21, 2013. The first day of the third pay period from June 21 was July 27, 2013. Additionally, under the terms of M-01824, career letter carriers transfers would have been taken before CCA conversions were made. Therefore, any of the residual vacancies at issue that were filled with a letter carrier transfer were excluded from this settlement. For instance, if a grievance involved 10 residual vacancies and two of them were filled with letter carrier transfers, there would be eight letter carriers affected by this settlement who were due a remedy. Former city delivery letter carriers who had left the craft or USPS as of the date of settlement were also excluded.

Each affected letter carrier had his or her conversion to full-time career status made retroactive to July 27, 2013. There were a few exceptions where someone was affected by the settlement, but was not actually hired as a CCA yet on July 27, 2013. In those few cases, the settlements were amended to reflect conversion to career on the date of hire as a CCA.

The basic remedy due included many aspects paid/credited back to the date of retroactive conversion such as seniority credit, increased hourly straight and overtime pay, credit for step increases, eight hours guaranteed time each workday, Sunday premium pay, minimum contributions from USPS to TSP account, sick leave credit, annual leave credit (as applicable), holiday pay and retirement credit. Additionally, those affected letter carriers who were originally converted to full-time career status after Jan. 1, 2014 and then made retroactive to sometime in 2013 had their retirement contributions reduced from 4.4 percent of their basic salary (excluding overtime) to 3.1 percent. That is a benefit that will keep on giving.

We agreed that the retroactive conversions and all payments/leave credits would be completed within six months of the date of each settlement. The last settlement was signed on Jan. 4, 2018, which meant that this entire process should have been completed by July 4, 2018. Unfortunately, this did not happen as agreed to in many locations. That resulted in another round of grievances regarding the delays that occurred. Those cases have all been resolved now.

On Feb. 10, we agreed to close the original interpretive dispute without prejudice to the position of either party (M-01907). In closing, I just want to take this opportunity to thank all of you who were affected by this situation for your patience while we worked through all the issues that arose from these settlements.

IRS/Labor Department reporting and other important reminders



Nicole Rhine

All branches, whatever their income and/or whether they receive local dues, must file an Internal Revenue Service Form 990, 990-EZ or 990-N yearly. The appropriate form should be filed by the 15th day of the fifth month after the end of the branch's fiscal year. The branch officers are responsible for signing and ensuring the form is filed. Generally, the branch president or treasurer signs the form. However, branches that are eligible to file a 990-N only need to have one officer to actually file.

The income and assets of the branch determines which form should be filed:

- Form 990—Branches whose annual gross receipts are generally \$200,000 or more, or whose total assets are \$500,000 or more at the end of the fiscal year.
- Form 990-EZ (or 990 if the branch prefers)—Branches whose annual gross receipts are generally less than \$200,000 and whose total assets are less than \$500,000 at the end of the fiscal year.
- Form 990-N—Also referred to as the e-Postcard, this form must be filed electronically. It involves only a few questions. Branches receiving \$50,000 or less in income per year, including branches with no income at all, must file a Form 990-N (the easiest method); however, a Form 990-EZ or Form 990 may be filed in lieu of a Form 990-N. You can access the filing site directly at epostcard.form990.org.

Failure to comply may result in fines, penalties and interest. A branch that fails to file required information returns for three consecutive years will automatically lose its tax-exempt status.

Note: Branch officers should be aware that in addition to filing an appropriate 990, the branch still may be liable for tax on its unrelated business income, if it received \$1,000 or more in such gross income. The branch must complete a Form 990-T (Exempt Organization Business Income Tax Return) and pay any tax due. This form has the same filing deadlines as the Form 990s. A branch subject to tax is also required to make quarterly estimated tax payments.

Items usually considered to be unrelated business income and therefore reportable on the Form 990-T and taxable if the branch or state has income of \$1,000 or more from these sources include:

- The excess of advertising income from a branch or state publication more than the cost of the publication.

- Rental income from “debt-financed property,” such as a branch-owned building subject to a mortgage.
- Reimbursements for NALC Health Plan associate members.

More information on filing Form 990, 990-EZ, 990-N, and 990-T is available on the Internal Revenue Service website at irs.gov.

Officer Information List: Many branches installed officers in the past few months. If you have not already done so, please immediately update the Membership Department via letter or a “Branch Information Record” card which is included quarterly with the branch roster. Do not wait for another card if you do not have one; call the Membership Department at 202-393-4695 and request one.

City carrier assistants: A CCA's break in service should not trigger a permanent cancellation of dues withholding. Per the agreement with USPS, a CCA's dues deductions automatically restart when the CCA returns from a break in service. Branch secretaries should review the biweekly roster and notify the Membership Department if the dues withholding of a CCA returning from a break in service does not restart after one pay period and/or the CCA is noted as “CAN” (canceled). A CCA on a break in service should be noted on the roster as “SEP” (separated).

Reciprocal Agreement: Union representatives must notify the Membership Department if an incoming member wishes to cancel dues to the losing craft's union. This can be done by simply circling the appropriate union to cancel dues to on the Form 1187 next to “Union Transfer.” Dues refunds for double dues taken while a member belonged to NALC and another union are made only upon request and only for the time period between when NALC Headquarters was notified of the dual membership and when the dues to the other union were discontinued. For more information, please consult the “Reciprocal Agreement” booklet, which is available on the NALC website or from the NALC Supply Department.

Reporting to the Department of Labor: Unless your branch has no annual income or financial activity, you must file one of three types of financial reports with the Office of Labor-Management Standards (OLMS), depending on the total annual receipts of the branch. The Labor-Management Reporting and Disclosure Act (LMRDA) requires that unions file the report within 90 days after the branch's (or state association's) fiscal year. Most branches have fiscal years ending Dec. 31, so most should be filing by March 30. Remember that 2020 is a leap year, so there are 29 days in February. Branch presidents and secretary-treasurers are responsible for ensuring that required reports are filed in a timely and accurate manner. The LMRDA does not provide for or permit an extension of time for filing for any reason. Please reference my January 2019 *Postal Record* article for more information on filing requirements for LM reports—including the requirement that all LM reports be filed electronically.

Union proud and labor friendly



**Paul
Barner**

Since its peak in the 1950s, the U.S. labor movement has experienced a decline in its ranks, with attacks on working families becoming far too common. This decline has contributed to the ongoing erosion of the middle class in our country. Many in corporate America have become shortsighted, ignoring the socio-economic impact of working people on the country.

For its part, NALC doesn't just talk the talk when it comes to respecting workers' rights and recognizing the importance of the labor movement as a whole. NALC as an organization employs numerous people who help carry out

the day-to-day functions so that our union can effectively represent our members. Many of these employees are themselves represented by unions. In fact, employees who work in the various departments at NALC Headquarters (Vincent R. Sombrotto Building), United States Letter Carriers Mutual Benefit Association (MBA) and NALC Health Benefit Plan (HBP) are represented by five separate unions.

As part of his duties as executive vice president, Brian Renfro oversees contract negotiations on behalf of NALC with the unions to establish fair collective-bargaining agreements. The unions representing employees at NALC are as follows:

- **Office of Professional Employees International Union (OPEIU), Local 2** represents Headquarters bargaining-unit employees in the Accounting, Membership, Communications, Information Technologies and Mailroom/Supply departments, as well as all craft employees who work throughout MBA and NALC HBP. In addition, the secretaries throughout NALC Headquarters who are in the bargaining unit are represented by OPEIU, Local 2.
- **Service Employees International Union (SEIU), Local 32BJ** represents two employees in the positions of guard or driver. These employees are stationed at the guard station in the first floor lobby of the Sombrotto Building.
- **International Union of Operating Engineers (IUOE),**

Local 99-99A represents two building engineers. These employees maintain the daily operations of NALC Headquarters and HBP buildings.

- **International Union of Painters and Allied Trades (IUPAT), Local 890** represents painters and drywall finishers. NALC employs a painter/drywall finisher who helps maintain the condition of the Sombrotto Building.
- **United Brotherhood of Carpenters and Joiners of America (UBC)–Northeast Regional Council of Carpenters (NRCC)** represents carpenters. NALC employs carpenters on an as-needed basis who help maintain the condition of the Sombrotto Building.



At NALC Headquarters, members of five unions work inside the Vincent R. Sombrotto Building.

“NALC takes every opportunity to reward companies and employers who share our values of a strong union work force.”

NALC takes every opportunity to reward companies and employers who share our values of a strong union workforce. From printing companies to travel agents, NALC actively seeks out vendors that employ union workers. When it becomes necessary to hire contractors to perform work at NALC buildings, NALC searches for employers who understand the concept of skill, craftsmanship and professionalism that comes with hiring union workers.

Every member of NALC can be proud that our union doesn't just talk the labor movement talk. NALC doesn't stop at representing letter carriers, but rather remains constantly mindful of the importance of workers' rights and a unified workforce. The very survival of the middle class depends on it.

Spring updates for City Delivery



Christopher Jackson

Spring is the season of change, and some letter carriers are looking forward to warmer temperatures and better weather conditions. However, improved weather conditions may not be the only changes city letter carriers experience with the arrival of spring. I want to use this month's article to update members on potential changes in the workplace and to provide a preview of a new resource for members.

Consolidated casing test

In a letter dated January 13, 2020, USPS provided NALC with a list of an additional 35 test sites for this initiative. However, as of the date of this article, NALC has not been provided any specific dates when testing will

commence in these locations. NALC has been monitoring this unilateral USPS initiative since the beginning of the test on May 18, 2019, in Annandale, VA. A national-level grievance was filed disputing the test and both parties' arguments were heard by Arbitrator Shyam Das in hearings conducted in November and December. NALC is currently waiting for the arbitrator to issue a ruling on this unilateral initiative.

In the meantime, NALC observers have been present at each test site, recording information related to the initiative. Based on work-hour data received, USPS projected 432,129 city delivery work hours would be used in October 2019 for the 62 test sites combined. In reality, 505,898 total work hours were used for the month. This work-hour data reflects almost 74,000 hours more than USPS's projected hours. That 74,000 work hours equates to an additional 9,250 full-time city carrier assignments for the month of October.

“On Jan. 28, USPS provided NALC with notification...of its intent to collect data to develop a study related to determining the impact of caseless duty assignments on city delivery routes.”

Keep in mind, the additional work hours identified above do not include any hours resulting from additional transportation runs and clerk staffing increases that USPS has initiated in some test sites. Also not included in the work-hour data is the time used by non-letter carrier craft employees performing city carrier work. NALC is aware of grievances that have been filed in multiple test sites disputing these cross-craft hours. I will be sure to keep our members informed of

any changes regarding this test process.

Caseless test

In addition to consolidated casing, USPS is gathering data and considering another unilateral test related to casing duties. On January 28, USPS provided NALC with notification pursuant to Article 34 of the National Agreement of its intent to collect data in order to develop a study (including test parameters) related to determining the impact of caseless duty assignments on city delivery routes. USPS states that in this test, letter carriers would take residual mail directly to the street and collate this mail into their automated mail, thereby eliminating all casing and pulling time in the office. If USPS initiates this unilateral test, NALC representatives will closely monitor and observe the testing process. USPS states that this testing will occur in 240 nationwide test sites, last approximately one year, and proceed on a similar schedule to consolidated casing. If USPS moves forward with this test, I will provide the membership with more information as this situation develops.

Next Generation Delivery Vehicle (NGDV)

According to Article 41.3.L of the National Agreement, NALC has the right to examine, comment and submit recommendations on new vehicle specifications. As written in previous articles, NALC has attended multiple meetings with USPS representatives to provide feedback on the proposed NGDV. In January of 2020, USPS provided NALC with a copy of the final Statement of Work (SOW) given to potential suppliers of the NGDV. Potential suppliers will be given several months to review the SOW and provide USPS with production proposals. USPS anticipates that a contract will be awarded this year and that the first production vehicle will be deployed 18 months following the contract award. NALC has reviewed the SOW and is pleased to report that the SOW includes a requirement for air conditioning and several additional safety features designed to help protect letter carriers.

Veterans Guide

Over the last several months, NALC has been developing an informational resource for letter carriers who are military veterans. The NALC *Veterans Guide* contains various topics of interest to veterans, including the Uniformed Services Employment and Reemployment Rights Act (USERRA), Wounded Warriors Leave (WWL), the Veterans' Preference Act of 1944 and retirement credit for military service. The guide also discusses several National Agreement provisions and memorandums of understanding (MOUs) specific to military veterans. In the coming months, a copy of the guide will be mailed to every member of the NALC Veterans Group; it also will be available in electronic format at nalc.org. In addition, a copy will be mailed to each member upon joining the group. I would like to give a special thank you to our Branch 421 member, Jim Ruetze, for his many hours of work assisting NALC with this project.

ProMaster recall, continued



Manuel L. Peralta Jr.

In my January column, I addressed the recall of ProMaster vehicles in our fleet and the fact that NALC had made an inquiry to USPS.

We asked if any of our ProMasters were affected by the recall, and USPS responded that “the Postal Service has approximately 20,000 ProMaster vehicles, with the majority of these vehicles included in the above referenced recall.”

As a follow-up, presuming some of the ProMaster vehicles in our fleet are affected, we asked what was being done to prevent a tragedy?

In response, USPS advised that:

...Chrysler FCA US, LLC (FCA) has informed the Postal Service of its notification to the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA) about the intent to recall certain model year ProMaster vehicles due to the potential for thermal events occurring with this model. We have been proactively working with FCA ahead of the recall to ensure the safety of those vehicles currently being used in delivery operations. We are also collaborating with FCA to determine the specifics of the recall, the identification of vehicles impacted, and the overall corrective action needed to ensure the vehicles no longer present the risk of a thermal event. In addition, the Postal Service has contracted with the investigative firm Rimkus to research the cause of all vehicle fires in the Postal fleet. Inspection procedures and safety talks have been prepared for delivery and vehicle maintenance operations in order to communicate the actions that are necessary for recognizing potential fire risks.

The safety and wellbeing of each and every one of our employees is paramount for the Postal Service. We remain confident that the ProMaster vehicles in our fleet will continue to operate safely and the FCA commitment to instituting a timely and effective process to mitigate any issues in order to ensure the safety of Postal Service employees, the mail they deliver, and the general public.

NALC recognizes that the response from USPS does not identify the decision-maker behind the scenes; however, it seems to me that the last paragraph above is a “hope” that no one suffers until the recall correction is put in place. We have made a follow-up inquiry and are awaiting that answer. In the meantime, if you see any smoke around the engine compartment, shut off the engine, secure the vehicle and get out as quickly as you can.

We are advised that management has prepared safety talks on this subject (which we have requested) so if you

have any ProMasters in your delivery unit, the employer should have held the relevant safety talks. If not, reach out and ask them what has been done with that material.

“...Presuming that some of the ProMaster vehicles in our fleet were affected, we asked what was being done to prevent a tragedy.”

Installation Safety Committees

Article 14, Section 4 of our National Agreement provides a forum for the local parties to discuss safety and health items. The agreement states:

At each postal installation having 50 or more employees, a Joint Labor-Management Safety and Health Committee will be established. In installations having fewer than 50 employees, installation heads are encouraged to establish similar committees when requested by the Union...

The agreement further states that if there is no established [safety] committee, the parties are to address their safety and health issues during labor-management meetings.

Do you have a functioning safety and health committee? If not, you should communicate with your local union leadership requesting that we set up a local safety committee as provided for in the contract (provided you have 50 or more employees).

If you have fewer than 50 employees, your postmaster is still encouraged to have such a committee. If the postmaster is not willing, he or she still must address safety and health issues that are placed on the agenda of the required labor-management meetings.

What should we be discussing at these meetings? Article 14, Section 8 identifies responsibilities of the local committee and guides as follows:

The Committee shall review the progress in accident prevention and health at the installation; determine program areas which should have increased emphasis; and it may investigate major accidents which result in disabling injuries. Items properly relating to employee safety and health shall be considered appropriate discussion items...

The above should be viewed as an opportunity for the local parties to truly look at the cause of an accident or injury, and to determine what needs to be done to prevent such accidents/injuries in the future.

Get involved and make a difference.
Keep an eye on each other.

Snake oil



Dan Toth

As the Director of Retired Members, I travel to numerous state and branch events throughout the year. One of my goals is to warn our members about unscrupulous financial planners, or “snake oil salesmen.” As you know, not all our members attend these events or even read *The Postal Record*; therefore, I decided to take my message to the workroom floor whenever possible. I am amazed by how many of our members have been contacted by financial planners, by methods including letters being sent to their workplace. I must say that not all financial planners are unscrupulous, but all financial planners need to be vetted to be sure they are who they say they are.

I am reminded of a conversation I had with the previous director of retired members, Ron Watson, concerning a disturbing call he received from a member. The member had just retired and had sought information and advice from a financial advisor regarding his very significant TSP account (\$350,000). He reported to Ron that the financial advisor had cautioned him that he should move his money out of the TSP because, upon his death, any remaining TSP balance would be forfeited to the federal government, instead of going to his spouse.

That financial advisor was likely selling snake oil. His caution was utterly false. If an active employee or a retiree dies with a TSP balance, the balance goes to the person designated by the deceased employee/retiree. If the deceased employee/retiree has not designated a beneficiary, the TSP account balance goes to the widow/widower. If no spouse exists, the balance goes to a child/children. If no child exists, the balance goes to the parents. If no parents are alive, the balance goes to the executor of the estate. If no executor exists, it goes to the next of kin.

You can read the TSP death benefits policy by linking to the *TSP Bulletin* at tsp.gov/PDF/bulletins/14-04.html.

“Don’t let ‘snake oil salesmen’ scare you away from the TSP with incorrect information.”

Ron Watson always preached what a financial advisor would have to gain by providing incorrect information about TSP death benefits. The salesman would probably get a sales commission, if the incorrect information tricked the retiree

into thinking the TSP was a bad deal. Consider these two key differences between TSP and for-profit investment funds.

First, the managers of TSP funds are required as a matter of law to make investment decisions solely for the financial benefit of the TSP participants. Stockbrokers, financial planners, life insurance purveyors and other securities salesmen are not required by law to make investment decisions in your financial interest, which means they can make decisions with your money (if you hire them) in their own financial interest.

Second, the cost of administering the TSP funds is a small fraction of the average cost of administering private investment funds. These costs are ultimately paid by the investors in the funds. The average annual cost of administering TSP funds is 0.04 percent per \$1,000. The expense ratio of private industry investment funds can easily be 30 times as much. A private investment fund with an expense ratio of 1.5 percent would cost \$1,500 per year, versus TSP costing \$40 per year for each \$100,000 in the account.

Given these two significant facts, retirees should carefully consider any decision to move investment funds out of the TSP. When doing that, beware the snake oil salesmen. Here is a list of questions you should consider asking any salesperson, financial advisor, etc. who suggests that you move money out of your TSP account and invest it with him or her:

- What is the average net expense I will pay for every \$1,000 invested?
- What additional annual fees, commissions or charges will I pay for investments?
- What profit do you make if I invest with you?
- Do you have a responsibility (fiduciary obligation) to put my interest ahead of your own?
- Will your plan protect my retirement funds from creditors’ claims?
- When I retire, can I receive a series of scheduled withdrawals without giving up control of my account?
- Can I change my investments or take withdrawals without being subject to surrender fees or back end charges?

If you would like your TSP account to be distributed upon your death according to the statutory order of precedence, it is not necessary to complete Form TSP-3, Designation of Beneficiary. If you do not want your TSP account distributed in the order of precedence, you can complete Form TSP-3, Designation of Beneficiary. You can download the form at tsp.gov/forms/civilianForms.html, or call the ThriftLine at 1-TSP-YOU-FRST (1-877-968-3778) and choose Option 3 to request a copy of the form. Be sure to read the directions carefully.

If you do not remember whether you have submitted a Form TSP-3, you can find out by calling the ThriftLine and speaking with a participant service representative. Don’t let snake oil salesmen scare you away from the TSP with incorrect information.

Important changes on traditional IRAs



**James W.
“Jim” Yates**

The traditional Individual Retirement Account (IRA) was established in the United States by the Employees Retirement Income Security Act of 1974 (ERISA). These IRAs became available in 1975.

The benefit of a traditional IRA is that it allows an individual to save money for retirement in a tax-advantaged way. The IRA is set up at a financial institution, which allows contributions to grow on a tax-deferred basis. Specifically, contributions to traditional IRAs generally lower the individuals' taxable income (adjusted gross income) in the contribution year. Contributions and earned interest continue to grow over the years.

Anyone with earned income can make the maximum traditional IRA contribution as long as he or she has at least that much income in a given year. (Qualification for a full or partial tax deduction depends mostly on the individual's income and whether he or she has access to a work-related retirement account like a 401(k).) A non-working spouse can establish his/her own traditional IRA if the earned income of the working spouse equals or exceeds the total contribution to both partners' IRAs.

Taxes are paid on the traditional IRA only when a withdrawal is made from the account. A penalty may be applied if the withdrawal is made prior to the policy owner attaining 59.5 years of age.

