

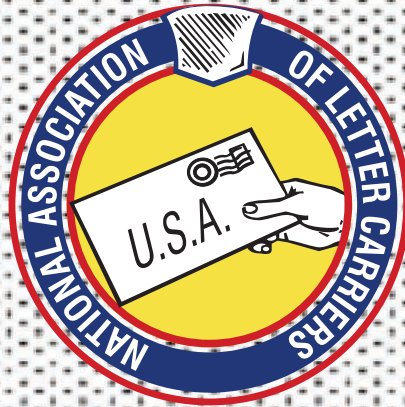
Volume 137/Number 11 December 2024

The Postal Record

The monthly journal of the NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF LETTER CARRIERS

In this issue

President's Message	1
National Officers	32
Branch Items	56
Branch Election Notices	61



HOUSE REPEALS WEP & GPO

NALC URGES SENATE TO VOTE FOR THE SOCIAL SECURITY FAIRNESS ACT

—PAGE 5

President Renfroe names Ballot Committee for ratification vote

—PAGE 4

Looking for the latest NALC news? Give it a listen wherever you stream your favorite podcasts!

NALC's podcast "You Are the Current Resident" is available on Apple Podcasts, Spotify, Google Podcasts, and wherever you listen to podcasts.

During each episode, NALC President Brian Renfro and guests discuss vital topics affecting the letter carrier craft and the union. The show's format also includes interviews with other NALC leaders to talk in depth about issues affecting letter carriers and the union.



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Postal finances in context



**Brian L.
Renfro**

In November the Postal Service announced its financial results for the 2024 fiscal year, which included a net loss of \$9.5 billion. This announcement comes as the agency faces strong headwinds addressing a dual challenge—navigating the negative impact of the recent pandemic (and the related inflation that followed) on mail volume and stamp prices, while also attempting to restructure itself to meet the country's evolving postal needs.

The pandemic led many mailers to cut back on their mail volume, and most of that mail has not returned. This business reduction has been accompanied by inflation, which sharply increased Postal Service costs, leading it to raise stamp prices,

which in of itself has contributed to lower mail volume. This is key, since the Postal Service is solely funded through earned revenue, not tax dollars.

Separately, but equally significant, USPS is in the midst of a 10-year plan to transform its operations to meet the rising demand for package delivery. It is making the needed investments to transform its networks, which were built mostly for now-declining letter mail, to handle surging parcel volume and a changing mix of First Class and Marketing Mail. On an operational level, initial positive results are starting to show—but there is much to do to achieve financial stability.

The \$9.5 billion loss would have been even higher if not for NALC's successful effort to eliminate the unfair mandate that the Postal Service pre-fund future retiree benefits (at a yearly cost of \$5.5 billion). Still, the recent annual loss, following the previous year's \$6.5 billion deficit, is unsustainable. This challenging financial context will continue to shape the legislative and political challenges our union will face in 2025 and beyond.

We know that letter carriers' work is an indispensable part of our society and democracy. In fact, the Postal Service is one of the few federal entities based in the Constitution because the Founding Fathers knew the role it would play in uniting our vast country. This universal network, powered by letter carriers who deliver to 169 million addresses six—and even seven—days a week, remains our nation's most secure communications network.

This is why it is critical for political leaders to do everything they can to support letter carriers by helping USPS weather this financial uncertainty. Unfortunately, they have repeatedly fallen short. Even something as obvious as pre-funding reform took more than a decade for lawmakers to fix.

We are waiting for two simple, long-overdue steps to be taken. One would be to stop the raid on postal pension funds and correct the misallocation of pension liabilities by implementing the 2010 Segal Report's recommended reforms. That would have saved the USPS \$3.2 billion in 2024. Unfortunately, the three most recent administrations (Obama, Trump and Biden) have failed to take executive action to direct the Office of Personnel Management to fairly value the Postal Service's pension liabilities.

The other step, which would require legislation, would be to allow the Postal Service to invest its retirement funds in safe private-sector securities, instead of only in low-yielding Treasury bonds. That would, over time, produce billions of dollars in additional annual revenue, having a positive impact on USPS finances.

These commonsense actions will be among our top priorities as the new Congress convenes and the second Trump administration takes office. I have no doubt that our great union will play a leading role in executing these efforts.

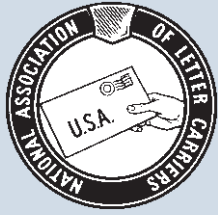
It is no secret that our recent round of collective bargaining took place in this environment of extreme financial stress. While some businesses, including in the shipping industry, are recording profits, the Postal Service continues to post losses. This setback, however, doesn't reduce our commitment, weaken our fighting spirit or alter our goal of achieving fair wages and improved working conditions.