The IRA maximum contribution limits have increased over the years. They started in 1975 with a \$1,500 limit. The contribution limit increased in the following years: 1982 (\$2,000), 2002 (\$3,000), 2005 (\$4,000), 2008 (\$5,000), 2013 (\$5,500), and 2019 (\$6,000).

Starting in 2002, individuals aged 50 or older were allowed to make additional “catch-up” contributions to their traditional IRAs. Catch-up contributions were \$500 from 2002-2005 and \$1,000 from 2006-2019.

For the 2020 tax year, the total contribution to all of an individual's traditional and Roth IRAs cannot exceed: \$6,000 (\$7,000 if the individual is age 50 or older), or the taxable compensation for the year, if the compensation was less than this dollar limit.

Until 2020, people were unable to make contributions to a traditional IRA once they reached 70.5 years of age, regardless of whether they had earned income or not. In addition, traditional IRAs had a required minimum distribution (RMD) requirement that began at age 70.5. This RMD is the minimum amount an individual must withdraw

from the traditional IRA each year. The amount of the RMD is based on the age of the IRA owner and the value of the account at the end of a calendar year.

The Setting Every Community Up for Retirement Enhancement Act of 2019 (the SECURE Act), which was signed into law on Dec. 20, 2019, has made changes to the traditional IRA.

Section 106 of The SECURE Act repealed the prohibition on contributions to a traditional IRA by an individual who has attained age 70.5. As Americans live longer, an increasing number continue employment beyond traditional retirement age. This change will allow individuals who still have earned income to continue contributing to their IRA for years, thereby providing a more secure financial future. Although contributions may be made for additional years, the maximum annual contribution limit still applies.

Section 113 of The SECURE Act increased the age for which a required minimum distribution was mandatory, from age 70.5 to 72. The rationale behind the RMD rule is to ensure that individuals spend their retirement savings during their lifetime and not use their retirement plans for estate planning purposes to transfer wealth to beneficiaries. The original age of RMD (70.5 years of age) was first applied in the retirement plan context in the early 1960s and has never been adjusted to consider increases in life expectancy. The increase in the age of mandatory withdrawal of funds allows individuals to let their funds remain in the IRA for a longer period of time. This allows additional tax-deferred earning of interest.

“The Setting Every Community Up for Retirement Enhancement Act of 2019 (the SECURE Act), which was signed into law on Dec. 20, 2019, has made changes to the traditional IRA.”

In January of each year, the MBA sends a written notification to all traditional IRA policy owners who are required to take an RMD from their policy. The notification also informs the policy owner of the amount of the RMD. Beginning in 2020, the MBA will be sending notifications only to those traditional IRA owners who are age 72 or older.

Contributions for a traditional IRA, as well as a Roth IRA, may be made up to the tax filing deadline of any given year. The last date to contribute to an IRA for the 2019 tax year is April 15, 2020. If you are making a traditional IRA or Roth IRA contribution for the 2019 tax year, please indicate on the check or money order that the “contribution is for the 2019 tax year.”

Write a new health story for 2020



**Stephanie
Stewart**

Iwould like to start off this month's article with a quote I was recently reminded of. It applies everywhere if you think about it, and most certainly, to your health: "Life's like a movie. Write your own ending."—Kermit the Frog, Muppet character and Jim Henson's best-known creation.

According to several online sources, most people have given up or failed on their New Year resolutions by mid-January or early February. Maybe goals are too high, life just doesn't offer enough time for us to think about ourselves, or we don't feel that we have enough support from our friends, programs or finances. As a result, we struggle to write

our own ending because we believe the resources are not there.

Good news: we can help you take a new approach to pen your story.

Start with taking or re-taking your annual health assessment. This is an interactive journey to discover ways to improve your health. Because we care about your health, we offer incentives for completion. If you are enrolled in the High Option Plan, one of the three available incentives is a wearable activity tracking device. What better way to keep your progress moving?

Other options that the NALC Health Benefit Plan offers for completing the health assessment are free enrollment in the CignaPlus Savings[®] discount dental program or waiver of two \$20 PPO medical office visit copayments (also healthy choices for your wallet). When at least two family members complete the health assessment, the incentive chosen will increase.

As said above, the health assessment can be taken annually, so make sure to complete it each year. Simply go to nalchbp.org and click on the Quicklink called "Health Assessment."

Keep in mind that while both High Option members and CDHP/Value Option members receive the same health assessment experience, there is a difference in the free incentives.

Your story doesn't need to stop there; keep writing.

Healthy Rewards[®]

The idea behind the Healthy Rewards[®] Member Savings Program is making healthy more affordable. Once you complete your health assessment and receive your wearable activity tracking device, maybe a gym membership or

healthy food products are part of the next chapter of your healthy lifestyle.

You can save up to 40 percent on products and services to encourage and promote healthy behaviors and lifestyles, such as:

- Low-cost fitness center memberships at 10,000 locations around the country.
- Yoga accessories and fitness gear through online discounts.
- Vision and hearing care discounts such as laser vision correction procedure and discounts on eyeglasses, prescription sunglasses and vision exams.

There are no claim forms or referrals, so the program is easy for members to use. You have access to a nationwide network of 48,000 providers and 10,000 fitness clubs. You can access the Healthy Rewards[®] Program by calling 800-558-9443 or by visiting the Plan's website at nalchbp.org.

Note: Some Healthy Rewards[®] Programs are not available in all states. Healthy Rewards programs are separate from your medical coverage. A discount program is not insurance, and the member must pay the entire discounted charge.

Need help quitting tobacco/e-cigarette use?

Don't give up on the resolution because it's March and the first two months were not successful. Keep writing your ending. We have faith in you, and we realize that while stopping tobacco use can be tough, having support and a plan in place can boost your chances for achievement.

Our cost-free Quit for Life[®] Program offers a variety of tools to help you succeed at kicking the habit, including a Quit Coach[®] staff member who will work with you to create an individualized plan. You also can receive free nicotine replacement therapy products (gum or patches), if it's part of your personalized quitting plan. To learn more about the Quit for Life[®] Program through Optum[®], call 866-784-8454 or visit quitnow.net/nalc.

If you choose not to participate in the Quit for Life[®] Program, you can still write this chapter; over-the-counter medications for tobacco cessation (prescription required) will be paid at 100 percent when you purchase the medication at an NALC CareSelect retail pharmacy or mail order program.

If you run into writer's block along the journey, we are here for you!

Lastly, the 2020 NALC Health Benefit Plan brochure (RI 71-009) is a wealth of information that we hope will make your life richer by way of affordable, quality healthcare. If you have any questions, our knowledgeable representatives are waiting to assist you at 888-636-6252.

Contract Administration Unit

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

Route inspection process

In past Contract Talk articles, we have covered management's requirement to abide by Chapter 2 of *Handbook M-39, Management of Delivery Services*, and Chapter 9 of *Handbook M-41, City Delivery Carriers Duties and Responsibilities*, when conducting route counts and inspections and any subsequent adjustments. Those articles were geared to union representatives who may have to initiate grievances over violations of these provisions. The purpose of this article is to educate you on how to protect your rights during the process.

Much of the information contained in this article can be found in the *NALC Route Inspection Pocket Handbook*, updated in 2018. This handbook is available to NALC members through NBA offices and the NALC Supply Department. Contact information for the NBA office that represents each area is available on the NALC website at nalc.org/union-administration/nalc-regions. The NALC Supply Department is open Monday through Friday from 9 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. Eastern time and can be reached by calling 202-393-4695, ext. 874.

Before the inspection

Once you are notified that your route will be inspected, whether through a special or unit-wide inspection, you should begin preparing for the process. One of the first steps you should take is to start taking notes about your route and the delivery unit where you work. The *NALC Route Inspection Pocket Handbook* contains pages for you to use to record these notes; however, you may need to keep a separate notebook based on your route. You should continue to keep these notes throughout the entire process to ensure that you do not forget information that could assist your shop steward in the grievance process. Some questions you should ask yourself when making these notes:

- Is your route properly adjusted? Do you need overtime or auxiliary assistance on a regular basis, or do you pivot (undertime) on other routes?
- How much time does it take you to case and pull your route each day? Do not rely solely on your leave time when you work an 8-hour day. If you usually must wait for mail or parcels to be distributed, make a note of the amount of time you generally wait.
- Do you take both rest breaks on the street or is one taken in the office? Does the entire office follow the same procedure?
- How much time does it take you to deliver your route on the street? This time does not include your 30-minute lunch but should include either one or two rest breaks, depending on your answer to the question above.
- Do you have businesses closed on Saturday, affecting

the amount of time you spend delivering? Does this lead to an increase in delivery time on Monday?

- Is there any new construction on your route?
- Are there any issues that impact your line-of-travel either to and from the route or while delivering? This could include detours or train crossings.
- Do you deliver in an area with a high amount of address changes, such as a college town or vacation area?
- Do you withdraw letters and flats in the morning while casing your mail? Do you retrieve your parcels prior to leaving for the street?
- Do you complete a PS Form 3996, Carrier-Auxiliary Control when you need overtime or auxiliary assistance? Do you complete a PS Form 1571, Undelivered Mail Report, when you curtail mail in the morning or if you bring mail back in the afternoon?

During the inspection

As the letter carrier servicing your route during the count and inspection process, you have a vital role to play in determining the outcome of any adjustments. While the Postal Service conducts the route inspection and adjustment process unilaterally, you can ensure that the data being used to adjust your route is accurate. Having accurate data will assist your shop steward in being successful if a grievance is filed over any aspect of the process.

“Once you are notified that your route will be inspected, whether through a special or unit-wide inspection, you should begin preparing for the process.”

One of the most important pieces of information gathered during the count is contained in the PS Form 1838, Carrier's Count of Mail – Letter Carrier Routes (Mngt. Summary). This form shows the mail volumes for the route during the week of inspection as well as the amount of time spent by the carrier performing other office duties.

These other duties include time spent conducting the vehicle inspection, retrieving accountable items, withdrawing mail from distribution cases, personal needs time (five minutes per route) and any other duties that do not include casing and pulling mail. For a detailed explanation of each office duty and the minimum time credited to the route, see Section 222.214.b of *Handbook M-39* and the *NALC Route Inspection Pocket Handbook*.

The data on the PS Form 1838 is taken directly from the
(continued on next page)

Route inspection process (continued)

PS Form 1838-C, Carrier's Count of Mail–Letter Carrier Routes Worksheet. This is a handwritten form completed for each route during the six days of the count and inspection. It is very important that the information on this form be accurate, and the best way to ensure that everything is recorded is for you to fill out the form. Do not agree to allow management to fill out this form.

The carrier servicing the route during the inspection completes the PS Form 1838-C each day, except for the day of inspection, which is the day an examiner will accompany the carrier on the street. Even if you are not servicing your regular route or if you do not have a regular route, you still should complete this form. A detailed explanation of the proper way to complete the PS Form 1838-C is found in Chapter 9 of *Handbook M-41* and the *NALC Route Inspection Pocket Handbook*.

Prior to the week of inspection, management is required to conduct a dry-run training with each carrier participating in the process. This training must be given within 21 days of the first day of the inspection. During this training, you will complete a sample PS Form 1838-C, which management must review for accuracy and discuss any errors. If necessary, a second practice form may be completed. This training is your opportunity to learn the proper process for filling out the form so you can ensure it is filled out correctly and the information is accurate. If management fails to conduct this training or does not answer any questions you have, record this in your notes for the shop steward.

“While you do not have any control over the information management enters on the form, you can still take steps to ensure that the time recorded is accurate.”

A second important piece of information the Postal Service will use during the inspection process is the PS Form 3999, Inspection of Letter Carrier Route. This form is completed on the day, or days if more than one, of inspection and records the street time for your route, beginning when you move to street time in the morning and ending when you move to office time in the afternoon. This form is completed by the inspector and is in either handwritten or electronic format.

While you do not have any control over the information management enters on the form, you can still take steps to ensure that the time recorded is accurate. Just as you did before the inspection, you should take notes of anything

out of the ordinary that occurs during the inspection. Management may attempt to deduct time from your street time, and good notes will help your shop steward when grieving these deductions. Some examples include the following:

- Did the examiner say that you were on management time? You should have some management time while the examiner explains the process and no other work should be performed while on management time.
- Did you have to backtrack to deliver a mis-sequenced piece of mail? Is this something you have been instructed to do by your supervisor? Management will attempt to deduct the time you spent going back to make the delivery.
- Did you have to deviate from your line of travel? What was the reason and is this something you do on a regular basis?
- Did you spend any time speaking with a customer on the route? Did the discussion pertain to Postal Service business (e.g. Customer Connect, delivery issues, etc.)?
- Did you take any comfort stops? This does not include any rest breaks taken on street time.
- Did the examiner instruct you to deliver your route contrary to the way you normally deliver? Did he or she try to speed you up or tell you to work in an unsafe manner in order to get the route finished in less time? Did he or she attempt to cut your lunch or rest break short?

Route evaluations and adjustments

Management is required to consult with you during the evaluation and adjustment stages of the process. They must provide information showing what data was used to evaluate your route times and again once they have adjusted your route. A detailed explanation of these consultations is found in the *NALC Route Inspection Pocket Handbook*. You should keep notes of these meetings, including the people present and what was said by each person.

If your route is scheduled for a route count and inspection, you should begin preparing for the process immediately by obtaining a copy of the *NALC Route Inspection Pocket Handbook*. More information regarding the process is available on NALC's website at nalc.org/routeadjustments. You may also want to read past Contract Talk articles, which can be read at nalc.org/workplace-issues/resources/nalc-publications. If you have further questions, please contact your shop steward, branch officer, or NBA.

OWCP, dog bites and multiple injuries



Assistant to the President
for Workers' Compensation
Kevin Card

You may have heard of the lyrics of an old spiritual song called Dem Bones: “Toe bone connected to the foot bone, Foot bone connected to the heel bone, Heel bone connected to the ankle bone, Ankle bone connected to the shin bone, Shin bone connected to the knee bone, Knee bone connected to the thigh bone...” One of my children’s teachers once used the song to teach the class about human anatomy. It’s a catchy tune.

As a letter carrier, I would often think about that song when I got up in the morning and it seemed like every one of my bones ached. Who would have thought letter carrying could be such a physically demanding occupation? Our job requires us to be in constant motion, be it reaching, pulling, walking or carrying. I think that the only time letter carriers are not moving is when they are on their break, having lunch, off work or retired. However, I know a lot of retired letter carriers who are still in constant motion.

The constant motion of the letter carrier is not lost on the canine population that follows our every movement. That’s part of the reason why letter carriers file more claims for dog bites than for any other injury. Those of you who have suffered a dog bite know that the sudden, startling event is rarely limited to just the puncture wounds. Fending off a dog attack often includes slips, odd twists and falls that injure a myriad of connected body parts.

In cases of such traumatic injuries, the dog bite often dominates your attention, sometimes masking other injuries. Days later, as your wounds heal, other body parts may begin to let you know that you suffered more than one injury.

If you are lucky, a doctor performed a thorough physical examination and all of your injuries are listed in an initial report. Unfortunately, many injured workers struggle just to find a doctor and often are seen by nurse practitioners (NPs) or physician’s assistants (PAs) in one of the urgent care centers that now are common. There are very capable and thorough NPs and PAs in urgent care clinics and doctor’s offices. However, the Federal Employees’ Compensation Act (FECA) requires that medical reports be signed or co-signed by a doctor.

A good rule of thumb for injured workers who were not examined by a doctor in an urgent clinic is to get an appointment with a doctor as soon as possible and get any medical reports co-signed by a doctor. Many claims have been denied due to the lack of a doctor’s signature on an otherwise-thorough medical report.

Additionally, when all of the injuries suffered are not in an initial medical report, an injured worker needs to follow up with his or her doctor as soon as possible so that all injuries can be diagnosed, treated and included in a claim for compensation.

The diagnoses in an initial medical report often guide the claims’ development. Claims examiners who process claims for the Office of Workers’ Compensation (OWCP) look through initial medical reports searching for diagnoses with the appropriate codes; ensuring that all injuries suffered in a traumatic claim are diagnosed as soon as possible can eliminate delays in gaining acceptance of the claim. Confusing medical evidence will need to be explained.

If a claims examiner has questions regarding an element of a claim, he or she will mail a development letter to the injured worker requesting more precise medical documentation, often accompanied by questions to be answered by the injured worker. Development letters give the injured worker 30 days to provide the new medical report and answer any questions posed. Injured workers need to be mindful of the burden of proof they bear in an injury claim and respond to the development letter immediately.

“When all of the injuries are not included in an initial medical report, the injured worker needs to follow up with their doctor...so that all injuries can be diagnosed, treated and included in a claim for compensation.”

When OWCP accepts a claim, the injured worker will receive a notice of acceptance, listing the diagnosed conditions and appropriate ICD-10 codes. This notification follows the accepted conditions on every acceptance letter:

If the current accepted condition(s) need to be revised or additional complications related to the current accepted condition(s) need to be added, your physician should explain in writing, with medical rationale, the relationship between any additional condition and the work injury or the current accepted condition(s) noted above.

Injured workers should carefully read the accepted conditions and consult with their doctor as soon as possible to submit medical reports that supplement or correct the accepted conditions. Subsequent conditions claimed need to be supported by a medical rationale that includes diagnoses and the objective medical evidence (physical exams, x-rays, MRI) used to make the diagnosis.

Doctors often find compliance with OWCP regulations tedious and can balk at providing new medical rationales, thinking that the reports previously submitted prove the diagnosed conditions. Like it or not, the law has been interpreted narrowly so that reference to and diagnosis of a medical condition is not enough. There must be an explanation of the connection between the work event and the diagnosed condition.

Alas, it’s not as simple as Dem Bones.

Back to the future, Part 2



Director of Education
Jamie Lumm

I don't have a time-traveling DeLorean, but I do want to return to where we left off in my previous article about the 1984-87 National Agreement, especially the big changes that were contained in it and how they affect carriers today. In January, I wrote about the modifications to the letter carrier pay scale with the addition of two lower steps; this month, I will cover the major changes to Article 8 and the assignment of overtime work.

Overtime was rampant in the years leading up to the 1984 agreement. Carrier routes were growing rapidly in volume and delivery points and what few route inspections and adjustments were done could not keep up, with overtime in many offices running well over 20 percent week after week. That meant that 20 percent of the hours used to deliver the mail during the week were overtime. (As a point of reference, postal managers are told that anything surpassing 4 percent is too high.)

Making matters worse, management was slow to hire more carriers, as it was cheaper to pay a current carrier time and a half than to pay the additional benefit costs (insurance, leave, pension, etc.) that came with a new hire. On top of that, there was contract language that specifically said it wasn't necessary to use an ODL carrier or a PTF to provide auxiliary assistance to non-ODL carriers when they couldn't complete their routes in eight hours (Article 8.5.C.2.D). It was not uncommon for management to send PTFs home after working only five or six hours, while requiring non-ODL carriers to work 10 hours or more. Because of this, reducing mandatory overtime was an important goal for NALC in the 1984 negotiations.

While the 1984 interest arbitration of the contract chiefly surrounded wages, NALC was able to reach agreement with the Postal Service on many changes to Article 8 that were incorporated into the final award issued by Arbitrator Kerr. This included a memorandum that stated: "Recognizing that excessive use of overtime is inconsistent with the best interests of employees and the Postal Service, it is the intent of the parties in adopting changes to Article 8 to limit overtime, to avoid excessive mandatory overtime, and to protect the interests of employees who do not wish to work overtime, while recognizing that bona fide operational requirements do exist that necessitate the use of overtime from time to time."

This memo also contained the following language that became known as the letter carrier paragraph:

In the letter carrier craft where management determines that overtime or auxiliary assistance is needed on an employee's route on one of the employee's regularly scheduled days and

the employee is not on the overtime desired list, the employer shall seek to utilize auxiliary assistance, when available, rather than requiring the employee to work mandatory overtime.

This was revolutionary for non-ODL carriers, since it meant that management had to provide help to non-ODL carriers if it was available. But more about that later.

The "changes to Article 8" referred to in the memo were the addition to Article 8, Section 4 of paragraphs C, D and E that created penalty overtime "to be paid at the rate of two times the base hourly straight time." For PTFs, the rate kicked in after 10 hours in a day or 56 hours in a week. For regulars, the penalty overtime triggers were listed in new Article 8.5.F as "overtime on more than four of the employee's five scheduled days in a service week or work over ten hours on a regularly scheduled day, over 8 hours on a non-scheduled day, or over 6 days in a service week." The intent was to take away the incentive to make carriers work huge amounts of overtime, rather than hiring more employees, by providing penalties when they did.

Additionally, the agreement included a new paragraph G to Article 8, Section 5 that stated "fulltime employees not on the overtime desired list may be required to work overtime only if all available carriers on the overtime desired list have worked up to 12 hours in a day or 60 hours in a service week."

All of these changes to Article 8 were made effective as of Jan. 19, 1985, and for those of us who were carrying mail back then, they were of major import. We now had contract language we could use to force management to seek auxiliary assistance and utilize the ODL up to 12 hours in a day and 60 hours in a week before forcing a non-ODL carrier to work overtime.

But as often occurs, once the award was issued, the parties did not see eye-to-eye on the meaning of some of the new language. For many, a strict reading of Article 8.5.G alongside the letter carrier paragraph gave the impression that non-ODL carriers could not be required to work any overtime, even on their own route, unless the ODL and any other available auxiliary assistance, was worked 12 hours in a day or 60 hours in a week. Consequently, over the next two years, many grievances were filed, and the Post Office paid out a lot of monetary remedies based on that reading. In some offices, to avoid grievances on this subject, management would simply work all the ODL carriers 12 hours, even if they just stood around, in case a non-ODL worked any overtime. On the flip side, not all carriers were happy with the sudden reduction in overtime. Many didn't mind working overtime if it was on their own routes; they just didn't want to be sent all over the place. There were other disputes over the new contract that the parties could not resolve, so they went back to national arbitration to resolve them. More on that in the next issue.

Looking forward to a better future



Christina Vela Davidson



The Muscular Dystrophy Association (MDA) has been NALC's only national charity since 1952. The good news: many of the persons diagnosed with muscular dystrophy are living longer lives that include more opportunities to live independently as young adults. Children who would have had little or no hope to grow up and go to college or get a job now have those opportunities, in no small part due to the work our branches have done. What a testament to your help!

While longer life spans for children with muscular dystrophy is a benefit achieved through MDA-sponsored research, that blessing brings its own new set of issues. How does a young person in his or her late teens and early twenties map out the future? Well, the answer is found in the recent efforts by MDA and other organizations to help young people address those difficult questions.

MDA and NALC are committed to supporting young adults with muscular dystrophy with resources, programming and community connections as they move through high school, higher education, employment and independent living. MDA's peer-led initiatives create solutions for them to exceed limits and unleash their fullest potential.

Questions like career choices, family decisions, education and ways to develop an independent lifestyle have to be addressed. As always, MDA is at the forefront of providing those answers and more. You can see some of those results at mda.org/young-adults/resources.

There are many components to living independently

as a young adult, including accessible housing and financial education. Local nonprofit branches called Centers for Independent Living can connect them to many services to support these young adults. For individuals with neuromuscular conditions, finding, managing and paying for personal care can be one of the greatest challenges to successfully living on your own, even while dealing with disabilities.

So what does all this mean to letter carriers? As we move through this new year, please join me in remembering those who are less fortunate. Remember that a gift of any size can help transform lives through better care and more chances at a cure. You can be assured that your efforts are not only making life better for those with muscular dystrophy, but also are giving kids hope for a future in the world that we all take for granted. Imagine the teen who now sees that he or she might be able to get a job, have a family or go to college. Now that is a legacy for NALC to be proud of.

I hope that you are excited about the difference you can make in the lives of families represented by MDA. Remember, you never know when it might be you. Brothers and sisters, we should continue to work hard and raise funds to help at a collective level to implement changes that will create a more equal world.

Totals for 2019 coming soon—It is our intention to publish a final listing of all branch contributions for 2019 in the April issue of *The Postal Record*. If you haven't sent in your totals, please do that immediately so we can get your amount published. Don't let your branch be left out.

Finally, part of NALC's community service is driven by veterans. If you are a veteran, don't forget to sign up for the Veterans Group by filling out and mailing in the card below.

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 your military service and membership in NALC.

If you are interested in joining the group, complete the sign-up card at right and mail it to the address included. A fillable version is also available at nalc.org/veterans.



You continue to serve your country—

THANK YOU!

NALC Veterans Group

Complete this form and mail it to:
NALC Veterans Group, c/o NALC,
100 Indiana Ave., N.W., Washington, DC 20001-2144

NAME: _____

ADDRESS: _____

CITY, STATE, ZIP: _____

NALC BRANCH NUMBER: _____ BRANCH OF SERVICE: _____

I BELONG TO THE FOLLOWING VETERAN GROUP(S):

AMERICAN LEGION DISABLED AMERICAN VETERANS VETERANS OF FOREIGN WARS

OTHER: _____

Free
to join

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

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

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

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

Years of Service ²	CC Grade 1 / High-3 Average ¹ : \$63,395			CC Grade 2 / High-3 Average ¹ : \$ 64,707		
	Basic Annuity	Max. Survivor Deduction ³	Max. Survivor Reduced Annuity ⁴	Basic Annuity	Max. Survivor Deduction ³	Max. Survivor Reduced Annuity ⁴
20	\$1,915	\$169	\$1,746	\$1,955	\$173	\$1,782
21	2,021	180	1,841	2,063	184	1,879
22	2,126	190	1,936	2,170	195	1,976
23	2,232	201	2,031	2,278	205	2,073
24	2,338	211	2,126	2,386	216	2,170
25	2,443	222	2,222	2,494	227	2,267
26	2,549	232	2,317	2,602	238	2,364
27	2,655	243	2,412	2,710	248	2,461
28	2,760	254	2,507	2,817	259	2,558
29	2,866	264	2,602	2,925	270	2,655
30	2,972	275	2,697	3,033	281	2,752
31	3,077	285	2,792	3,141	292	2,849
32	3,183	296	2,887	3,249	302	2,946
33	3,289	306	2,982	3,357	313	3,044
34	3,394	317	3,077	3,465	324	3,141
35	3,500	327	3,172	3,572	335	3,238
36	3,606	338	3,268	3,680	346	3,335
37	3,711	349	3,363	3,788	356	3,432
38	3,817	359	3,458	3,896	367	3,529
39	3,923	370	3,553	4,004	378	3,626
40	4,028	380	3,648	4,112	389	3,723
41	4,134	391	3,743	4,219	399	3,820
41+11 months & over ⁵	4,226	400	3,826	4,314	409	3,905

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

2. Years of service includes any unused sick leave.

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

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

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

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

Clip and save - may not be printed every month. Always available at nalc.org.

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

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

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

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

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

Years of Service ²	CC Grade 1 / High-3 Average ¹ : \$63,395			CC Grade 2 / High-3 Average ¹ : \$64,707		
	Basic Annuity	Max. Survivor Deduction ³	Max. Survivor Reduced Annuity ⁴	Basic Annuity	Max. Survivor Deduction ³	Max. Survivor Reduced Annuity ⁴
20	\$1,057	\$106	\$951	\$1,078	\$108	\$971
21	1,109	111	998	1,132	113	1,019
22	1,162	116	1,046	1,186	119	1,068
23	1,215	122	1,094	1,240	124	1,116
24	1,268	127	1,141	1,294	129	1,165
25	1,321	132	1,189	1,348	135	1,213
26	1,374	137	1,236	1,402	140	1,262
27	1,426	143	1,284	1,456	146	1,310
28	1,479	148	1,331	1,510	151	1,359
29	1,532	153	1,379	1,564	156	1,407
30	1,585	158	1,426	1,618	162	1,456
31	1,638	164	1,474	1,672	167	1,504
32	1,691	169	1,521	1,726	173	1,553
33	1,743	174	1,569	1,779	178	1,602
34	1,796	180	1,617	1,833	183	1,650
35	1,849	185	1,664	1,887	189	1,699
36	1,902	190	1,712	1,941	194	1,747
37	1,955	195	1,759	1,995	200	1,796
38	2,008	201	1,807	2,049	205	1,844
39	2,060	206	1,854	2,103	210	1,893
40	2,113	211	1,902	2,157	216	1,941
Each additional year ⁵	52.83	5.28	47.55	53.92	5.39	48.53

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

2. Years of service includes any unused sick leave.

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

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

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

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

State Summaries

Arizona

The state of Arizona's answer to the USPS Fairness Act (H.R. 2382) is HCM 2005, a concurrent memorial urging Congress to ensure that the United States Postal Service remains independent and to reform retiree health benefit requirements. HCM 2005 is sponsored by Richard Andrade (AZ-LD29), a Democrat but just as H.R. 2382 is a bipartisan bill, so is HCM 2005, with cosponsors Biasiucci (R-LD5), Blanc (D-LD26), Butler (D-LD28), Campbell (R-LD1), Cano (D-LD3), Chavez (D-LD29), Cobb (R-LD5), DeGrazia (D-LD10), Dunn (R-LD13), Engel (D-LD10), Fernandez (D-LD4), Galbaldon (D-LD2), Jermaine (D-LD18), Lawrence (R-LD23), Peten (D-LD4), Powers Hannley (D-LD9), Rodriguez (D-LD27), Salman (D-LD26), Teller (D-LD7), Teran (D-LD30) and Toma (R-LD22): thank you, co-sponsors!

An historic Wednesday on Feb. 5 in the Arizona House of Representatives, Hearing Room 4, House Federal Relations Committee consisting of Chairman Mark Finchem (R-LD11), VC Gail Griffin (R-LD14), Shawna Bolick (R-LD20), Kelly Townsend (R-LD16), Reginald Bolding (D-LD27), Alma Hernandez (D-LD3), and Robert Meza (D-LD30). In attendance and speaking in behalf of HCM 2005 was Rep. Richard Andrade (AZ-LD29), and letter carriers Jack Van Dyke (AZ-CD8, LCCL-Br. 576), Carlos Villalobos (president, Br. 1902), Tom Paul (AZ-CD5 LCCL-Br. 1902), Cynthia Staley (AZ-CD6 LCCL-vice president, Br. 576), Terry Valdez (AZ-CD3 LCCL-Br. 576) and Jeff Clark (president, ASALC).

The letter carriers came to speak and so they did, to save letter carrier careers, retirement, and USPS! Rising up from committee was Rep. Bolding (D/LD27), speaking up on behalf of the working women and men who deliver more than mail, along with Chairman Finchem (R/LD11), explaining that his Yes vote was a vote for America, and with the sound of Chairman Finchem's gavel, HCM 2005 passed!

300 words are not enough to say thank you to Congressman Tom O'Halleran, AZ/CD1, for his compassionate speech on the passing of letter carrier Latanya "Jody" Wilson, my better half and love.

Dominus Vobiscum—

Jeff Clark

California

Well, the House of Representatives finally voted on H.R. 2382, the USPS Fairness Act. And our friends from both parties passed it, specifically 222 Democrats and 87 Republicans. Even conservative stalwarts like Liz Cheney, Doug Collins, Steve King and my own congressman Devin Nunes voted to rid USPS of the unfair obligation to pre-pay future retiree health benefits as much as 90 years in advance. If your congressman voted yes, please call or write to express gratitude. Remember, that obligation is bankrupting our employer.

Another group of people to thank are our letter carrier congressional liaisons (LCCL). Many of the aforementioned representatives were easy sells, but some were not, and I speak from personal experience. Our LCCLs oftentimes visit or lobby their representatives without compensation and we don't appreciate their efforts as

often as we should. I hope by now that all of you recognize the wisdom of our national leadership in appointing a letter carrier in each congressional district to educate, lobby, arm-twist (in a gentle way of course) and encourage our elected representatives to do the right thing for our nation's men and women who deliver the mail and for our employer.

S 2965, introduced by Senators Steve Daines (R-MT) and Brian Schatz (D-HI) is the Senate version of the same bill. This is all-hands-on-deck, folks. We will probably need a veto-proof majority as we achieved in the House, so all of you need to contact both senators and get them to co-sponsor this bill. If you served in the armed forces, please mention that when you call or write. We cannot leave our future to chance.

Don't think that just because USPS employs over 600,000 that we are too big to fail. Remember how many were willing to see the auto industry fail.

Eric Ellis

Florida

NALC annual food drive: The history of FSALC would not be complete without mentioning the Annual Letter Carriers' Food Drive. In recent years, the state of Florida has been the nation's leader in total food collected. Much of the state's success is due to the efforts of State President Al Friedman, who has secured several major sponsors who provide printed bags and postcard mailings. The success of those efforts has resulted in several branches being number one in their categories and the state of Florida collecting more than any other state during the past few years. In both 2018 and 2019, Florida collected more than 9 million lbs. of food. It seems that other states are now beginning to use printed bags which is making competition for the FSALC much tougher, and that's a good thing.

Notes of Interest: (1) Two of Region 9's NBAS, Mattie Rose and Judy Willoughby (also former NALC assistant secretary-treasurer), and National President Fred Rolando all served as FSALC's director of education. (2) At our 73rd Biennial Convention in 2015; a resolution was passed honoring former Pres. John Giordano with the title of "President Emeritus" for his 28 years of service as president. (3) The 2017 state convention created a first in FSALC history. The District 4 Chairperson election ended in a tie vote with each candidate receiving 139 votes. By agreement of the two candidates, the election was decided by the toss of a coin.

O.D. Elliott

Kentucky

As this article is being composed, preparations are well underway for our KYSALC district meeting in Lexington, Feb. 22-23. Central KY Bluegrass Branch 361 was the host. Future info will be shared for Kentucky in next *Postal Record*. Thanks to all who contacted our US reps to co-sponsor and vote yes for H.R. 2382, to essentially repeal the awful prefunding mandate on USPS. John Yarmuth, KY-3, and Hal Rogers, KY-5, both voted yes for this NALC-favorable legislation. We lobbied the other four U.S. reps with our LCCLs

and other NALC activists. We reminded them that USPS is the largest nonmilitary employer of veterans, and that the Postal Service is valuable to all U.S. residents and those around the world. Now it is on to the U.S. Senate for S. 2965, the companion to 2382. Phone calls, e-mails, visiting the US reps' district offices are the best ways to communicate. Thanks to who called or received calls to give to LCPF, our "PAC" for NALC issues, recently at Br. 361 in Lexington with Anna Mudd, LPO. Retirees can now give securely with only giving their name and amount through NALC. Call me at 859-273-3791 and we can get you to contribute to this fund that supports candidates who support issues from President Rolando and NALC.

Bob McNulty

New Jersey

Congratulations to all of the Letter Carrier Political Fund contributors listed in the February Issue of *The Postal Record*. New Jersey has 17.78 percent of our members contributing to the LCPF. The strength of the NALC legislative efforts in New Jersey, fueled by the LCPF, were made evident by the number of New Jersey representatives voting in favor of H.R. 2382 and H.R. 2474.

February was a momentous month for our organization in the House of Representatives. The House passed two major bills affecting the Postal Service. H.R. 2382, the USPS Fairness Act, which would repeal the retiree health insurance prefunding mandate, was passed by the House on Feb. 5. The next step for New Jersey members will be to educate our senators on S. 2965, the sister bill in the Senate.

H.R. 2474 was sent to the House floor for a vote the next day, and passed. H.R. 2474, named as the Pro-Act, protects the right of unions to collectively bargain for wages, benefits, and working conditions. The Senate companion bill S. 1306 will need to be passed and presented to the president for approval.

The New Jersey congressional representatives in the House all voted in favor of both of the above referenced bills. This is especially important, and demonstrates the dedication of letter carriers across the Garden State. We continue to inform and educate our representatives. Thank you for making the phone call to your representative when alerted through the NALC App! Our fight is far from over. When the New Jersey letter carrier congressional liaisons visit Washington in March, they will again emphasize to each representative the importance of bipartisan support of postal reform.

Christine A. Strasser

Tennessee

H.R. 2382 passed through the House of Representatives on a 309-106 vote. In Tennessee, we had four co-sponsors: Burchett, Fleishmann, Cooper and Cohen. Roe voted for the bill on the floor. Now it is time to get to work on the Senate bill, S. 2965. Carriers need to contact their Senator and ask them to support this bill. Currently there is one sponsor and two co-sponsors. Alexander's D.C. number is 202-224-4944 and Blackburn's is 202-224-3344.

Laurie McLemore



Veterans' events for national convention

Since the November issue of *The Postal Record*, we have signed up more than 850 new members. With about 13,000 members total, our Veterans Group could do wonders in the community alongside local veteran programs. “Veterans helping veterans is something I truly believe in,” Assistant to the President for Community Services Christina Vela Davidson said.

Veterans and members of branches can get together and come up with a project to help local homeless veterans. They can clean gravesites or go visit veterans in assisted living homes who have no family. Other possibilities: volunteer at a VA hospital or form their own local Veterans Group to talk about their service days.

Our Veterans Group will be hosting a booth all week long at the 2020 National Convention. The veterans' project will be rededicating a memorial and collecting toiletries from the attending members to donate to the U.S. VETS for the homeless veterans' centers. We are “Veterans Helping Veterans.” Thank you for your service today, tomorrow and forever!

Tuesday, Aug. 18—We will fill 1,500 homeless care kit bags for displaced Honolulu veterans.

The U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs has collected data showing a substantial decrease in homelessness among veterans. While this reduction is encouraging, the needs of veterans struggling with homelessness, unemployment and other barriers to reintegration still exist. Of the veterans living in the U.S. today, 63,000 are chronically homeless. Veterans make up a disproportionate amount of the homeless population. This is why we help.

Hawaii has an estimated homeless population of 6,530 people, of which more than 500 are veterans. Some of the major Hawaiian charities that assist veterans are listed below:

- U.S. VETS is the nation's largest nonprofit provider of comprehensive services to homeless and at-risk veterans. U.S. VETS has helped veterans and their families transition by providing housing, counseling, career development and comprehensive support.
- Barber's Point at Kalaeloa serves nearly 1,000 homeless and at-risk veterans throughout the state of Hawaii each year. Barber's Point provides affordable, long-term, supportive housing and is home to the U.S. VETS's signature work re-entry program,

Veterans in Progress.

- Waianae Civic Center is the only U.S. VETS location that provides services to veterans, civilians and their families. WCC began serving the Hawaii homeless population in March 2007 and currently serves 300 men, women and children each day.
- Catholic Charities Hawaii is designed to assist veterans in search of temporary or permanent housing, our Supportive Services for Veteran Families (SSVF) program is here to help. The program helps homeless veterans or those at risk of homelessness and their families achieve housing stability by providing them with resources for transitional or long-term housing.

Wednesday, Aug. 19—Second, we will be rededicating the war memorial that honors Hawaiians who died in World War II. This will also be during the evening workshops. Transportation will be provided for any veterans who would like to be present at the rededication (the memorial is a little over a mile from the convention center).

This memorial was first dedicated on Dec. 7, 1944. It has a concrete base and a wooden shaft about 18 feet high. The shaft is decorated near the top with four carvings out of monkey pod wood. Facing the mountains is a huge American eagle clutching 13 arrows and an olive branch. The opposite side, looking toward the ocean, has a carving of the Hawaiian coat-of-arms. The side toward Waikiki has a carving of the olive branch of peace. The remaining side has a carving of the shield of the United States. Olive branches decorate both ends of the memorial's front base, and the 880 names are carved into both sides of the monument (see photo below).

Ron Han, Director, State Office of Veterans Services, stated, “This structure was intended as a temporary memorial that has

withstood the test of time and the elements for over 70 years. The State Office of Veterans Services in Hawaii is very appreciative to the NALC for helping to sponsor the rededication of the WWII Memorial on the corner of Punchbowl St. and King St.” Han continued, “When the NALC has their National Convention in Hawaii this August, the memorial will be rededicated honoring the distinguished service of military members of the “Greatest Generation” along with their families. We're are very grateful to NALC for their generosity and for supporting this special project!”