Those who were letter carriers during our last round of collective bargaining, and before that, know this is not the first time we have negotiated during a challenging financial situation. That said, the recent period has been unique because the financial stress that began with the Great Recession of 2008-09 was severely deepened by the COVID-19 pandemic. This is why we stayed in the fight for 20 tireless months to reach a fair and rewarding tentative agreement that now is subject to a ratification vote, rather than pursuing interest arbitration, where the Postal Service is certain to lean on its financial instability.

Part of being a skilled negotiator is understanding what your counterpart's next move or argument might be. While we built an excellent and strong case for arbitration, after weighing the Postal Service's projected—and now announced—losses, among many other factors, I felt confident that the tentative agreement we reached was far more favorable to every single one of our active members than an arbitration board's decision would be.

The future of the tentative agreement is now up to our active members. I encourage all voting-eligible members to inform yourselves about the tentative agreement and understand what it would mean for your pay, working conditions and future. I urge you to carefully review the materials that are on nalc.org and that were sent to you. Most importantly, please be sure to complete your ballot and mail it back. As always, your vote is your voice.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Brian L. Renfro".



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

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Contents

Volume 137/Number 11 December 2024

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16

Departments

- 1 **President's Message**
- 3 **Letter from the Editor**
- 4 **News**
- 26 **Proud to Serve**
- 32 **Executive Vice President**
- 33 **Vice President**
- 34 **Secretary-Treasurer**
- 35 **Assistant Secretary-Treasurer**
- 36 **Director of City Delivery**
- 37 **Director of Safety and Health**
- 38 **Director of Retired Members**
- 39 **Director of Life Insurance**
- 40 **Director, Health Benefit Plan**
- 41 **Contract Talk**
- 43 **MDA Report**
- 44 **Staff Reports**
- 46 **Annuity charts**
- 51 **Veterans Group**
- 52 **Honor Roll**
- 53 **Retiree Reports**
- 55 **Nalcrest Update**
- 56 **Branch Items**
- 59 **Cost-of-living adjustment**
- 61 **Election Notices**
- 62 **Auxiliary Update**
- 63 **State Summaries**
- 64 **In Memoriam/ Mutual Exchange ads**

Features

- 4 **Ballot Committee announced**
President Renfro appoints a committee to monitor the balloting process in the ratification vote of the proposed NALC/USPS National Agreement
- 5 **News from Washington**
The House passes WEP and GPO repeal and sends bill to Senate; Senate committee holds hearing on USPS BOG nominees
- 6 **Disaster relief**
The NALC Disaster Relief Foundation and its donors aid letter carriers who have been affected by hurricanes
- 11 **Give through CFC**
There is still time to contribute through the world's largest annual workplace charity campaign
- 16 **A season for caring**
We examine how carriers spread goodwill and cheer throughout the communities they serve, during the holidays and beyond

Madison might, media malfeasance, magazine magic



Philip
Dine

Wisconsin’s “Enough is enough” rally, held a few weeks ago as I write this, did NALC proud—garnering coverage on more than a dozen major news outlets around the Badger State and sparking an enthusiastic public reaction.

The event, held in the state capital, Madison, featured presidents of out-of-town branches: Green Bay Branch 619’s Pat Van Egeren, Milwaukee Branch 2’s Rob Kosier, and Fond du Lac Branch 125’s Aaron Le Duc. That translated into coverage by various Madison outlets (*Wisconsin State Journal*, WORT community radio, network TV affiliates) and beyond, such as the state’s largest newspaper, the *Milwaukee Journal*, plus Milwaukee’s ABC and Fox stations, 80 miles to the east; and the ABC affiliate in Green Bay, 140 miles up north.

And because it coincided with the Wisconsin State Association of Letter Carriers fall seminar, the 110 letter carriers attending the seminar from around Wisconsin attended the rally at the capitol building. Other major Wisconsin unions, including the AFT and UAW, were there to lend support.

These elements were due in no small measure to tactical decisions made by WSALC President Dawn Ahnen, perhaps not coincidentally a Marine veteran who joined the military while still in high school. When necessary, reporters were kept in line by this 34-year carrier and past president of Beloit Branch 715, who also sits on the state AFL-CIO’s executive board. She and Rob carved out time to do a pre-rally interview with Milwaukee’s Spectrum News 1, further boosting media interest.