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:

70-year pins

Marvin B. Cox	Garden Grove, CA	Br. 1100
Robert L. McDowell	Garden Grove, CA	Br. 1100
Donald T. Rentch	Garden Grove, CA	Br. 1100
Hollis H. Stone	Greeley, CO	Br. 324
Alva L. Lumley	Alton, IL	Br. 309
Joseph F. Quade	Alton, IL	Br. 309
Joseph F. Collins	Boston, MA	Br. 34
Thomas W. Hogan	Boston, MA	Br. 34
Edward J. McCauley	Boston, MA	Br. 34
Guy J. Ruggieri	Boston, MA	Br. 34
Victor J. Staffier	Boston, MA	Br. 34
Dante W. Tramonte	Boston, MA	Br. 34
Edward C. Williams	Boston, MA	Br. 34
Nick C. Plasha	Detroit, MI	Br. 1
Robert J. Hahn	Jackson, MI	Br. 232
Daniel J. Anthony	Buffalo-Western NY	Br. 3
Henry B. Block	Buffalo-Western NY	Br. 3
Americ V. Picardi	Fresh Meadow, NY	Br. 294
Peter F. Quagliata	Fresh Meadow, NY	Br. 294
Luis R. Montero	Utica, NY	Br. 375
Charles P. Kaiser	Valley Stream, NY	Br. 2189
W. H. Shouse	Winston Salem, NC	Br. 461
Robert J. Wilson	Columbus, OH	Br. 78
John J. Long	Allentown, PA	Br. 274
Martin E. Parker	Austin, TX	Br. 181
Donald A. Hildeman	Appleton, WI	Br. 822
Warren Pierner	Green Bay, WI	Br. 619
Mark J. Krumdick	Milwaukee, WI	Br. 2

65-year pins

Philip Damore	Mesa, AZ	Br. 1902
Archie D. Adams	Garden Grove, CA	Br. 1100
Burton E. Gray	Garden Grove, CA	Br. 1100
Charles R. Jones	Garden Grove, CA	Br. 1100
Calvin W. Mickelson	Garden Grove, CA	Br. 1100
Charles L. Green	San Diego, CA	Br. 70
Dale D. Peters	Centennial, CO	Br. 5996
Alva L. Lumley	Alton, IL	Br. 309
Joseph F. Quade	Alton, IL	Br. 309
Richard E. Johnson	Des Plaines, IL	Br. 2076
Vern L. Thompson	Mishawaka, IN	Br. 820
James W. Cobette Jr.	New Orleans, LA	Br. 124
William J. Lowry	Boston, MA	Br. 34
Peter V. Mascaro	Boston, MA	Br. 34
Stanley C. Ramoska	Boston, MA	Br. 34
Ralph L. Rossetti	Boston, MA	Br. 34
Richard E. Christensen	Omaha, NE	Br. 5
Walter L. Staley Jr.	Omaha, NE	Br. 5
Anthony J. Irene	Flushing, NY	Br. 294
Americ V. Picardi	Flushing, NY	Br. 294
Peter F. Quagliata	Flushing, NY	Br. 294
Eugene Solar	Flushing, NY	Br. 294
Michael J. Eannone	Jamaica, NY	Br. 562
Theodore J. Kosmalski	Jamaica, NY	Br. 562

Anthony S. Parrotta	Jamaica, NY	Br. 562
Thomas H. Armstrong	Columbus, OH	Br. 78
Herbert H. Henderson	Columbus, OH	Br. 78
Chester J. Rickard	Columbus, OH	Br. 78
Otto F. Boeckel	Portland, OR	Br. 82
Ronald R. Hendricks	Portland, OR	Br. 82
Ivan C. Linton	Portland, OR	Br. 82
William E. Yezzi	Erie, PA	Br. 284
George A. Box	Scranton, PA	Br. 17
Arden J. Schwartz	Wausau, WI	Br. 215

60-year pins

Gene W. Cole	Mesa, AZ	Br. 1902
Thomas G. Cook	Mesa, AZ	Br. 1902
Joseph C. Fellhauer	Mesa, AZ	Br. 1902
Joe M. Lopez	Mesa, AZ	Br. 1902
Francis L. Ludington	Mesa, AZ	Br. 1902
Maxwell A. Morton	Mesa, AZ	Br. 1902
William N. Mrozek	Mesa, AZ	Br. 1902
Richard H. Avakian	Garden Grove, CA	Br. 1100
Leonard T. Biscailuz	Garden Grove, CA	Br. 1100
Jordan Brown	Garden Grove, CA	Br. 1100
Harvey L. Coley	Garden Grove, CA	Br. 1100
Gordon G. Henshall	Garden Grove, CA	Br. 1100
James H. McLennan	Garden Grove, CA	Br. 1100
John T. Murphy	Garden Grove, CA	Br. 1100
William G. O'Neill	Garden Grove, CA	Br. 1100
Stephen E. Palyo	Garden Grove, CA	Br. 1100
Duane R. Shafer	Garden Grove, CA	Br. 1100
Calvin H. Vanderark	Garden Grove, CA	Br. 1100
Carl T. Wright	Garden Grove, CA	Br. 1100
Ralph A. Alessandra	San Diego, CA	Br. 70
Eugene W. Robb	Greeley, CO	Br. 324
Charles L. Wyatt	Alton, IL	Br. 309
Clifford L. Moellenkamp	Des Plaines, IL	Br. 2076
James C. Sauer	Des Plaines, IL	Br. 2076
Jeanette K. Wrzos	Des Plaines, IL	Br. 2076
James H. Rauch	Murphysboro, IL	Br. 1197
Theodore F. Ginther	Peoria, IL	Br. 31
Verle W. Safford Jr.	Peoria, IL	Br. 31
James F. Szymbersky	Peoria, IL	Br. 31
James W. Cobette Jr.	New Orleans, LA	Br. 124
Donald A. Shepley	Hampden, ME	Br. 391
Richard J. Boudreau	Boston, MA	Br. 34
Pasquale R. Dicesare	Boston, MA	Br. 34
John J. Jordan	Boston, MA	Br. 34
Vincent Maglio II	Boston, MA	Br. 34
Paul J. Tivnan	Boston, MA	Br. 34
Theodore J. Markiewicz	Jackson, MI	Br. 232
Bernard J. Thieman	Mankato, MN	Br. 90
Lyle C. Andrew	Omaha, NE	Br. 5
Donald S. Duros	Omaha, NE	Br. 5
Roy A. Holmgren	Omaha, NE	Br. 5
Loy E. Koehler	Omaha, NE	Br. 5
Thomas L. Theiler	Omaha, NE	Br. 5
Ronnie D. Vancleve	Omaha, NE	Br. 5

Rudolph E. Vasko	Omaha, NE	Br. 5
John Ratynski	Bergen County Mgd.	Br. 425
Alan B. Stalker	New Jersey Mgd.	Br. 38
Warren N. Reid	Pennsville, NJ	Br. 908
Donald L. Carlson	Buffalo-Western NY	Br. 3
James C. Gaglione	Buffalo-Western NY	Br. 3
Edward E. Getz	Buffalo-Western NY	Br. 3
James F. Hayes	Buffalo-Western NY	Br. 3
Jacob D. Kurczewski	Buffalo-Western NY	Br. 3
Russell N. Millace	Buffalo-Western NY	Br. 3
Bernard A. Pollutro	Buffalo-Western NY	Br. 3
Bernard H. Schuller	Buffalo-Western NY	Br. 3
Richard J. Burke	Flushing, NY	Br. 294
Vito Fodera	Flushing, NY	Br. 294
Anthony J. Irene	Flushing, NY	Br. 294
P. E. Kane	Flushing, NY	Br. 294
Carmine Paolini	Flushing, NY	Br. 294
Joseph F. Quinn	Flushing, NY	Br. 294
Eugene Solar	Flushing, NY	Br. 294
Theodore J. Kosmalski	Jamaica, NY	Br. 562
Anthony S. Parrotta	Jamaica, NY	Br. 562
Orlando J. Scarinzi	Jamaica, NY	Br. 562
Anthony T. Lagrutta	Valley Stream, NY	Br. 2189
Dominick Rich	Canton, OH	Br. 238
Edwin J. Baker	Columbus, OH	Br. 78
Richard H. Burke	Columbus, OH	Br. 78
James A. Carter	Columbus, OH	Br. 78
Patrick J. Finneran	Columbus, OH	Br. 78
Robert K. Kirk	Columbus, OH	Br. 78
Raymond C. Morgan	Columbus, OH	Br. 78
Isaiah B. Ransom Jr.	Columbus, OH	Br. 78
Larry C. Harris	Wooster, OH	Br. 480
Ronald A. Carver	Portland, OR	Br. 82
Herbert R. Couperthwaite	Portland, OR	Br. 82
Gerald R. Heckaman	Portland, OR	Br. 82
Donald J. McGillivray	Portland, OR	Br. 82
Thomas A. Dierenzo	Erie, PA	Br. 284
Girard J. Pacelli	Hazleton, PA	Br. 253
John A. Soloski	Scranton, PA	Br. 17
Joe E. Davis	Spartanburg, SC	Br. 628
W. E. Davis	Spartanburg, SC	Br. 628
Louis B. Owens	Nashville, TN	Br. 4
Jerry S. Williams	Nashville, TN	Br. 4
Martin E. Parker	Austin, TX	Br. 181
Thomas G. Remington	Kenosha, WI	Br. 574
Richard L. Schnuck	Kenosha, WI	Br. 574
James R. Jaskolski	Milwaukee, WI	Br. 2
Donald A. Meinholz	Milwaukee, WI	Br. 2
Edwin H. Schultz	Milwaukee, WI	Br. 2
James J. Williams	Milwaukee, WI	Br. 2
Arden J. Schwartz	Wausau, WI	Br. 215

55-year pins and gold cards

Lyal W. Hanson	Anchorage, AK	Br. 4319
Thomas G. Cook	Mesa, AZ	Br. 1902
Anthony J. Spilotro Jr.	Mesa, AZ	Br. 1902

Honor Roll

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

John A. Yoder	Phoenix, AZ	Br. 576	Charles R. Turner	Centennial, CO	Br. 5996	Guy J. Blodgett	Buffalo-Western NY	Br. 3
Paul M. Zandee	Phoenix, AZ	Br. 576	Ronald L. Zirger	Centennial, CO	Br. 5996	Max H. Brenzel Jr.	Buffalo-Western NY	Br. 3
Darrel M. Zifka	Phoenix, AZ	Br. 576	Miguel Garcia	Miami, FL	Br. 1071	Joseph A. Desiderio	Buffalo-Western NY	Br. 3
Richard F. Carrillo	Mesa, AZ	Br. 1902	Charles B. Smith	Miami, FL	Br. 1071	Carl M. Janish Sr.	Buffalo-Western NY	Br. 3
Thomas G. Cook	Mesa, AZ	Br. 1902	Joseph A. Baloga	Orlando, FL	Br. 1091	Samuel N. Jarrett	Buffalo-Western NY	Br. 3
Daniel A. Danakas	Mesa, AZ	Br. 1902	Julius T. Hughey	Decatur, GA	Br. 73	Victor Kopack	Buffalo-Western NY	Br. 3
Robert C. Hanson	Mesa, AZ	Br. 1902	Geneva O. Shine	Macon, GA	Br. 270	Francis E. Krajewski	Buffalo-Western NY	Br. 3
Richard A. Hobson	Mesa, AZ	Br. 1902	Donald Goodwin	Alton, IL	Br. 309	Paul J. McCarthy	Buffalo-Western NY	Br. 3
Bruce J. Hrivnak	Mesa, AZ	Br. 1902	Ernest J. Piazzi Jr.	Arlington Heights, IL	Br. 2810	Paul L. Meyer	Buffalo-Western NY	Br. 3
Robert C. Mobley	Mesa, AZ	Br. 1902	Tom J. Malapanes	Des Plaines, IL	Br., 2076	David L. Militello	Buffalo-Western NY	Br. 3
Walter E. Morris III	Mesa, AZ	Br. 1902	Delbert A. Mette	Des Plaines, IL	Br., 2076	Robert C. Morawski	Buffalo-Western NY	Br. 3
Claude M. Wallace Jr.	Camarillo, CA	Br. 4114	Michael J. Vacielek	Des Plaines, IL	Br., 2076	John A. Noworyta	Buffalo-Western NY	Br. 3
Jimmie R. Anderson	Garden Grove, CA	Br. 1100	Jeanette K. Wrzos	Des Plaines, IL	Br., 2076	Zygfryd M. Pieczynski	Buffalo-Western NY	Br. 3
Alexander Bashta	Garden Grove, CA	Br. 1100	Jane Y. Evans	Des Plaines, IL	Br. 2076	Leonard S. Pszeniczny	Buffalo-Western NY	Br. 3
Mary A. Beal	Garden Grove, CA	Br. 1100	Clarence L. Humphries Jr.	Des Plaines, IL	Br. 2076	John E. Rupp	Buffalo-Western NY	Br. 3
James H. Bemis	Garden Grove, CA	Br. 1100	Edward J. Kelly	Des Plaines, IL	Br. 2076	Nicholas S. Santora	Buffalo-Western NY	Br. 3
Michael A. Carmichael	Garden Grove, CA	Br. 1100	Lorran R. Burkman	Frankfort, IL	Br. 4016	William J. Tobin	Buffalo-Western NY	Br. 3
Gary D. Cruz	Garden Grove, CA	Br. 1100	Dennis M. West	Peoria, IL	Br. 31	Victor A. Vitello	Buffalo-Western NY	Br. 3
George G. Cunnings Jr.	Garden Grove, CA	Br. 1100	Paul W. Brewer	Central Kentucky	Br. 361	Randal T. Ward	Buffalo-Western NY	Br. 3
Robert P. Farmer	Garden Grove, CA	Br. 1100	Sammie M. Cassity	Central Kentucky	Br. 361	Ronald G. Woelfle	Buffalo-Western NY	Br. 3
Anthony J. Fiduccia	Garden Grove, CA	Br. 1100	William I. Dawkins	Central Kentucky	Br. 361	Kenneth P. Zotara	Buffalo-Western NY	Br. 3
Kathleen M. Gannon	Garden Grove, CA	Br. 1100	Franklin J. Gerlach	Central Kentucky	Br. 361	Charles J. Anderson	Flushing, NY	Br. 294
Ronald J. Grace	Garden Grove, CA	Br. 1100	Joe M. Overstreet	Central Kentucky	Br. 361	George F. Baranovics	Flushing, NY	Br. 294
Laura Y. Holmdahl	Garden Grove, CA	Br. 1100	Jack R. Travis	Central Kentucky	Br. 361	John B. Blackwell	Flushing, NY	Br. 294
Terry W. Jones	Garden Grove, CA	Br. 1100	Jerry G. Newcomb	Owensboro, KY	Br. 234	Anthony Caravella	Flushing, NY	Br. 294
James M. Kashima	Garden Grove, CA	Br. 1100	James W. Cobette Jr.	New Orleans, LA	Br. 124	A. J. Gambeski	Flushing, NY	Br. 294
Laurence C. Kimball Jr.	Garden Grove, CA	Br. 1100	Hollis A. Wilkins	New Orleans, LA	Br. 124	J. C. Holden	Flushing, NY	Br. 294
Pamela G. Laswell	Garden Grove, CA	Br. 1100	James P. Barrett, III	Boston, MA	Br. 34	G. M. Lehmann	Flushing, NY	Br. 294
Lawrence H. Miller	Garden Grove, CA	Br. 1100	Leonard P. Polacco	Boston, MA	Br. 34	George Martino	Flushing, NY	Br. 294
Lee H. Nidess	Garden Grove, CA	Br. 1100	John M. Sgobbo	Boston, MA	Br. 34	J. A. Rivera	Flushing, NY	Br. 294
Carolyn A. Pisetti	Garden Grove, CA	Br. 1100	Kevin J. Sullivan	Boston, MA	Br. 34	Eusebio Rosado	Flushing, NY	Br. 294
Roland R. Pollerana	Garden Grove, CA	Br. 1100	Daniel J. Tempesta	Boston, MA	Br. 34	William J. Sannuto	Flushing, NY	Br. 294
Emil Santisteven	Garden Grove, CA	Br. 1100	Peter J. Wieneke	Boston, MA	Br. 34	Fred Schlagel	Flushing, NY	Br. 294
Roberta L. Taboas	Garden Grove, CA	Br. 1100	James B. Curtin	Swanpscott, MA	Br. 7	George A. Decos	Yonkers, NY	Br. 387
J. C. Taylor	Garden Grove, CA	Br. 1100	Robert J. Desilets	Swanpscott, MA	Br. 7	William E. Boyce	Elizabeth City, NC	Br. 1127
Vernon E. Topp	Garden Grove, CA	Br. 1100	Darlene L. Turner	Detroit, MI	Br. 1	Lois A. Aldrich	Fargo, ND	Br. 295
Elmer G. Wald	Garden Grove, CA	Br. 1100	Jackie D. Caudill	Jackson, MI	Br. 232	Charles P. Beeber	Fargo, ND	Br. 205
Bruce R. Watson	Garden Grove, CA	Br. 1100	Mary A. Cavin	Jackson, MI	Br. 232	Willie C. Caldwell Jr.	Columbus, OH	Br. 78
Clarence E. Webb	Garden Grove, CA	Br. 1100	Francis M. Faber Jr.	Jackson, MI	Br. 232	Enrico Caruso Jr.	Columbus, OH	Br. 78
Manuel J. Arias	Greater E. Bay, CA	Br. 1111	Tommy L. Herr	Jackson, MI	Br. 232	Richard J. Grunwald	Columbus, OH	Br. 78
Judy K. Carlson	Greater E. Bay, CA	Br. 1111	Ernest G. Hobart	Jackson, MI	Br. 232	Charles F. Lantz	Columbus, OH	Br. 78
Steven M. Oubichon	Greater E. Bay, CA	Br. 1111	Jimmy E. Jackson	Jackson, MI	Br. 232	Patrick M. Lerum	Columbus, OH	Br. 78
Franklin D. Jenkins	Los Angeles, CA	Br. 24	Harold C. Mills	Jackson, MI	Br. 232	Larry R. Meade	Columbus, OH	Br. 78
William R. Sharp	Pasadena, CA	Br. 2200	Barbara O'Dell	Jackson, MI	Br. 232	Earl T. Otey	Columbus, OH	Br. 78
Raoul J. Bisbal	San Diego, CA	Br. 70	Charles L. Pepper	Jackson, MI	Br. 232	Phillips H. Paulsen II	Columbus, OH	Br. 78
Virgil J. Fontenot	San Diego, CA	Br. 70	Dale A. Shields	Jackson, MI	Br. 232	Garry R. Pennington	Columbus, OH	Br. 78
Stanley S. Ford	San Diego, CA	Br. 70	Marvin L. Stotler	Jackson, MI	Br. 232	Mark D. Prince	Columbus, OH	Br. 78
Ronald L. Hughes	San Diego, CA	Br. 70	David O. Burandt	Minneapolis, MN	Br. 9	David M. Pritchard	Columbus, OH	Br. 78
Howard R. Larson	San Diego, CA	Br. 70	Daniel R. Vanyo	Minneapolis, MN	Br. 9	Dennis J. Shore	Columbus, OH	Br. 78
Charles A. Perez	San Diego, CA	Br. 70	Janice L. Mason	Ballwin, MO	Br. 5050	Larry O. Wilson	Columbus, OH	Br. 78
Charles W. Scallorn	San Diego, CA	Br. 70	Herman R. Collins	St. Joseph, MO	Br. 195	Arthur L. Bryant	Portland, OR	Br. 82
Adolph B. Schoenen Jr.	San Diego, CA	Br. 70	Robert L. Bugni	Butte, MT	Br. 621	Michael L. Cairy	Portland, OR	Br. 82
Christine C. Sidabras	San Diego, CA	Br. 70	Walter K. Hendrickson	Butte, MT	Br. 621	James A. Carlson	Portland, OR	Br. 82
Cheryl L. Wilson	San Diego, CA	Br. 70	Merlin B. Norbury	Butte, MT	Br. 621	Hewell M. Connell	Portland, OR	Br. 82
John H. Marshall	San Francisco, CA	Br. 214	Clarence R. Van Elsberg	Butte, MT	Br. 621	Robert M. DiNovo	Portland, OR	Br. 82
George Middleton	San Francisco, CA	Br. 214	Terry L. Bessey	Omaha, NE	Br. 5	William D. Donigan	Portland, OR	Br. 82
Edward J. Castellano Jr.	Tri-Valley, CA	Br. 2902	Gary R. Decker	Omaha, NE	Br. 5	Roxie J. Rossi Jr.	Portland, OR	Br. 82
Gilbert F. Atencio	Centennial, CO	Br. 5996	Paul H. Goetz	Omaha, NE	Br. 5	Michael F. Salladay	Portland, OR	Br. 82
James C. Boaz	Centennial, CO	Br. 5996	William D. Looman	Omaha, NE	Br. 5	Terry M. Wells	Portland, OR	Br. 82
Billy J. Bobb Sr.	Centennial, CO	Br. 5996	Douglas M. Mundy	Omaha, NE	Br. 5	Harry E. Heebner	Allentown, PA	Br. 274
Peter K. Crossan	Centennial, CO	Br. 5996	Michael Borshe Jr.	Bergen County Mgd.	Br. 425	Richard D. Young	Allentown, PA	Br. 274
Martin P. Curtan	Centennial, CO	Br. 5996	Daniel F. Capozzi	Bergen County Mgd.	Br. 425	Merle W. Aikens Jr.	Erie, PA	Br. 284
George F. Downer	Centennial, CO	Br. 5996	Stephen Las III	Bergen County Mgd.	Br. 425	Arthur D. Beckerink	Erie, PA	Br. 284
Richard Eisenberg	Centennial, CO	Br. 5996	James J. Marcus	Bergen County Mgd.	Br. 425	Laird P. Deemer	Erie, PA	Br. 284
Patrick W. Green	Centennial, CO	Br. 5996	Frank Francisco	New Jersey Mgd.	Br. 38	William T. Gress Jr.	Erie, PA	Br. 284
Richard Guzman	Centennial, CO	Br. 5996	Charles V. Brooks	Albany, NY	Br. 29	Jerome T. Nowacinski	Erie, PA	Br. 284
Ellwood W. Haines	Centennial, CO	Br. 5996	Patrick J. Clancy	Albany, NY	Br. 29	Joseph A. Talarico	Erie, PA	Br. 284
Warren D. Hanchett	Centennial, CO	Br. 5996	Vincent J. Commisso	Albany, NY	Br. 29	Thomas J. Mancuso	Scranton, PA	Br. 17
Robert B. Hoppe	Centennial, CO	Br. 5996	Charles C. Finnegan	Albany, NY	Br. 29	William J. Bishop	Spartanburg, SC	Br. 628
Gene L. Janne	Centennial, CO	Br. 5996	John F. Graves	Albany, NY	Br. 29	George W. Camp	Spartanburg, SC	Br. 628
William R. Lyle	Centennial, CO	Br. 5996	William D. Matthews	Albany, NY	Br. 29	Vester N. Candler	Spartanburg, SC	Br. 628
David R. Maez	Centennial, CO	Br. 5996	Ronald K. Meilinger	Albany, NY	Br. 29	Joe E. Davis	Spartanburg, SC	Br. 628
Vincent J. Matero	Centennial, CO	Br. 5996	Robert W. Yaiser	Albany, NY	Br. 29	W. E. Davis	Spartanburg, SC	Br. 628

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

Dennis E. Hall	Spartanburg, SC	Br. 628	Charles F. Phillips	Allen, TX	Br. 4065	Terry L. Clark	La Crosse, WI	Br. 59
Jack S. Jennings	Spartanburg, SC	Br. 628	Thomas H. Wilson III	Allen, TX	Br. 4065	Darrell E. Hansen	La Crosse, WI	Br. 59
Clarence L. Johnson	Spartanburg, SC	Br. 628	Wayne R. Green	Austin, TX	Br. 181	Dennis R. Kline	La Crosse, WI	Br. 59
Luther A. Lippert	Spartanburg, SC	Br. 628	Julian M. Venable	Richmond, VA	Br. 496	Richard D. Loomis	La Crosse, WI	Br. 59
Billy C. Ruppe	Spartanburg, SC	Br. 628	Richard A. Wilson Sr.	Richmond, VA	Br. 496	David C. Marsolek	La Crosse, WI	Br. 59
Blanch N. Suddeth	Spartanburg, SC	Br. 628	James H. Allemani	Spokane, WA	Br. 442	Daniel T. McGarvey	La Crosse, WI	Br. 59
Charles G. Cowan	Nashville, TN	Br. 4	Manfred R. Baumbauer	Spokane, WA	Br. 442	Rodney R. Molzahn	La Crosse, WI	Br. 59
Richard K. Woodard	Nashville, TN	Br. 4	Richard M. Froman	Spokane, WA	Br. 442	Gale J. Rugg	La Crosse, WI	Br. 59
Curtis W. Beckemeyer	Allen, TX	Br. 4065	Joseph A. Mangano	Spokane, WA	Br. 442	Andrew B. Schwaegerl	La Crosse, WI	Br. 59
David L. Herring	Allen, TX	Br. 4065	David Mueller	Spokane, WA	Br. 442	Benjamin F. Shove	La Crosse, WI	Br. 59
Samuel R. Hitchcock	Allen, TX	Br. 4065	Edward J. Palac	Spokane, WA	Br. 442	Donald J. Klatkiewicz	Milwaukee, WI	Br. 2
Karen L. Hudgeons	Allen, TX	Br. 4065	Carla J. Phillips	Spokane, WA	Br. 442	Ruth Ann A. Klotz	Milwaukee, WI	Br. 2
Harold W. Inge	Allen, TX	Br. 4065	Donald K. Winkenweder	Spokane, WA	Br. 442	Dale B. Lofquist	Milwaukee, WI	Br. 2
Ronald D. Morgan	Allen, TX	Br. 4065	Michael A. Hodges	Appleton, WI	Br. 822	Larry L. Anklam	Wausau, WI	Br. 215
Dennis C. Nida	Allen, TX	Br. 4065	John T. Marx	Appleton, WI	Br. 822	John P. Jauch	Wausau, WI	Br. 215
Justice B. Norris	Allen, TX	Br. 4065	Elizabeth L. Mosier	Kenosha, WI	Br. 574	Russell E. Mirek	Wausau, WI	Br. 215
Richard A. Oatman	Allen, TX	Br. 4065	Diane J. Tuttlewski-Fanel	Kenosha, WI	Br. 574	Thomas J. Schaefer	Wausau, WI	Br. 215

In Memoriam

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

April L. Juliussen	Br. 4319	Anchorage, AK	Kurt A. Krueger	Br. 4016	S. Suburban Mgd., IL	Frank A. Abbamonte	Br. 210	Rochester, NY
Bobby W. Pickard	Br. 448	Anniston, AL	Richard J. Etchison	Br. 489	Anderson, IN	Leonard D. Capadano	Br. 210	Rochester, NY
James B. Walton	Br. 106	Montgomery, AL	John C. Evans Jr.	Br. 489	Anderson, IN	Roger R. Scocco	Br. 99	Staten Island, NY
Eugene W. Caldara	Br. 6156	Sun City, AZ	Glenn M. Johnson	Br. 39	Indianapolis, IN	Steven Iaropoli	Br. 693	Westchester Mgd.
John Krumenaker	Br. 2086	Burbank, CA	David J. Otting	Br. 719	Cedar Falls, IA	J. S. Price	Br. 693	Westchester Mgd.
John P. Marx	Br. 2086	Burbank, CA	Theodore L. Kahler	Br. 373	Cedar Rapids, IA	Oscar M. Brown Jr.	Br. 464	Wilmington, NC
Hubert S. Chung	Br. 1100	Garden Grove, CA	Richard L. Baltzley	Br. 352	Central Iowa Mgd.	James L. Baldwin	Br. 43	Cincinnati, OH
Harold H. Huntsman	Br. 1100	Garden Grove, CA	Don A. Lombardi	Br. 257	Dubuque, IA	Charles E. Bishop	Br. 43	Cincinnati, OH
Robert H. Porter	Br. 1100	Garden Grove, CA	Joseph W. Csordas	Br. 201	Wichita, KS	Robert J. Connor	Br. 40	Cleveland, OH
Leonard J. Baldizan	Br. 1111	Greater E. Bay, CA	Charles A. Mcgroder	Br. 176	Baltimore, MD	Ernest L. Rocco	Br. 40	Cleveland, OH
Kathy L. Houghton	Br. 4430	Lancaster, CA	Andy J. Murphy	Br. 7	Lynn, MA	Zachary L. Scott	Br. 40	Cleveland, OH
Frank H. Cloud Jr.	Br. 24	Los Angeles, CA	Louis S. Bochnynski	Br. 25	MA Northeast Mgd.	Mark A. Molinski	Br. 78	Columbus, OH
Co Ly	Br. 24	Los Angeles, CA	James F. Moran	Br. 25	MA Northeast Mgd.	Ronald G. Patterson	Br. 78	Columbus, OH
Stephen L. Carillo	Br. 1310	Monterey, CA	Albert J. Gaspar Jr.	Br. 18	Southeast MA Mgd.	Ed R. Ohns	Br. 105	Lima, OH
Karl E. Petersen	Br. 2200	Pasadena, CA	Paul E. Vandenberg	Br. 262	Battle Creek, MI	Virgil J. Kalas	Br. 100	Toledo, OH
Gerald D. Bell	Br. 70	San Diego, CA	Lloyd E. Johnson	Br. 1	Detroit, MI	Kenneth E. Kreuzberg	Br. 1491	Norman, OK
Howard H. Olsen Jr.	Br. 70	San Diego, CA	Robert P. Radziejewski	Br. 1	Detroit, MI	Jerry T. Rhodes	Br. 1358	Tulsa, OK
Alfred D. Curry	Br. 32	Bridgeport, CT	Leo A. Huizenga	Br. 56	Grand Rapids, MI	Nels K. Christensen	Br. 82	Portland, OR
Matthew J. Doyle Sr.	Br. 20	Connecticut Mgd.	Bernard A. Lakowicz	Br. 56	Grand Rapids, MI	Norman W. Featherston	Br. 920	Bux-Mont, PA
David P. Guido	Br. 20	Connecticut Mgd.	James R. Rusky	Br. 56	Grand Rapids, MI	John J. Schwab	Br. 284	Erie, PA
Walter A. Shamock	Br. 20	Connecticut Mgd.	Robert W. Struik	Br. 56	Grand Rapids, MI	Lynn E. Meadows	Br. 274	Lehigh Valley, PA
Maurice A. Archambault	Br. 86	Hartford, CT	John M. Santi	Br. 529	Port Huron, MI	Clifford V. Hoak	Br. 332	Mon-Yough, PA
Wallace M. Washington	Br. 142	Washington, DC	Robert H. Schauwecker Jr.	Br. 3126	Royal Oak, MI	William S. Fratick	Br. 157	Philadelphia, PA
Herbert G. Gray Jr.	Br. 1091	Central Florida	Daniel J. Valko	Br. 3126	Royal Oak, MI	Robert F. Graziano	Br. 84	Pittsburgh, PA
Rachid Karsi	Br. 1091	Central Florida	John D. Adams	Br. 30	Kansas City, MS	John P. Lannutti	Br. 84	Pittsburgh, PA
Albert Lazo	Br. 599	Tampa, FL	Charles L. Blechle	Br. 343	St. Louis, MO	Robert P. Kovach	Br. 17	Scranton, PA
Holmes L. Manning	Br. 1477	W. Coast Florida	John J. Lewandowski	Br. 343	St. Louis, MO	Donald A. Novack	Br. 17	Scranton, PA
Ernest H. Posey	Br. 263	Augusta, GA	Willis Lloyd	Br. 343	St. Louis, MO	Michael J. Studenski	Br. 17	Scranton, PA
Joe K. Johnson	Br. 331	Boise, ID	William G. Mathews	Br. 343	St. Louis, MO	Julio V. Rivera Colon	Br. 826	Ponce, PR
Charles D. Smart	Br. 1409	Nampa, ID	James V. Bottomly	Br. 709	Reno, NV	Joseph P. Azar Jr.	Br. 55	Pawtucket, RI
Douglas E. Gehr	Br. 11	Chicago, IL	Michael A. Gay	Br. 1913	Bordentown, NJ	George E. Verrier	Br. 55	Pawtucket, RI
George J. Karras	Br. 11	Chicago, IL	Chester H. Korkuc	Br. 444	Garden State Mgd.	Clarence L. Abshire	Br. 181	Austin, TX
Charles J. Zalinski	Br. 11	Chicago, IL	John W. Krajack	Br. 444	Garden State Mgd.	Harold M. Hall Jr.	Br. 181	Austin, TX
Richard P. Weaver	Br. 88	Galesburg, IL	Marc F. Laurance	Br. 444	Garden State Mgd.	Ron G. Burrus Jr.	Br. 132	Dallas, TX
Jean A. Williams	Br. 1132	Granite City, IL	Erin Montoya	Br. 444	Garden State Mgd.	W. N. Wilson	Br. 132	Dallas, TX
Gregory A. Geffe	Br. 825	Oak Brook, IL	Glenn P. Bruden	Br. 38	New Jersey Mgd.	Renato T. Ornelas	Br. 354	Laredo, TX
Norbert J. Ruzicka	Br. 825	Oak Brook, IL	William J. Henderson	Br. 38	New Jersey Mgd.	Shayla Garris	Br. 609	Newport News, VA
Edward J. Tinault	Br. 825	Oak Brook, IL	Thomas P. Contos	Br. 120	Paterson, NJ	R. B. Banks	Br. 496	Richmond, VA
Joanne Easden	Br. 209	Pekin, IL	Ronald A. Bruso	Br. 29	Albany, NY	Roxanne R. Johnson	Br. 450	North Sound, WA
			John M. Gawel	Br. 3	Buffalo/Western NY	J. B. Galloway	Br. 130	Tacoma, WA
			Mario I. Inglese	Br. 3	Buffalo/Western NY	Warren S. Kingsbury	Br. 130	Tacoma, WA
			Roy F. Phillips	Br. 3	Buffalo/Western NY	Robert L. Vipperman	Br. 359	Huntington, WV
			Robert D. Bush	Br. 358	Northeastern NY	Robert E. Schoettle	Br. 728	Eau Claire, WI
			W. B. Coons	Br. 358	Northeastern NY	Douglas A. Addis	Br. 2	Milwaukee, WI
			Richard A. Guyette	Br. 358	Northeastern NY	Gene W. Sorenson	Br. 2	Milwaukee, WI
			Anthony J. Isgro	Br. 358	Northeastern NY	Francis R. Plunkett	Br. 337	Superior, WI
			William F. Marhafer	Br. 358	Northeastern NY			

Jim Wade was erroneously listed as deceased in a previous issue of *The Postal Record*. We regret the error and apologize for any problems it may have caused.

Branch Items

Albany, New York

Congratulations to our newest career letter carriers in Branch 29: Victor Ortiz, Sandra Hancock, Sefatullah Hashimi, Travis Perrott, Travis Morris, Dylan Zwack, Christopher Legg, Chyanna Canada, Richard Peck and Colin McLeod. We wish you all the best as you begin your careers as regular letter carriers.

The branch sends our congratulations to Tim Spath, Jeanette Wiley, Colleen Caulfield, Matt Czech, Joe Girard and John Paratore, all of whom have recently retired from the Postal Service. We wish you a long and healthy retirement!

Jay Jackson, Branch 29

Anchorage, Alaska

Our branch would like to thank Jim Yates, NALC director of life insurance, for performing the installation of officers for the branch. It was his first time to Alaska and hopefully not his last.

Some of our offices have recently undergone route inspections. And as I've reported before, the Operations Support management team came in like a wrecking crew and slaughtered routes. In one office, it abolished a parcel post route. I don't think Operations Support received the memo on how the Postal Service is becoming a parcel delivery company. Getting rid of a parcel post route is like a pizza place getting rid of their pizza oven. I truly believe their mission is to do whatever they can to prevent hard-working carriers from giving great customer service.

In those offices where Operations Support has conducted route inspections and adjustments, the overtime rates have increased not in the 100, 200, or 300 percent range, but in the thousands. In some of the offices, the penalty overtime rate compared to last year is up 1,325 percent, and in one office it's up 2,579 percent. In the Anchorage Installation, the penalty overtime rate is up 242 percent and the regular overtime rate is up 70 percent.

The Post Office has been around for 245 years and postal management and some of those in Congress want to destroy it. Can you imagine how the job interview for postal managers is going to play out if the Postal Service fails? "So you managed to run a company that's been in business for 245 years into the ground?" Yeah, that'll look great on their resume. Thankfully, NALC is leading the fight to save the Postal Service. Step up and contribute to the Letter Carrier Political Fund. The job you save may be your own.

Jim Raymond, Branch 4319

Boston, Massachusetts

Management has gone into a holding pattern with Consolidated Casing until Feb. 29 on announcing where and when they will start up again. Management has also been spotted going into certain stations filming and taking measurements of the buildings after carriers hit the streets. This total lack of communication from management simply shows little to no concern of how they will turn employees' lives upside down. The only assistance they will get from this office will be in the form of a tidal wave of grievances. Management (OPS) has provided

our branch with about 95 percent of the spring route inspection schedule and they are coming at us hot and heavy again. Their plan must be due to their inability to hire and retain new employees is to simply make all routes 10-hour assignments. They have no long-term plans for this business other than to go day to day patching the leaks.

Congratulations to the 33 recent CCA conversions, well-deserved but still taking about 30 months to get there. Management converted these 33 CCAs just a few weeks prior to M-01906 converting all 30-month CCAs, so it looks like we will not have any conversions from this agreement.

I would also like to congratulate our recent retirees Tone Chang, Paul Donoghue, Michelle Postell, Chris Macdonnell, Bill Casey, Bernard Washington, Diane Reddy, Jim Imbrogna, Paul "Butch" McDonough, Bruce Wojciechowski, Nancy O'Hearn, Alan Chan, Jimmy Tucker, Rich Noll and Tim McCarthy. Enjoy your retirement. Shout out to Braintree carriers Peter Wiencko and James Barrett, who recently celebrated their 50-year anniversaries working for USPS and being union members. I'll hold on to those retirement jackets for you!

Condolences go out to the families of retired brothers Charles Donnelly and Leonard Hirshberg Rest in peace, my brothers.

Jerry McCarthy, Branch 34

Camden, New Jersey Merged

Worker's compensation claims can be very confusing. There is a lot of red tape and we need to jump through a lot of hoops. It can be a fairly smooth process, as long as we provide all the required documentation. When you file a claim through OWCP, it is up to you to provide the necessary documentation. Management has its own responsibilities, but providing the documentation is up to you.

Request copies of all forms you fill out and make copies of all correspondence and doctor's notes for your own records. I have seen plenty of cases where management somehow misplaces an employee's medical documentation or the file is sent through to OWCP without it. You need to be able to provide the needed documents that could go missing.

Your union can assist you with this whole process, and hopefully you informed your shop steward of your claim from the beginning. Your shop steward can get the answers to any of your questions. While he or she may not know the answers immediately, the answer is only a phone call away. Always read all of the information on all of the OWCP forms you fill out. It will explain everything you need to know about the form. If something is not properly filled out or additional information is needed, OWCP will send you a letter explaining why your claim has not been approved and the letter will detail exactly what you need to provide. Read this letter completely. Don't just leave it up to someone else to handle. You should know what is on every piece of paper in that file. It's your claim and it's your career and livelihood; understand for yourself what is going on with your OWCP claim.

Chuck Goushian, Branch 540

Carmel, Indiana

The USPS Fairness Act, H.R. 2382, passed the House of Representatives 309-106! This is the crucial bill that would finally repeal the onerous pre-funding mandate that has caused most of the red ink during this manufactured crisis with our employer. Were this burden not imposed, USPS would have recorded approximate surpluses of nearly \$4.0 billion since 2013.

Branch 888 and the NALC network in Indiana as well as all of our help at the regional and national level should be very proud that we have been able to get Rep. Susan Brooks to sign on as a co-sponsor of H.R. 2382. She is the only Republican member of the Indiana delegation that we have been able to convince to support this bill because it is the right thing to do for the future of the Postal Service. Our issues are not partisan issues, so party affiliation should not come into play. And I am super happy to report that she voted yea.

I would like to thank everyone that has called and wrote letters and/or attended the rally in October 2018 in front of her office. I would also like to say a special thank you to our trustees Don Dwigans and Tom Kingsley for attending several of her Connect-with-your-Congresswoman events when my schedule would not permit me to attend. This shows that local activism works and we as letter carriers can make a difference at the local level. Job well done, Branch 888 and the NALC network. Getting Rep. Brooks to sign on to H. Res. 33 and H.R. 2478 was a big accomplishment and getting her to sign on to H.R. 2382 and to vote yea was a huge accomplishment!

Now we turn our attention to the Senate and the companion bill, S. 2965.

Knowledge is power!

Ronnie Roush, Branch 888

Cincinnati, Ohio

Greetings from Cincinnati Branch 43.

The annual Branch 43 Jim Frentzel Memorial Bowl Against Dystrophy was Jan. 26–20 years of friends and co-workers getting together on an off day to help aid others afflicted by a disease that limits their ability to walk, let alone bowl.

It may be a new year and a new decade, but the flipping of the calendar is merely a symbolic gesture and represents nothing new on the treatment of carriers by management. We are still expected to do unfathomable pivots, not use any own route overtime, and wear a tie while wearing a blue collar (am I the only one that finds the act of wearing a tie as a letter carrier to be as antiquated and archaic as our members of Congress?). Happy 2020. The good will and cheer that existed at the end of December evaporated as the final seconds of 2019 ticked away.

The new year brought with it some of the same ol' tactics that management has used for a while. Namely their PET—a white sheet of paper usually affixed to a clipboard that tells them how quickly a route should be delivered. Because every post office receives every piece of mail and every parcel in a timely manner. It is all perfectly and timely sorted before the carriers

arrive each day and made ready for them before they clock in.

And everything I wrote in the last two sentences of the previous paragraph is a lie. None of that happens daily. Sure, some of it happens but at irregular and inconsistent intervals, never all at once. The only thing we as carriers can do is what Branch 43 gold card member Jerry Mees advises us at every union meeting:

“Do the best you can!”

Jacob Bingham, Branch 43

Cleveland, Ohio

What does it take to be a union officer? I know it takes a someone special. It takes a person with leadership skills. It takes a person with the ability to plan—for today and the future. When I think about past and present officers of Branch 40, it is amazing how capable these people were and are.

Branch 40 has been fortunate to have the right people, with the right skills at the right time, to run a successful branch. It does not happen by chance that Branch 40 protects its members; *all* of its members. The leadership of this branch provides service and education to all.

Over time, leadership has changed, but Branch 40 has had some remarkable people running the ship—names like Harold Lowe, Jack Grab, Bob Harrigan, Dan Rupp, Dennis Perk and Bill Barnes.

Now, Executive Vice-President Jim Hopkins, after many years of conscientious hard work, joins the ranks of the retired officers of Branch 40. Much appreciation for a job well done and wishes for a bright and happy future with your wife and family. Thank you! (And see you at the meetings—first row, a little left of center).

We will soon be celebrating 50 years since of the Strike of 1970. Branch 40 was right in the thick of it. We united to take a strike vote—we proudly walked the picket line. I clearly remember two things about the strike: 1) The names of a few who crossed the picket line; and 2) that I was making more money at my part-time job than I was making at the Post Office.