The blanket news coverage accomplished the mission of informing the public, as carriers quickly learned once back on their routes.

“We got tons of positive reinforcement from the community,” Dawn said. “My customers said they saw it on the news. A lot said they didn’t know that these crimes were happening, and that ‘We’re going to watch out for you guys, keep a light on and watch out for letter carriers more.’”

A *New Yorker* cartoon decades ago pictured a newsroom with a sign, “Danger, journalist doing math.” I’ll propose a new version to fit today’s media scene: “Danger, journalist doing fact-check.” Rather than fact-checking other media outlets or political debates, news organizations might first get their own houses in order, because few journalists possess either the requisite expertise or objectivity to play this role.

Case in point: Reuters recently fact-checked a story about

the Postal Service allegedly endorsing the Democratic presidential ticket (it hadn’t), but in so doing Reuters circulated the myth that USPS is taxpayer-funded.

In fairness, Reuters’ global enterprise editor along with its editor for ethics and standards engaged with us when we brought it to their attention, and then corrected the article to state that USPS earns its own revenue. However, the update put the clarification in the ninth paragraph, after repeating the initial error—which the editors said was Reuters’ policy.

I suggested to them that moving forward, Reuters might consider altering that practice by putting the correction up top, since not every reader will wade through the updated version to discover what’s new. We’ll keep you apprised.

OK, “magic” might be a bit hyperbolic, but alliteration carried the day (smile). In any case, NALC and *The Postal Record* continued their run of success in the International Labor Communications Association’s annual competition for labor journalists, the largest in North America. In the 2024 ILCA contest, NALC garnered four awards, including two first-place honors—one for a story on labor history, the other for earned media coverage of the very “Enough is enough” rallies cited above. A full report of the recognition accorded *The Postal Record* can be found on page 15.

While welcome, this is perhaps no surprise, given the dedication of this magazine’s staff. I spent a quarter-century in newsrooms in New England, the Midwest and right here in Washington, DC, working with some talented journalists. The communications folks who put out this magazine and contribute in other ways to telling NALC’s story are as committed and skilled as any I encountered in those newsrooms. And, as mission-focused. Example: Send a story with grammatical errors Jenessa’s way, and you’ll soon be racing for the hills as she flexes her ever-present red pens.

To all of you, from HQ officers to rank-and-file letter carriers, regional leaders to branch officers, please continue in the new year your outstanding work amplifying our union’s message. Your role is not only vital to NALC’s success in improving the lot of America’s letter carriers and ensuring the future of the Postal Service, it also serves as a communications model for the entire labor movement.

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Ballot Committee announced

NALC President **Brian L. Renfroe** has appointed a Ballot Committee to monitor and observe the dispatch, receipt and tabulation of the ballots in the upcoming ratification election of the proposed 2023-2026 National Agreement between NALC and USPS.

Every active letter carrier eligible to vote in the contract ratification election will be mailed a copy of the changes in the proposed 2023-2026 National Agreement between NALC and USPS, along with the ballot materials. Eligibility to vote is defined by Article 16, Section 1 of the *NALC Constitution*, which provides:

Ratification shall be a mail referendum vote, and the ballot shall be mailed only to regular members of the NALC, as defined in Article 2, Section 1(a), excluding retirees, OWCP departees, and non-letter carrier regular members, as shown by the records of the National Secretary-Treasurer as of ninety (90) days prior to the date that the proposed agreement is reached.

The proposed agreement was reached on Oct. 17, 2024. The *NALC Constitution* also provides that “membership acceptance or rejection of a proposed National Agreement shall be by majority of valid ballots returned by the voters.” If the agreement is accepted, it will go into effect immediately. If the agreement is rejected, then, under the Postal Reorganization Act, the parties may continue bargaining or, ultimately, refer the dispute to an interest arbitration board. Under the law, decisions of the arbitration board are conclusive and binding upon the parties.