Factoid: An eight-day strike in March 1970, the U.S. Postal Strike began in New York City and spread rapidly to other cities. Though regarded as illegal, it was the largest wildcat strike in U.S. history.

Bob Murphy, Branch 40

Cumberland, Maryland

Branch 638 will be appointing the bylaws committee at our March meeting, which is held on the third Wednesday of the month. The amendments will be read at the regular meeting in May.

Voting on the bylaws will take place in June. Also, the election of officers will be held in March and the installation of officers will be held during our retiree’s dinner that will be held at the American Legion, 206 E. Harrison St., Cumberland, on April 15 at 6:30 p.m. Our meetings are always held on the third Wednesday of the month. Carriers are encouraged to attend the monthly meetings for the latest updates

and news, as well as to learn how to protect your rights. CCAs should bring your concerns and questions to the monthly meetings. The best way to learn is to talk to your fellow carriers who have been there, done that.

Paul Kirby, Branch 638



Ann Arbor, MI Br. 434 President John Odegaard (r) presented a 65-year membership pin to Eugene Alber.

Elyria, Ohio

Thanks to all members who support our legislative efforts through LCPF and to the untold numbers of member activist who call their representatives in Congress; our hard work has paid off with passage of H.R. 2382 in the House of Representatives. Branch 196 has for many years been very proud of the legislative support we provide to advance our agenda: protecting our jobs and our future. Although not all Ohio congressmen voted *yea* on the measure to eliminate the prefunding mandate, the outcome could have been unfavorable had it not been for your help.

Congratulations to Marcus Zajdel who celebrated his retirement early last month. Marcus started his career as a letter carrier in South Euclid. His tremendous support of NALC made us very lucky to have him in Elyria for most of his nearly 25 years. Best of luck and good health in your retirement.

Perry J. Sprachmann, Branch 196

Emerald Coast, Florida

As far back as 1981, there has been a collective bargaining agreement between USPS and NALC. It has been an agreement that both parties agreed to and were to follow. We have agreements that were settled either through negotiation or through binding arbitration. In talking to stewards and presidents within my district, I have found out that there are certain postmasters, station managers and supervisors who have failed to read the *memo* that there is a contract that is to be adhered to by management and labor. I have been told that some supervisors are not allowing carriers to see their stewards, won't give them PS Forms 3996s, won't honor stewards' requests for documentation, won't honor Step B decisions telling them to comply with Articles 17 and 31 and a postmaster telling the branch president that they will not post a route, but instead revert the route without going through the proper procedures.

I find this appalling and it burns me up. The National Agreement and JCAM are our bible that has been agreed to by the USPS and NALC. We as a union must keep management in their place and make them abide by the contract. I encourage all presidents and stewards to follow the National Agreement and JCAM and make management do the same. It is important that we protect our members and I encourage you to ensure that their rights are protected. Make management treat us with dignity and respect and if they don't, *file!* on them. If they violate the contract, *file!* sooner or later, hopefully sooner they will understand there is a contract that they must follow.

I want to wish Robert (Pep) Wegner a speedy recovery from surgery.

Percy Smith Jr., Branch 4559

Fargo-West Fargo, North Dakota

The amount, size and weight of Amazon packages seem to be increasing. This past holiday season was an amount we have not seen before and it continues to be at high levels. It can be extremely frustrating having to deal with the large number of packages, no matter how big or small or heavy they are. We all know that more and more people are skipping shopping at brick-and-mortar stores and ordering online. A few days during winter weather, the Amazon truck did not make it to Fargo from Minneapolis, and those days really showed what the Post Office would look like without us delivering their packages. Those were some light delivery days with the decline in regular mail volumes. While Amazon is delivering in parts of the country, I assume it will eventually have its own nationwide delivery service. We need to embrace what we have while we have it. While I get frustrated as well having to lug heavy packages up ice- and snow-covered driveways this time of year or stuff my satchel to the max, I know that is our future. One with the Post Office largely depending on us delivering parcels to our customers with their ever-increasing online shopping habits. Hopefully other retailers will increase their use of our services to get their product to their customers.

If you are interested in getting more involved in our local branch, don't hesitate to speak with a union official or your steward. The future of the union depends on the active participation of the younger generation of carriers.

Congratulations to 50-year gold card recipient Dave Kringlie, and Dana Holland on his retirement in December.

Our annual MDA auction is March 21 at the Ramada on 13th Avenue in Fargo.

Brian Prisinzano, Branch 205

Flushing, New York

In honor of our retirees, on Oct. 20, 2019, at Douglaston Manor in Queens, Branch 294 held its annual brunch. It is always special seeing our retired brothers and sisters join together and rekindle old acquaintances and also make new friends. They have sacrificed, but triumphed over so many challenges. All of us can draw strength from their hard earned victories.

Branch Items

Our new retirees: Jayesh Bhatt, Leo Czyzak, Carlos Garcia, Dien Hua, Diane Keller, John Kruszynski, Hyuk Lee, Michele Litner, Nicholas Longhitano, Ming Lui, Larry May, Jeffrey Rudolph, Eric Schieler, Barbara Steinberg, James Tang, Deborah Walker Urszula Walker. Our 60-year members: Frank Gallo and Carl Gallo. Our 50-year members: Arthur Gandini, Joel Powder, Walter Rosenberg, John Seedorf and Michael Squillante.

Congratulations to all and thank you for your service, strength and wisdom. Special thanks to Paul Barner (NALC assistant secretary-treasurer), Eddie Davidson (executive assistant to the president), Larry Cirelli (Region 15 NBA), Tom Matthews (Region 15 RAA), George Mangold (New York State Association president) along with our friends from Branches 562 and 41 for joining us in celebrating this very special occasion. Stay strong—

Tony Paolillo, Branch 294

Fresno, California

Just tell the truth! That's the way it should be. But many in management have a problem with doing that. All in the name of being low self-esteem, jealous, power hungry, and sometimes flat out sadistic. Some in management are not this way. But postal culture has seen abusive management for decades. It seems every station has at least two of them. If their made up charges cannot beat you into their ridiculous demands, more lies are added to charges. Then they get help from the office snitches. All of this for what? Since I am not one of them, you will have to ask them. Can you imagine our president acting like that? Hmhmhm.

Well, back to the article. Many, many letter carriers have lost their jobs, transfers and OWCP claims because of management lies. These are not misconceptions. I am talking about flat out, deliberate lies. Lies with bad intentions. Yet they demand respect. So what does that tell you? Bringing in donuts one time does not forgive long term abusing the employees. If a supervisor is fair, truthful, not abusive and understanding, that goes a long way in employees taking pride in their work. To me, that is important.

Always be united. Management lies do not come with warning signs right out of the blue. Right away the employee is put on the defensive. Stand up for our rights; your rights. Lies are not factual, they are fiction.

Jesse Dominguez, Branch 231

Greensboro, North Carolina

On Thursday, Jan. 2 at our regularly scheduled monthly meeting, our newly elected branch leadership was sworn in by Region 9 National Business Agent Lynne Pendleton. I was pleased to assist her with the installation ceremony.

There were several outstanding features about this meeting worth sharing.

In his recent "President's Message," President Rolando had announced that "we are joining the other postal unions and the Grand Alliance to Save our Public Postal Service to collect



Jamaica, NY Br. 562 President Andrew Weiner presented 70-year plaques to William Scheeler (above) and Leo Appel (below).



signatures for a petition addressed to the Board of Governors." It calls on them to "appoint a Postmaster General who is fully committed to universal service and the public ownership of the Postal Service."

Our new Branch 630 president, Debbie Matyga, used the occasion of the installation meeting to make sure that the members present had an opportunity to sign the petition. This as an indication that President Matyga recognizes NALC is not just a grievance machine but that we need to act politically as well as in the community.

Following the installation ceremony, NBA Pendleton gave a substantial report to our members. It was a good opportunity for so many branch members to see and hear Lynne bring her no-nonsense message of strong unionism delivered in her unfiltered, casual and friendly style. She also encouraged questions, comments and discussion from the floor that breathed strength and confidence in ourselves and in each other. We could feel the truth in the old union saying: in our unity lies our strength. No wonder just about everyone signed the petition.

Earlier this week, more than 400,000 signatures were presented to the Board of Governors. Most signatures were gathered by members of the 80 or so civic organizations affiliated with us in the Grand Alliance to Save our Public Postal Service.

Fraternally—

Richard A. Koritz, Branch 630

Hagerstown, Maryland

Last October, I wrote about the minor route inspections of 11 routes in our downtown office that were never implemented. These were the result of an attempt to try to fix yet another failed route inspection in that office. Due to the efforts of Region 13 RAA Hugh McElroy, we now have a pre-arbitration decision that instructs district level management to implement the submitted route package within 52 days. This

package will make a current auxiliary route a full time assignment, and create a new auxiliary route. Also, once the changes are implemented, monetary remedies will be determined for those carriers unfairly impacted. Thanks Hugh, for your determination to achieve fairness for the carriers of Hagerstown.

The recent route inspections at the Northern Station have yielded a new auxiliary route. It was placed in the center of continuing development in the zone, so despite its 943 deliveries, it will become a full-time assignment at some point. This route and the newly created route downtown, combined with recent retirements, will create several new opportunities for our deserving CCAs.

Thanks to the recent national level arbitration, we have six CCAs who will be converted to PTF. Congratulations to Gina Williamowski, Erick Martinez, Jeremy Kessel, Justin Bertrand, Matt Miller and Mondale Allen. You have all worked hard, and have earned this. Also I would like to congratulate recent retirees Tommy Kortright, Larry Losh and Greg Burkett. After working an entire career, nothing could be more fulfilling than to enjoy the retirement you worked so hard for. I hope you all find this new chapter in your lives as rewarding as you had expected.

Branch 443 will be holding its annual bowling to benefit the Muscular Dystrophy Association on April 19 at Turner's Southside Bowl at noon. I hope to see you there!

Larry Wellborn, Branch 443

Jackson, Michigan

Hoping all you *union* members had a safe and wonderful holiday. Our Christmas party was a huge success thanks to Kymm Neal. Every year she and her helpers knock it out of the park. Our guest was newly minted NBA Troy Clark. We are a small branch, and for the NBA to travel to Jackson to spend time with us says a lot about Mr. Clark. I needed a wheelchair to exit the place, and lo and behold, pushing the chair is Troy Clark. He helped my wife get my big ass into the seat—no easy task, I assure you. I feel we have a future Hall of Famer National Business Agent protecting our rights.

Our members are making some nice bucks this season due to staff shortages. The \$100,000 club continues to expand nationwide. Carriers retire and are not replaced. Speaking of which, two more carriers hung up the bag. Lisa Fowler and Cheryl Ulrich became the latest members of the Last Punch Bunch. Two more routes with no regulars.

Our January union meeting was postponed for lack of a quorum. Five members showed, with three being retirees.

A number of years ago, the OIG was asked to do an investigation as to why the carrier craft was using so much overtime. Much to everyone's surprise the answer was, drum roll, please...a shortage of carriers. Months of time, thousands of dollars and they came up with "shortage of carriers." Who would have thought of dat.

Solution? Hire more carriers. Management said "OK," and naturally did not hire more carriers.

OK, gang, be careful out there for ice and loose dogs. Remember, safety begins and ends with you. God love all youse.

Cut and roll—

Bob Czartoryski, Branch 232

Kansas City, Missouri

NALC unity was once again on display at the January Branch 30 meeting. Branch 5267 (Grandview, MO) was present as Region 5 National Business Agent (NBA) Michael Birkett was there to conduct a three-for-one officer installation ceremony. In what I consider a star-studded event, retired Region 5 NBA Dan Pittman and RAA David Teegarden, both former Branch 30 presidents, were in attendance.

Melvin R Moore, president; Curtis L Walker, vice president; Kenneth Best, recording secretary; Terry Myers, treasurer; Byron Townsend, financial secretary; Troy Smith, sergeant-at-arms; Frank Ferro, trustee (chairman); Frank Mitchell, trustee; Chris Cole, trustee and Michael “Rob” Kumpf, health benefits representative/director of retirees rounds out the Executive Council.

Officers installed for Branch 5267 were Anthony Ealy, president; Lee Brown, vice president; Curtis Byrd, secretary/treasurer; Cordell Holley, sergeant-at-arms; and Earl Morris, Marcus Barbosa and Michelle Woodrum are trustees.

Auxiliary 4 is lead by George Anna Myers, president; Patsy Davis, vice president/secretary; and Geneva Robinson, treasurer.

Congratulations to Anthoney Mitchell and Gary and Anita Franklin, members of the branch legislative team, for their efforts in keeping the membership informed and involved in the passage of the USPS Fairness Act (H.R. 2382). Now let’s direct our attention towards bipartisan companion bill, S.2965. Support of the LCPF has never been greater. To be blunt, it’s time to be part of the solution, not the problem.

With the NALC’s lawsuit on consolidated casing biting the dust like the impeachment trial, the lunacy at Waldo Station continues, and grievances mount ad nauseam. It appears USPS is trying to capitalize on the NALC letter carriers’ greatest gift, resiliency, to bulldoze this disaster into existence. I’ve always figured the USPS had a slush fund used exclusively for grievance payouts. Include this latest debacle along with Article 8 violations and now I’m certain of it.

In solidarity—

Calvin Davis, Branch 30

Knoxville, Tennessee

Greetings, brothers and sisters.

Well, it’s the start of the new year for Branch 419 as January started with the installation of new officers and stewards. Congratulations are in order for our new president (Mark Love), new vice president (Reba Campbell), acclamation secretary (Tony Rodriguez), acclamation financial secretary (Carlos Jimenez), acclamation treasurer (Monica Davis), new health benefit plan director (Alexis Ducksworth), acclamation branch chaplain (Bobby Walker) and new sergeant-at-arms (Greg Isbill). Our stewards for Branch 419 are Mark Love (NWCA-Lonsdale), Reba Campbell (Oak Ridge), Barry Loveday (Burlington), Jeremy Acuff (Cedar Bluff), Greg Isbill (Concord), James Peppers (Downtown), Ken Christian (Fountain City), Matt Haggard (North Station), Tom Gavin (NWCA-Norwood), Bobby Walker (NWCA-West Hills), Travis Burns (South Station), James Collins II (West Station), Matt Curtis (Maryville) and Scott McCarty (Lenoir City).

It makes no difference whether you’re in your first day as a steward or your 10th year, you’ve got the job and you have a lot of city carriers depending on you to protect their rights and defend the guarantees outlined in our National Agreement. Step forward and defend. Hip hip, hooray!

Tony Rodriguez, Branch 419

Las Vegas, Nevada

The CCA Song:

Where am I goin’?
I don’t know
When will I get there?
I ain’t certain
What will I get?
I ain’t equipped to say
Where am I goin’?
I don’t know
Where am I headin’?
I ain’t certain
All that I know
Is I am on my way

Do you remember when you first started as a letter carrier, CCA, TE, PTF, or casual? Do you remember the fear of going out on your own for the first time? The “CCA Song” is from Paint Your Wagon, an old movie musical starring Lee Marvin and Clint Eastwood. It cracked me up when I heard it because it brought back memories of how lost I felt when I first started learning to carry mail.

Our newbies have better technology to utilize, but I don’t think it’s enough to offset the fear you feel when you first start. Us oldsters had to rely on maps—f we were lucky enough to get one. Or we were told to “just follow the mail.” Now USPS relies on the CCAs to use their phones to find delivery locations, without compensation. It’s a sad dilemma for them. Use your phone to find where you need to be or get lost, take too much time, and lose the job.

Supposedly, new scanners are in the works that appear to be similar to cell phones. Will they have GPS capability to assist the carriers finding addresses? I sure hope so. Our current primitive scanner bricks are no longer adequate for the demands of the service we provide. They are grindingly slow and irritating to use. Don’t get me started on the voice that tells you to “scan flats than letters.” At least it can’t hear me when I curse at it. Yet.

Leslie Hammett, Branch 2502

Louisville, Kentucky

This year is already flying by! Winter just presented itself here in Louisville, and we’re already ready for spring to come pop up.

This first quarter has been tough. Along with a lot of call-ins, there’s been several 8.5G violations, followed up by safety blitz and discipline. It’s hard to stay positive for the carriers when you know they’re suffering. You come to work to do your job, but then are forced to carry over time you never signed up for. Well time change is right around the corner, which hopefully changes things. It won’t necessarily bring

people to work, but you won’t be in the dark anymore.

Background: Louisville’s management is under strict instruction to have carriers off the street by 1900. Now, if your station is starting at 8 or 8:30 a.m. and you’re going off the overtime list, this isn’t adding up. That’s causing carriers who aren’t on the overtime list to carry time they didn’t ask for, and the overtime list is denied from carrying their 12 hours of work. Thus, another reason carriers aren’t coming to work—they’re exhausted. To follow that, management answers back with discipline for attendance!

Hopefully brighter days are to come. Remember, knowledge is power.

Adriane Shanklin, Branch 14

Minneapolis, Minnesota

On the afternoon of March 20, 1970, Branch 9 members gathered at the old Labor Temple for a strike vote. As narrated by former Branch 9 President, Vern Doll, “The members went out on strike at 12:01 a.m. Picketing began almost immediately at the Main Post Office and then spread to the stations. Another vote to return to work was taken on March 24, 1970. We all voted to go out together and we also voted to return together. Not a wildcat strike, but a unified decision.”

Our Branch 9 office “strikers wall” honors those who were courageous enough to risk their jobs, their pensions and being arrested by taking part in the strike. One of many items displayed on the wall is a poem written by Dale S. Allen (now deceased):

Nixon tells the Congress just exactly what to do.

Congress tells the Senate, and the Senate tells you.

But, when it comes to getting it done;

There’s no one left you see;

And that means, the dirty work, must be done by me.

It must be right, but I wake up nights,

In a terrible stew.

I wonder what would happen,

If I walked out on you.

If Nixon told the Congress just exactly what to do.

And Congress told the Senate, and the Senate told you,

And you ordered me, and I laughed with glee,
And said it’s just too hard.

Would Nixon do the job himself, or call the National Guard?

Let Nixon tell the Congress just exactly what to do,

Let Congress tell the Senate, and the Senate tell you,

But when it comes to getting it done,

I’ve only this to say –

If they want me to do the job,

By God they’re going to pay!

Thank you, Branch 9 strikers, for your bravery!

In solidarity—

JoAnn Gilbaugh, Branch 9

Branch Items

New Jersey Merged

This will serve as official notice to all members of New Jersey Merged Branch 38 that two votes will be taken at the monthly branch meeting on April 1, 2020, at 7:30 p.m., at the Elks BPO Lodge 2116, 665 Rahway Ave., Woodbridge.

The first vote will be on a proposed merger with Branch 1089, Lakewood, NJ.

The second vote concerns proposed bylaw changes. One change involves moving the title and duties of the health benefit representative from the office of director of retired members to the office of full-time area representative. This proposal will neither add nor eliminate any current officers.

Two additional changes involve increasing the funds designated for the congressional conference and the retiree banquet. These changes will not represent an increase in the dues, but will only increase the funds dedicated for these two functions, in response to the increased cost of the events.

Details of the proposed merger and the proposed bylaw changes are available at the branch web site (branch38nalc.com), or by contacting President O'Neill at 973-564-7244 (ext. 18).

I want to thank everyone whose name appeared in the February issue of *The Postal Record* as a contributor to the Letter Carrier Political Fund. This is, without question, the number one priority of the NALC and of Branch 38. The passage of H.R. 2382, the USPS Fairness Act, is one example of what we can do as an organization when we have the necessary tools. We have much more to do in order to make this law, and there will be many more challenges in the near and distant future.

Once again, thanks to all who already contribute, and to those who have not yet signed on, please consider doing so. We need everyone on board in order to secure our future.

Michael J. O'Neill, Branch 38

New Orleans, Louisiana

My fellow letter carriers—

I sincerely hope this incoming new year find you in good health and sound of mind. We have a lot to be grateful for, the gift of life, freedoms that others will not partake of!

I'd like to take this opportunity to recognize one of our very own letter carriers, Gerald Soileau of LaFayette, LA Branch 1760.

On Saturday, Dec. 28, Brother Soileau doing his customary duties heard a loud noise and yelled, "Is that thunder?" Hearing it again, he ran out the building to investigate. He saw a vehicle flipped over and in flames. He looked to the right and saw a plane that had crashed. Hearing victims yelling for help, he rushed to action. As he approached the burning aircraft, adrenaline kicked in. Gerald was able to help a burning passenger with burns on more than 90 percent of his body.

The passenger crawled out the plane when Gerald moved him away from the flames of the burning plane, which had disintegrated. He noticed two people had been thrown from the plane. The other three were burned to death. As

he surveyed the debris, he noticed a young lady trying to get up but to no avail. She was coworker wife, Skylar Sam. Together, they saved two and five died, four from the plane and one bystander. We lost Carly McCord, WDSU sports anchor.



New Jersey Merged Br. 38 presented a 70-year plaque to Donald Autenrieth. Pictured (l to r) are Branch Treasurer Joe Rutkoski, Autenrieth's wife, Autenrieth and Branch President Mike O'Neill.

Thanks to Gerald and Skylar's bravery, courageous act of heroism lives were saved. Some people go in shock mode where others react. We have heroes amongst us! Let us all do what we can, when we can, for as long as we can. Give to LPCF. Remember inoculations, shingles shots, pneumonia shots and flu shots.

Yours in unionism—

Marshall Wayne Smith, Branch 124

Norristown, Pennsylvania

Happy New Year. Hopefully 2020 will be a little more in focus.

We have a so-called president that is trying to dismantle the P.O. by privatizing it. If you have never voted before, now is the time to start—your job depends on it. The Post Office was not created to make a profit, it was created to help people send messages to people far away. In the beginning, you had to pay to get a letter from someone far away who sent it to you, then B. Franklin said, "This isn't working," so he created the stamp so the sender would pay for the letter to be sent. This is *our* Post Office. Get out and vote!

Everyone should have a hero in their life, someone you can look up to and ask for advice and just to chill with when needed. My father-in-law was my hero. He told me to join the P.O. He was a carrier back in the '70s in Philadelphia for 12 years, went to college at night to better himself, left the P.O. and went to work for the Navy, where he retired a few years ago. The reason I'm saying this is that he found out he had congestive heart failure 14 years ago and was told by the doctors that if he didn't change his life, he would be gone in a few years. So what did he do? He changed his life. He stopped smoking and having a beer after work, watched what he ate—anything that the doctors said. With that, he was able to see his first grandson (my son) graduate from high school and go on to college, and was able to meet three more grandchildren. He passed just before Christmas and will be missed.

In memory of Fran!

Joel Stimmler, Branch 542

Oklahoma City, Oklahoma

As we start a new year, the Postal Service is still being smothered under the cumbersome burden of the outrageous requirement of prefunding of health benefits of retirees who haven't even been born yet. And this administration is still seeking to reduce postal employees pay and benefits and still seeking privatization of the Postal Service as a way to stem the hemorrhaging caused by the onerous prefunding put in place in 2006 by a lame-duck legislature.

This being an election year, all of those things are on the line and how the election turns out could have a devastating affect on whether the Service continues to survive. The Postal Service shouldn't be about politics, nevertheless politics are heavily involved in whether or not it survives as the only government entity actually mentioned in our Constitution. We all have a stake in making sure that who we elect this year to both houses of Congress will understand the importance of what the Postal Service means to our nation and our citizens.

There are outside forces seeking to destroy the Service and they aren't going away anytime soon. We have to be vigilant and be ready when called upon by our national leaders to step and write letters, call our congress-creatures, send emails, attend rallies and contact our members of Congress no matter what party they are in. Our benefits, our retirements, the very existence of our retirements and our benefits, and the jobs of our active members are at stake. The Postal Service is still the first line of communication for millions of our fellow citizens and we still perform a highly important and necessary function to this nation and its citizens. As someone once said, "If it is to be, it is up to we!"

Bob Bearden, Branch 458

Philadelphia, Pennsylvania

As we begin 2020, we have 35 new shop stewards representing our 2,000 members on the workroom floor in Philadelphia. I want to thank you and promise that the branch officers will be there to support you in any way we can. Remember, it is a privilege to represent our members and with that privilege comes an awesome responsibility.

If you contended for shop steward and were not successful, I encourage you to stay involved. I admire anyone who aspires to make work-life a more pleasant experience. It is one of the most unselfish acts I can think of. When you participated in the election, you were making a statement. You were saying to your co-workers that you were willing to place your self-interest aside in exchange for the common good. Thank you for caring enough to take a chance by throwing your hat in the ring. In doing so, you are to be respected and held in high esteem.

The new union representatives will receive as much training as possible. I want them to understand that they are not in this endeavor alone. Lean on us, call us and communicate with us. We will always be there for you.

If I may offer one final piece of advice to those newly elected shop stewards, it would be to recognize that everyone is different. Everyone

has their own story and not everyone sees the world as you may. The members you have the privilege to represent, want to be heard, understood, connected with, and treated with dignity as well as respect.

Joe Rodgers, Branch 157

Racine, Wisconsin

Why do restaurant servers wait until *after* you have a mouthful before asking, “how is everything?” Earbuds are getting smaller and smaller while I’m still trying to shake off the iPod. Technology is moving at warp speed while I hang onto a 20-year old truck.

Tired? Exhausted? Beat down? Have you thrown enough F-bombs this holiday season to where you’re drawing a line through a T to make an F? If you pinged on any of the above, then congratulations, you made it through another dysfunctional, chaotic holiday season at USPS. It would be nice if management didn’t wait until December before realizing the holidays are in full swing. We should remind management in March that Christmas is right around the corner. That way, we get our list of equipment that’s off limits that much sooner.

Long days and into the night prompted one of my coworkers to ask when this became a second-shift job. I was told I’m taking too long between relays. When our daily mantra is “check your DPS,” I’m doing just that. Flipping over upside down mail and turning around backwards mail. All take time. Let’s not forget the missing DPS. Where does it go? It never seems to find its way home. It just stays missing.

NALC continually fights for the survival of the Postal Service. I’m wondering why management doesn’t have a dog in this fight. No mail; no boss to count it. No carriers; no boss to supervise them. No Post Office; no 5-to-1 supervisor to carrier ratio. You get the point.

Congratulations, Debbie Matusewick and Jeff Egresi, on your recent retirements. On behalf of a grateful branch, your deeds have not gone unnoticed and your contributions to this branch are immeasurable.

Chris Paige, Branch 436

Saginaw, Michigan

Greetings, brothers and sisters. Our recently-held Christmas party went off without a hitch, thanks to Ashlee Hoyt and Crystal Ranville. They do an amazing job of coordinating everything, and we are thankful for them.

We would like to recognize Terry Ewing on his efforts for our branch. He has been our health benefits representative for as long as I can remember, and he never stops working. He recently won first place in the nation for his newsletter article—just one of many accolades he has received in his time as health benefits rep. We can’t express enough how much he is appreciated. Thank you, Terry, for a job well done.

In closing, I am sorry to report the deaths of Alan Kern, Dale Stevens and Jerry Przybylski. All three of them were retirees from Branch 74, and will truly be missed. Our thoughts and prayers are with their families.

Jennifer Frasle, Branch 74

St. Louis, Missouri

It wasn’t easy, but on Feb. 5, the 116th Congress passed H.R. 2382, the USPS Fairness Act, by a bipartisan margin of 309-106. The bill would finally eliminate the burdensome pre-fund requirement of paying for future retiree health benefits. Of the hundreds of federal agencies, only the U.S. Postal Service was singled out with the congressional requirement to fully fund those obligations placing the USPS at a decide competitive disadvantage over the last 14 years.

H. R. 2382 was introduced by Oregon Rep. Peter DeFazio in April 2019. DeFazio stated that, “the pre-funding mandate had not only prevented the USPS from investing in services technology and products, but has also threatened core services including door-to-door delivery and six-day delivery. The legislation will not only end USPS’s financial crisis, but will allow the agency to invest in critical improvements, all while maintaining its commitments to retirees health benefits.”

The next impasse the bill faces is on the Senate side, which thus far has thwarted the advancement of any meaningful labor related legislation. For all the malicious attacks on the democratically controlled House of Representatives, it is the House that has passed more than 400 bills and sent them on to the U.S. Senate and Majority Leader Mitch McConnell, who have failed to act on any of them, including pro-worker legislation like the minimum wage hike and laws to make union organizing easier.

We need to act this fall to elect middle-class-minded, worker-friendly candidates to the House and the Senate. The current administration is proposing cuts to entitlement programs like Social Security and Medicare to pay for their massive tax cuts to corporations and the wealthy. For the USPS Fairness Act to become law, we need pro-worker legislators to represent us.

Tom Schulte, Branch 343

San Antonio, Texas

Greetings, brothers and sisters. Our activists and contract enforcers have just returned from our Region 10 Spring School in Grapevine, TX. It was nice to see a fresh batch of stewards as well as our more experienced members gathering and absorbing information to enhance their ability to enforce the contract and protect the members they serve. These people voluntarily gave up their holiday week-end to educate themselves on how to be more effective in enforcing the contract, so when you see your steward at your station, stop them and say thank you for the work that they do for you.

A new era has started for Branch 421. We have moved into our new building at 6218 Krempen Ave. While there is extensive remodeling that needs to be done to turn the warehouse into a union hall, the administrative portion of the building is up and running. If we’re lucky, the building should be fully functional around July. Check your email, our Facebook page and the branch website (nalc421.com) for updates.

Vote by mail is a huge initiative supported by the NALC to increase revenue and provide job security. Making vote by mail the law of the land in Texas is a gamechanger in the two areas just mentioned, and it does one other very important thing—it increases voter participation. One of our own, Homer Hernandez, is leading this effort by working to obtain one million signatures across Texas to present to the Texas legislature. Contact him at 210-744-2602 or homer-postal421@yahoo.com for more information.

Congrats to Erin McLaughlin on her completion of branch officer training in Washington, DC, and Leneea Segovia and Erin McLaughlin for their completion of Dispute Resolution Team training in Silver Spring, MD.

Tony Boyd, Branch 421

San Diego, California

Hello from cold and rainy San Diego. Maybe not as cold as where you are, but it’s cold for us.

It was a busy year for us here at Branch 70 last year. We filed more than 1,700 grievances

COLA: Cost-of-living adjustment

- ▶ Following the release of the July 2019 consumer price index (CPI), the cost-of-living adjustment (COLA) under the 2016-2019 National Agreement is **\$624 annually**. This COLA is based on the change in the CPI from the base index month to July 2019, with the previous six COLAs subtracted.
- ▶ The 2021 projected COLAs for CSRS and FERS, which are based on the CPI’s increase between the third quarter of 2019 and third quarter of 2020, is **0.5 percent** and will be finalized

with the publication of the September 2020 CPI in October 2020.

- ▶ The 2021 COLA under the Federal Employees’ Compensation Act (FECA) is projected to be **0.4 percent** following the release of the January CPI. This COLA is based on the change in the CPI between December 2019 and December 2020 and will be finalized with the release of the December 2020 CPI in January 2021.

Visit nalc.org for the latest updates.

Branch Items

as of this writing. It seems with each year, and each new crop of supervisors, managers, and upper management personnel, we have to re-educate everyone about the contract through the grievance procedure. Especially the new employees who immediately jump into management without the proper training and without any leadership training at all. They are the easiest for upper management to manipulate.

We have two offices scheduled to have the caser/streeter program implemented. We haven't been given a date yet. We also have one office with four vehicles with the cameras inside and outside of the vehicles. Some carriers feel their privacy is being invaded, while others see it as an opportunity to show management what we really do out there, and how long it takes.

We look forward to the new challenges that await us in 2020 and are prepared to meet them head on. We expect an attack on our rights as a labor organization. That is why it is so vitally important to be involved in what is going on legislatively. They are coming after our Social Security and Medicare. Remember, if you are under FERS, Social Security is part of your retirement.

So let's all pay attention and step up to the plate when called to do so. Our jobs depend on it. Please contribute to LCPF.

In unionism—

George Elias, Branch 70

Seattle, Washington

While management is busy fiddling around with Consolidated Casing, our postal fleet is going up in flames. But we can't worry about everything, now, can we? No. The kids should know better than to play with matches. Well, it's not that the carriers are smoking in the vehicles; it's the vehicles that are doing all the smoking. Yes, our postal trucks are spontaneously combusting at an alarming rate—26 this year as of October. These things should come with a Surgeon General's warning. "Caution: This vehicle is an incendiary trap. Exercise extreme care whenever driving, and/or sitting, and/or standing, and/or being in the general vicinity of this vehicle. Drivers should approach with caution as evidently these long-overdue-for-an-upgrade

postal vehicles, are highly temperamental and could blow up at the slightest provocation." We are now a meme. The photo of a flaming postal vehicle has been viewed by millions online.

Our Long Life Vehicles (LLVs) are well past their pull date. The Grumman LLV, with an expected lifespan of 24 years, which was extended by the USPS in 2009 to 30 years, were first contracted and delivered in the year 1987. Hmmm—that doesn't speak well of their shelf life, even with their extended extension, these babies are past being extinct. There wouldn't be anything to bitch about if these LLVs were reliable, but the only reliable thing is their probability to catch fire. If these were groceries, they'd be labeled inedible. You know, all that curdled, slimy, oozy, moldy *eww* food. But since their flaws and shortcomings are not visibly apparent to the untrained eye, and you can't inspect them like a piece of fruit, it's hard to know when you're strapping yourself into a ticking time bomb. At what point does this rattle trap turn into a death trap?

Don Nokes, Branch 79

Silver Spring, Maryland

After witnessing the numerous errors and dishonesty recently displayed by the area inspection team, I was inspired to coin a new phrase: "So incompetent, you can't even do wrong right!" I have become extremely pessimistic regarding the current management internal disconnect between their various levels and reality in general. I'm also bombarded by customer complaints regarding horrendous service that is outside my ability to assist. Maybe I'm over the hill, but it seems like people just don't seem to take pride in their job anymore.

Recently, while providing auxiliary assistance and carrying these issues around with me, an elderly customer opened the door and yelled for me after I had completed her delivery. My mind said, "Here we go; another customer complaint; try to be nice and patient." The lady asked who delivered the mail on Saturday (it was Monday and Saturday was a cold, sleet and freezing rain day). Obviously, this is a complaint about damaged mail. I told her I didn't know who delivered that day and was prepared to apologize profusely when she said, "I love all you carriers, but that one was someone very special. I fell right here on my sidewalk and hurt my knees, and my caregiver could not lift me up. The weather was bad too and I was laying there getting wet with my caregiver. Out of the blue, this mailman appeared, and lifted me up and carried me inside. Please find out his name for me."

I was flabbergasted and determined to discover who this inspiring hero was. Come to find out, a CCA with about a month's experience represented us "big time," and thought it was no big deal. Thank you, Darrell Williams, for providing this customer and me with exactly what we desperately needed.

Lee Taylor, Branch 2611

South Jersey, New Jersey

Is it time to bring back the "casual" workforce? I think the Postal Service has to acknowledge

the CCA workforce classification has been an utter disaster, and their trying to establish a more flexible workforce at a cheaper price was not the answer. For those of you who don't remember the days of casuals, they were those temporary employees hired for a limited term, usually 90 days, to cover for vacations and carriers out with an illness or injury, or cover a carrier who may go out on a detail assignment. This type of method seemed to work fine because management would have plenty of career PTFs to be the flexible workforce they so desperately needed, and the casuals were there to provide a buffer when times were hectic and the regular workforce was off. Casuals knew they were only there for a short time, and believe it or not, a lot of them only wanted something temporary either because they were in between jobs or on a furlough.

With the latest settlement on converting our CCAs to PTF career employees, I am hopeful the new agreement will get rid of the CCA classification and try to incorporate a more career workforce and maybe bring back the casual employee or something like it. I think the Postal Service can save a lot of money with this new/old employee, and go back to the days of in office training of the casual, since we have many qualified carriers who could do this and would be happy to help knowing they are only there temporary. The CCA project isn't working as can be attested to the more than 50 percent retention rate. Something needs to change, so maybe going back in time could be the answer.

Gary DiGiacomo, Branch 908

Southeast Pennsylvania Merged

Hot issues! These are the things that management places their laser focus on at the time. Please stop by our branch meetings the first Wednesday of every month to hear in more detail. I've placed an emphasis on this in the reports to the membership at our meetings because it may help you understand why your offices feel like they are under attack. But please understand one thing: every office in the country is "under attack." It's just the new approach at the higher levels that management has been taking.

Attendance: The focus is for obvious reasons. But the union disagrees with management's discipline-first policy on every issue. They are having weekly attendance reviews at the district level. On the telecons, they are ordered to discipline carriers for absences. The problem is that any discipline must be for just cause. And while we are doing great in defending our brethren, we have lost some carriers due to exceptionally bad attendance records. Now, they are trying to write people up for only a few occurrences. Please be careful.

Safety: The district manager has made a new year's resolution to reduce accidents in the district by 50 percent. This is a very lofty goal. The union would be first in line to reduce accidents of any type by 100 percent. We would only differ in the tactics used negatively against us and any discipline used to meet their goals.

While these hot issues are very valid and need to be addressed, NALC prefers a more broad-based approach to reduction of employee absences and safety accidents. Neither of these issues are necessarily the fault of the carrier. Let's work together!

How to submit items

Branch presidents or their designated scribes may submit Branch Items to *The Postal Record* by mail at 100 Indiana Ave. NW, Washington, DC 20001-2144; email at postalrecord@nalc.org; or fax at 202-737-1540. The deadline is the 10th of the preceding month, or if it falls on a weekend or holiday, 9 a.m. E.T. the first business day after. For the April issue, the deadline is 9 a.m. on Wednesday, March 11. The *NALC Constitution* limits items to 300 words. Photos should be in color; photos sent by email should be at least 150 dpi resolution. Please identify every person in the photo. *The Postal Record* reserves the right not to print every photo received. Hard-copy photos will not be returned.

#IfYouWorkLongExhaustingHoursYouWillBreakDown!

#WorkHarderToGetCarriersToBuyIntoSafety-NotDisciplineOrEmbarrassment

We have started our annual Letter Carrier Political Fund drive. In an election year, it's most impactful.

Eric Jackson, Branch 725

Springfield, Ohio

Over the years, I've worked for dozens of supervisors, 204-b's, POOMs, OICs, postmasters, and district managers. They have run the gamut from awful to incompetent. Most were mediocre at best, but occasionally we did get a good supervisor.

One of the good ones was an OIC assigned to Springfield for about a month. She was a breath of fresh air among our usual malodorous postal management. Among other things, she installed Plexiglas on every case and encouraged us to place photos of what was important to us under the Plexiglas. She said it was to remind carriers why they came to work every day, and to work safely.

Her name is Jean Lovejoy, and she is now our District Manager. She has said that she wants more employee engagement from management, meaning treating employees with dignity and respect and creating an atmosphere where we want to come to work. She also wants to focus on safety.

I don't expect miracles. After all, the "good ol' boy" network of shuffling bad supervisors from office to office has been entrenched in the Postal Service long before I hired on. But for the first time in years, I think there is hope of some real change in managements treatment of letter carriers starting from district management on down.

We can only hope. But until the changes occur, your union will continue to fight for that dignity, respect, and safety for all carriers.

What happened to the Plexiglas? When our postmaster returned, she had all the Plexiglas removed, stating we had no right to have personal items at our cases.

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

Brian Gourilis, Branch 45

Toledo, Ohio

As I stated in my last article, we were encouraged at the beginning of this year that management had finally seen the light, yes and no. Many grievances are being settled before reaching the arbitration level. A recent award may have provided the current to the light bulb.

The award paid the carriers and union hall alike an escalated award. Management has now come to the table as the union has agreed to compensate the carriers the remedy in lieu of the union. In the most egregious case, a carrier was originally owed \$10. They received just over \$1,500 as a corrective remedy. There have been dozens of similar resolves.

On the flipside, we started off January with a total of 140 grievances. That's probably more than some branches file in a year. In review, upper management gets it but their frontline supervisors don't. Those in Labor Relations need to get the message to the front line supervisors. There are proper procedures set forth in the

various manuals and handbooks. If supervisors choose to ignore the proper procedures, the Postal Service will pay. It just baffles me that upper management puts up with what appears to be intentional mismanagement.



Mon-yough, PA Br. 332 presented a 70-year plaque to Lou Zell.

There's a proper order used in putting together a car on the assembly line. If that procedure isn't used the end product is flawed, costing the company cash. The same is true at the Post Office. Procedures have been established and if followed, all is well. If not, cha-ching!

Branch 100 will be sending a delegation to Washington, DC, March 25-26 to the Ohio Legislative Conference. It would be wonderful if 2020 is the year we finally get reform and the pre-funding debate decided.

Again this year, at our February meeting, Rachel Roy organized the Black History Month buffet. Girl, the food was great!

Roy Bricker, Branch 100

Tri-Valley, California

If you read the monthly Branch Items in *The Postal Record*, which you obviously do, you are aware that most branches continually deal with tons of negative crap coming from USPS in their respective districts. Sadly, about 75 percent of the issues I deal with on a daily basis are of the negative variety, including repetitive contractual and disciplinary grievances, workplace injuries, abusive supervisors and the very few "frequent flyer" carriers who always seem to be in trouble at work. The good 25 percent of my workday comes from interactions with the letter carriers of the branch, many of whom I have known for a long, long time.

As we begin a new year and a new decade, I decided to write a Branch Item of a very positive nature. At our meeting on Dec. 19, the members were informed about a "CSUN Scholarship Opportunity" being offered and fully funded by Branch 2902 retiree Fred Shaw and his wife, Lisa Guravitz. Applicants must be a child of an NALC member, with priority given to applicants whose parent is, or was (if deceased), a Branch 2902 member.

On behalf of Branch 2902, I would like to thank Fred and Lisa for going way above and beyond the call of duty by creating and funding this scholarship opportunity for the children of NALC members. I really appreciate their generosity and the fact that they took it upon themselves to do such a cool thing. That is solidarity in action, brothers and sisters. Hearing about selfless acts such as this one greatly lifts my spirits and will serve to help deflect that 75 percent of negative crap I will deal with today. Fred and Lisa, you two are aces in my book and

you've got some damned good karma coming your way.

Ray Hill, Branch 2902

Western Wayne County, Michigan

The officers, stewards, and the active and retired members of Branch 2184 warmly welcome our NALC union brothers and sisters from former Allen Park Branch 4779 into membership in our branch. Branch 2184 has a long history of no-nonsense contract enforcement and top-flight member services. We look forward to working closely with each of our Allen Park members in union solidarity for the betterment of all.

Branch 2184 received its NALC charter in 1924 and for several decades represented the city letter carriers in Dearborn. During the past 50 years, we have undertaken a series of mergers with neighboring NALC branches and we now have more than 1,300 active and retired members. The Allen Park post office has become the 20th location where city letter carriers are represented by Branch 2184.

While we always seek to promote the success of America's public Postal Service, we also recognize the best interests of the Postal Service are in many instances are not served by its badly outdated and failed management philosophy. Hence, we actively oppose the widespread and daily application of policies that emphasize disrespect, antagonistic supervisory behavior, and obsessive micromanagement instead of policies that promote mutual respect, cooperation, and trust.

Although our political enemies presently control the executive branch of government as well as the U.S. Senate, there is much that the Postal Service can and should do to survive and even prosper in these politically perilous times. There could be no better place to start than by replacing its dysfunctional labor relations model with an enlightened and respectful workplace culture that values the dignity and the contributions of every employee.

Joe Golonka, Branch 2184

Yakima, Washington

Change is a long, slow, difficult process. Most people don't like change. We get use to our routine and balk at deviation.

Postal management loves change. They love to cram new delivery procedures down our throats without testing or opposition opinion. They love spending billions of dollars on unproved systems. Then stuck with them, spend even more forcing them to work.

The only constant is change. Lately there has been some change that's 25 years too late for this old-timer, but I'm glad it's happening. Providing proper equipment to do the job safely and effectively is the crux of Article 1.

The biggest challenge that needs to happen is for management to adhere to the National Agreement. Supervisors and managers that constantly violate the contract need to be disciplined to the point of removal.

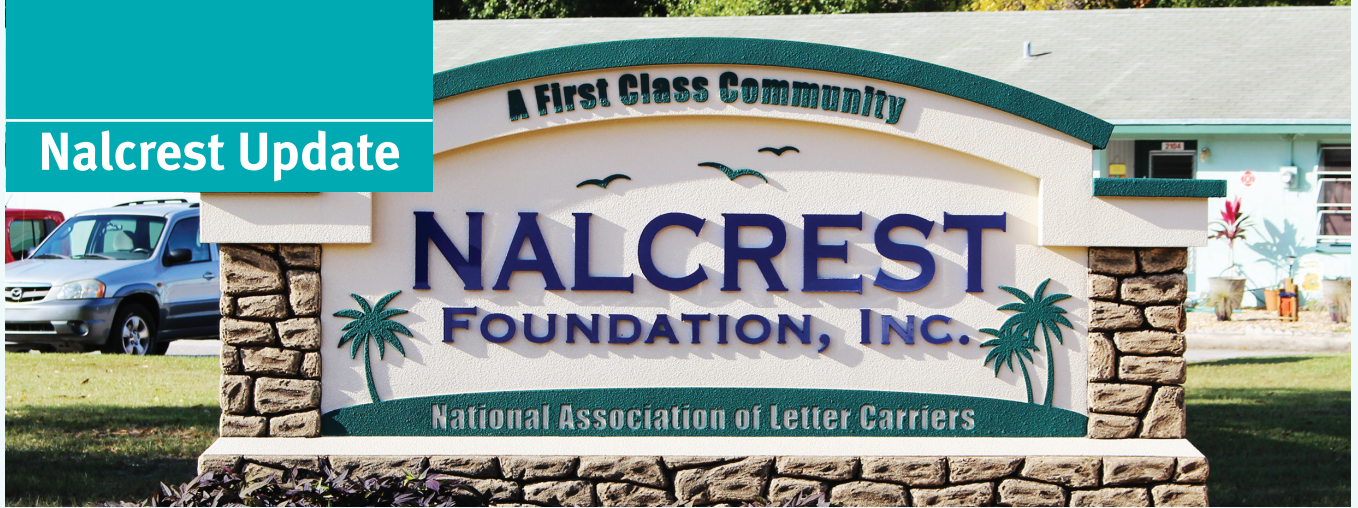
Good luck getting employment in the real world with the leadership skills you now possess. Of course, this will never happen because the insane are in charge of the asylum.

Calling it a day at the end of August. Hope y'all get new vehicles before 2025.

Peace—

J.S. Bohlinger, Branch 852

Nalcrest Update



From the Trustees

Most of you are sitting on the edge of your seats waiting for the February issue of *The Postal Record* to read the Nalcrest article. Well, because of the listings of the contributors to the Letter Carrier Political Fund, the Nalcrest article was postponed until this issue. There are many Nalcrest residents listed in the February 2020 issue as giving to LCPF.

There were many events that kicked the new year off at Nalcrest: the December 2019 Holiday parade and party; the extravagant New Year's Eve party; weekly bingo that makes many play-

ers winners; and each week is the game for smart residents, the Nalcrest Trivia Challenge. Valentine's Day finds the Nalcrest Trustees meeting at Nalcrest to have the yearly meeting with the residents. The Trustees are NALC President Fred Rolando, NALC Secretary/Treasurer Nicole Rhine, Director of Retired Members Dan Toth, NALC Trustee Mike Gill, former NALC Health Benefits Director Tom Young, former Director of Retired Members Don Southern and former NBA Region 9 Matty Rose.

Nalcrest has no vacancies for the 500 apartments (16 of which are short term rentals in fully furnished guest apartments). The waiting list to

live at Nalcrest is exceeding 140, so if you are thinking about retiring and dumping your scanner, get on the list now. Our planning and budgeting for 2020 shows that Nalcrest is the place to be, however, you *must* be a retired letter carrier member in good standing.

The Nalcrest Foundation is always improving its infrastructure and raising the cosmetic appearance of the community. Visit us at nalc.org, follow us on Facebook or just call for more info. We are Union Proud, as illustrated by the Union Made/Made in USA products for sale (pictured below).

Matty Rose

Nalcrest Trustees

NALC President Fredric Rolando

NALC Secretary-Treasurer Nicole Rhine

NALC Director of Retired Members Dan Toth

NALC Trustee Mike Gill

Nalcrest Trustees President Matty Rose

Nalcrest Trustees Vice President Tom Young

Nalcrest Trustees Vice President Don Southern



Scholarships available for Florida colleges

The Costas G. Lemonopoulos Scholarship Trust, established by the late West Coast Florida Branch 1477 member Costas G. Lemonopoulos, will award scholarships to children of NALC members attending public, four-year colleges or universities supported by the state of **Florida**, including St. Petersburg College (no private colleges, universities, or junior colleges).

For an explanation of the rules governing the awards and instructions on how your son or daughter can compete, fill out and send the form at right by **June 1** to the Costas G. Lemonopoulos Scholarship Trust, NALC, 100 Indiana Ave. NW, Washington, DC 20001-2144.

Lemonopoulos Scholarship Application

(Please print clearly)

Date _____ Check if renewal

Please send details on how I can compete for a scholarship award.

I am the _____ of active letter carrier _____
son retired

daughter deceased _____ (Name)

of Branch No. _____ City _____ State _____

My name is _____

My home address is _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

Signature of NALC parent member
(or spouse if deceased)

Signature of branch officer

NALC parent's Social Security No.

Title

Date



Crystal Bragg
Secretary

National Auxiliary Board

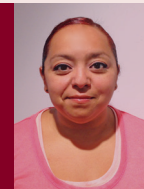
News and updates from the officers



Cythensis Lang
President



Cynthia Martinez
Vice President



Linda Davis
Asst. Secretary



Pam Fore
Treasurer

From the Secretary

Gerome Gnome arrived in Kenosha, WI, where he met with Auxiliary Branch 465 members. Members shown are: Past NALCA President Linda Kirby, Rick Willems, Jackie Adams, Ed Salo, Sue Salo and Jim Kirby. (picture 1) Gerome enjoyed Kenosha's spectacular lakefront, then Gerome traveled to Wisconsin Rapids where he met with WSALC President Scott VanDerven, Linda Kirby, Sallie Wylie and Jim Kirby (picture 2). Gerome said his good-byes and headed to his next adventure.

The national convention in Hawaii is Aug. 17–21; as you know, we will have a country store, so keep making and collecting items for the store—more information to follow as soon as details are completed. Convention registration cost is \$30 by May 15 and \$35 after May 15, payable to NALCA and mailed to NALCA Secretary Crystal Bragg. This year, our usual Wednesday luncheon will be an all-day event, “Family Fun Day”! Our day will consist of visits to: the USS Missouri, lunch at Restaurant 604,

Pearl Harbor Arizona Memorial, Punchbowl National Cemetery and Honolulu City. Each guest will receive: Lunch at Restaurant 604, a slice of banana bread, an exclusive lanyard, a full color souvenir book, a bottle of Hawaiian water and an official Pearl Harbor tote bag. Space is limited to 50 guests. The cost for “Family Fun Day” is \$125 per person.

Restaurant 604 Tour Menu—please select one of the following choices for your lunch: Kalua Pork (slow-cooked shredded pork served with rice and macaroni salad); 604 Burger (1 lb. patty, lettuce, tomato, onion and cheddar with french fries); Fish and Chips (furikake crusted catch served with thick-cut fries, Hawaiian pineapple slaw and house-made tartar sauce); Chicken Caesar Salad (fresh-cut romaine, parmesan and croutons); Garden Burger (vegetarian patty with lettuce, tomato and avocado, served with french fries); Vegetarian/Vegan/Gluten-Free Meal (half salad with oil/vinegar, half hummus). Meal includes one non-alcoholic beverage. Registrations for “Family Fun Day” are

due May 15, payable to NALCA and mailed to NALCA Secretary Crystal Bragg. Remember, space is limited, so registrations will be received on a first-come, first-serve basis.

The U.S. Department of the Interior has strict security measures for visits to USS Missouri and Arizona Memorial: 1) Each person attending “Family Fun Day” must complete a registration form; names must appear the same as on your official ID (ex: drivers licenses, birth certificate, passport, etc.). 2) Please bring vital items in a manner that they can be placed in your pocket. No purses, handbags, backpacks, camera bags, diaper bags or any other items that offer concealment are allowed. Although clear, transparent bags may be allowed with security approval. 3) Do not leave anything of value on the bus.

The due dates for convention registration and Family Fun Day are both on May 15. Mail registrations to NALCA Secretary Crystal Bragg at 835 Westland Dr., Mt. Zion, IL 62549.

Crystal Bragg



Join NALCA for FAMILY FUN DAY

Wed., Aug. 19, 2020 8:30 a.m.–5:30 p.m.

Tickets are \$125 per person and must be received by May 15. Reminder: each person must complete a form and your name must appear the same as your ID. Also, choose your lunch from the above menu. (Space is limited to 50 people.) Send form and payment to NALCA Secretary Crystal Bragg at 835 Westland Dr., Mt. Zion, IL 62549. **Make check payable to “NALCA Auxiliary” or “NALCA.”**

Name _____ Auxiliary/Branch No. _____

Lunch choice: _____



Registration for the NALCA 72nd Biennial Convention

Honolulu, HI—Aug. 17-21, 2020

Name _____ Auxiliary No. _____

Amount paid: _____

Registration fee before May 15 is \$30; after May 15 is \$35.

Send registration form and payment to NALCA Secretary Crystal Bragg at 835 Westland Dr., Mt. Zion, IL 62549. **Make check payable to “NALCA Auxiliary” or “NALCA.”**

Mutual Exchanges

CA: Fresno (4/01) to Northern VA area. Plenty of OT available. Regular carriers only. Relocating to care for family member. Joseph, 559-355-4734 or pettrock1@yahoo.com.

CA: LA (10/04) to Menifee, Sun City, Lake Elsinore, Temecula, Perris, Morena Valley or Murrieta. Bicentennial Station Branch 24, nice area. OT available. Contact mleezyn69@gmail.com or text 323-300-0341.

CA: Newport Beach (12/93) to Durango, CO or surrounding area. Beautiful area near beaches and best weather. OT available. David, 714-914-8726 (text or call) or krenik20@gmail.com.

CO: Denver (12/17) to Houston, TX. 26 offices for bidding. Eric, 720-443-9942.

FL: Davie (1/16) to Garden City, Inkster or Wayne, MI, or surrounding areas. Lots of OT. Curbside route. Call 313-410-7571 or mr.catchem@sbcglobal.net.

FL: Miami (8/97) to St. Augustine, Jacksonville, Green Cove Springs, Orange Park or surrounding areas. Regular carriers only. OT available. Great weather all year round. Moving for family reasons. Luis, 305-505-0977 or yuriperu@yahoo.com.

FL: New Port Richey (6/11) to Knoxville. Close to beaches, great fishing, boating, golfing. Hoping to move before the next school year. Regular carriers only. Christian, 727-485-6737 or palacios.c09@gmail.com.

FL: Winter Garden (9/18) to Nashville, TN, or surrounding area. Beautiful suburb of Orlando. 20 minutes from Disney World. 90 minutes from the beach. Plenty of OT available. Need to be closer to family. Dan, 407-230-8940.

NM: Albuquerque (10/07) to Myrtle Beach, SC, or surrounding area. Scenic area with lots of outdoor activities, nice weather and low cost of living. Lots of OT. Regular carriers only. Daniel, 505-301-9363 or danielsb63@msn.com.

NV: Las Vegas (3/14) to Dallas-Fort Worth, TX, or surrounding areas. Regulars only. Nice weather year-round. OT available. Moving for family reasons. Sherry, humblebee.SW@gmail.com.

OH: Toledo (11/00) to Fort Myers, FL or surrounding area. Citywide bidding. 11 offices. Plenty of OT available. Windy, 419-270-0342.

SC: Spartanburg (5/13) to Bath, Brunswick, Portland, ME or surrounding areas. Will consider other locations in Maine as well. Good seniority ranking. Route bids come available often. Nice, mild winters. Low cost of living. Family friendly. Kevin, 860-805-2868 or kevinmbyington@gmail.com.

How to place a Mutual Exchange ad

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

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

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

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

ation, city and seniority date.

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

Note: Specific route information or mention of three-way transfers will not be published, nor any wording that offers cash or property to facilitate an exchange. Mutual exchanges must be approved by both postmasters involved. Seniority of carriers involved shall be governed by Article 41, Sec. 2E of the National Agreement. Carriers may not exchange assignments, since vacated positions must be posted for bids in accordance with local and national agreements.

TX: Houston (8/98) to Chattanooga, TN. Regular carriers only. Excellent medical center, diverse communities and one of the best culinary scenes in the country. Many opportunities. Paul, p62b@hotmail.com.

WA: Bremerton (7/14) to Auburn, Kent or Covington, WA, or surrounding areas. Many options outdoors. Ferry ride to Se-

attle. Affordable housing options. David, 425-221-6727 or 454david.anderson@gmail.com.

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

Retiree Reports

Bergen County Mgd., NJ

Why is it when the mail is delivered late it is always the carrier's fault?

Why is it when the mail gets wet during a rainstorm, it is the carrier's fault?

Why is it when a patron gets a bill in the mail, it is the carrier's fault?

Why is it when a supervisor constantly ignores the contract and it results in thousands of dollars won through grievances for carriers, it is no one's fault?

Why is it that in many offices, supervisors think that it is a good idea to make territorial changes right before Christmas?

Why is it that we have supervisors who never ever delivered the mail think they have the right to tell us how the job needs to be done?

Why is it when carriers do something wrong, they get written up, but when supervisors screw up bigtime, they get promoted?

Some questions just can't be answered properly.

Dennis Spoto, Branch 425

Hartford, Connecticut

We had our Dec. Branch 86 meeting with the usual buffet dinner. It was a nice spread of food with

green salad, rolls and butter, sausage and peppers with chicken parmigiana and cheese plus soft drinks, etc. We have raffles from Buffalo Wild Wings, Dunkin Donuts and/or Olive Garden gift food certificates at most meetings.

Our union reps warned those who are considering retirement to be wary of self-styled corporations who are advertising offerings to help retirees. Many of them want you to clean out your annuity and savings accounts and turn it over to them for their own investment and profit. Apparently, a record numbers of active letter carriers are contemplating retirement from the Post Office. Sadly, the P.O. custom of local management and clerks to help you out with information and paperwork has been abolished by the Post Office. The 1-800 numbers the P.O. gives to you are often out of state. Your Branch 86 reps are happy to help you with the paperwork here in CT.

It was good to see so many carriers and spouses—250 in all at our Christmas party in Waterbury, La Bella Vista Ponte club facility. Our retirement party for Br. 86 will be Saturday, April 18.

It is good to see so many co-sponsors of legislation for elimination of penalties of Social Security for postal retirees in Congress now.

Ed Mulrenan, Branch 86

Little Falls, New Jersey

With the winter now here, letter carriers should be focused and pay special attention towards maintaining their safety and health. Here in the northeast part of our country, temperatures seem to plummet at a moment's notice where delivering our nation's mail can be challenging at times. With the constant monitoring of letter carriers by tracking, letter carriers may feel (at times) unable to fully concentrate on the delivery of mail and at the same time look to avoid slips, trips and falls.

When starting this occupation at an early stage of one's life (hopefully), and then going to a middle age and looking forward to retirement, the delivery of mail requires extra attention to keeping a safe and healthy work environment. Letter carriers must not forget that their safety and health should be prioritized when delivering the mail. An employee should have a goal in mind thinking the way one feels when starting a day's work should be exactly the way that one should be able to feel when finishing a day's work.

Joseph Murone, Branch 120

New Orleans, Louisiana

“What's Going On?”—Marvin Gaye

As a former retired union steward, I never did a grievance without witnesses or evidence—just saying. If you like clothes on your back, a roof over your head, food on the table, show up this year and especially Nov. 3, 2020. Let me quote President Rolando: “Our endorsements, for resident and others, will be based on issues affecting our jobs and... ‘retired life,’ not on social or cultural issues that, while important, can be divisive to many members.”

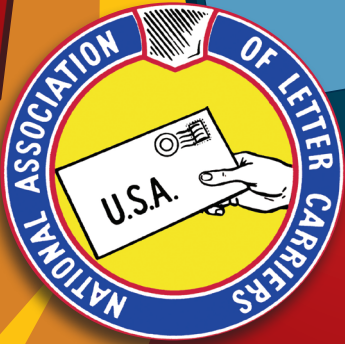
All carriers, retired or otherwise, have all the tools needed at nalc.org to stay informed and contribute to the Letter Carrier Political Fund, where your money went to 87 Republicans who voted in favor of the Fairness Act (read the story on inequality.org). More Republicans live in rural areas and want their mail; me too, helps my pension!

Ironically, a very good book on this is from FOX News reporter Juan Williams, titled *What Do I Have To Lose?* Great question, great conservative reporter.

Happy 19th Amendment to the Branch 124 lady carriers: Gwen Poree, Karen Butler, Glenda Garnett, Rachel Linker, Dianne Sanders, Veltina Scott-Wylie, Loletha Foster, Tamberlynn Hawkins.

Stay invoked, stay informed.

Stanley Taylor, Branch 124



social media

Join the conversation!

Follow NALC HQ's social media accounts to get the latest letter carrier news and updates straight from the source. Follow our pages; interact with us by liking, commenting and sharing content and encourage others to do the same. For suggestions and photo/video submissions, please use social@nalc.org.



@*nalc.national*



@*NALC_National*



@*lettercarriers*



*National
Association of
Letter Carriers
(NALC)*



@*ThePostalRecord*



*NALC Member App
(iTunes, Google Play)*

Help your NALC family affected by natural disasters

The **NALC Disaster Relief Foundation** provides hands-on relief for carriers affected by natural disasters, such as wildfires, hurricanes, floods and tornados. It receives donations to be used to assist regular NALC members affected by natural disasters.

NALC response teams throughout the country are activated to go to disaster locations and offer assistance to NALC members and their families who live in the same household. Basic supplies, including uniforms and food, are available for those who need assistance.

Financial support may be available depending on the availability of funding and qualifying criterias. Any regular member of NALC who has faced hardship as a result of a natural disaster will be able to apply for assistance.

Make a donation by sending a check or money order to:

**NALC Disaster Relief Foundation
100 Indiana Ave. NW
Washington, DC 20001-2144**

The foundation is a 501(c)(3). Your contribution to the NALC Disaster Relief Foundation may be eligible for a tax deduction. It is recommended you seek further advice from your tax advisor.



**NALC
Disaster
Relief
Foundation**