The Ballot Committee members are:

- Paul Roznowski (chair) of Branch 3126, Royal Oak, MI



TENTATIVE AGREEMENT

Between the
**NATIONAL ASSOCIATION
 OF LETTER CARRIERS**
 and the
**UNITED STATES
 POSTAL SERVICE**

2023-2026



- Barbara Stickler of Branch 1100, Garden Grove, CA
- Mike Hansen of Branch 111, Salt Lake City, UT
- Elise Foster of Branch 11, Chicago, IL
- Kathy Walter of Branch 704, Tucson, AZ
- Rod Holub of Branch 1018, Manhattan, KS
- Ryan Smith of Branch 440, Rochester, MN
- Antonia Shields of Branch 530, Birmingham, AL
- Sylvain Stevens of Branch 545, Charlotte, NC
- Ethel Ford of Branch 283, Houston, TX
- Ted N. Thompson of Branch 43, Cincinnati, OH
- Ted Lee of Branch 84, Pittsburgh, PA
- Delano Wilson of Branch 2611, Silver Spring, MD
- Mike O’Neill of Branch 38, New Jersey Merged
- Andy Weiner of Branch 562, Jamaica, NY

More information will be posted on the NALC website as it is available. **PR**



News from Washington

House passes WEP and GPO repeal; sends bill to Senate

On Nov. 12, in a 327-75 vote, the House passed the Social Security Fairness Act (H.R. 82), legislation that would repeal the Windfall Elimination Provision (WEP) and the Government Pension Offset (GPO). The WEP and GPO are parts of Social Security law that reduce or sometimes eliminate earned benefits for Civil Service Retirement System (CSRS) retirees, including letter carriers.

The vote came after a decades-long fight to repeal these unjust provisions. The bill, led by Reps. Garret Graves (R-LA) and Abigail Spanberger (D-VA), has had broad bipartisan support for years, but leadership from both parties have been hesitant to bring the bill to the floor.

“This is a major win for letter carriers and other federal annuitants who have been victimized by the WEP and GPO for decades,” NALC President Brian L. Renfroe said.

“We appreciate Reps. Graves and Spanberger’s steadfast leadership and commitment to finally get this bill to the floor, and we commend every House member who voted ‘yes’ on this critical bill.

“With House passage, we are one step closer to finally righting this wrong that impacts so many CSRS retirees. We must keep up the momentum. NALC calls on the Senate to pass the Social Security Fairness Act as soon as possible and send it to the president’s desk.

Passing the Social Security Fairness Act in the Senate is NALC’s top legislative priority in the remaining weeks of the 118th Congress. The Senate companion bill has 62 bipartisan co-sponsors, more than enough for passage, and I am calling on the Senate to vote on it as soon as possible.

“I want to thank every NALC member who lobbied their representative to support H.R. 82. I urge them to keep



President Renfroe speaks at a September event on Capitol grounds calling for a vote on H.R. 82.

up the work and contact their senators. It’s time to finish the job.”

Senate committee holds hearing on USPS BOG nominees

On Nov. 14, the Senate Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs (HSGAC) held a hearing on USPS Board of Governors (BOG) nominations. There are four upcoming vacancies on the BOG, two Republican and two Democratic. HSGAC considered only three nominations: William Zollars and Gordon Hartogenesis, both Republican nominees, and Val Demings, a Democratic nominee. Unfortunately, the second Democratic nominee, former Secretary of Labor Marty Walsh, removed himself from consideration.

Zollars previously served on the BOG in a term that expired in 2022. He is the former chairman/president/CEO of Yellow Transportation, Inc., a freight and shipping company. Prior to that, he served as a senior vice president of Ryder Integrated Logistics and as general manager and vice president of the Midwestern region of Eastman Kodak. He also served on the boards of Cerner, ProLogis,

Cigna, and the National Association of Manufacturers.

Hartogenesis started his career on Wall Street. In 1993, he built a supply chain and logistics startup, Petrolsoft Corporation, that was later acquired by Aspen Technology, where he served in a leadership role until 2002. He then founded a customer relationship management software company, Auric Technology, which was sold to Telnorm in 2011. He has since served as an investor and advisor to several technology startups in cybersecurity, immunotherapy, streaming video, fintech and artificial intelligence. Most recently, he served as the director of the Pension Benefit Guaranty Corporation from 2019 to 2024.

Demings is a former member of the House and ran unsuccessfully for a Florida seat in the Senate in 2022. Prior to her work as an elected official, Demings was a social worker and police officer. In 2007, she was appointed chief of the Orlando Police Department, where she served until 2011.

While HSGAC favorably reported these three nominations to the full Senate on Nov. 20, NALC does not support their confirmations at this time. **PR**

Disaster Relief Foundation, donors aiding carriers harmed by hurricanes



NALC Disaster Relief Foundation

Make a donation by sending a check or money order to NALC:

Disaster Relief Foundation
100 Indiana Ave. NW
Washington, DC 20001-2144

Damage left in the path by Hurricane Helene

Photo by Florida Fish and Wildlife



Many letter carriers found themselves and their homes in the path of the pair of hurricanes that hit the Gulf Coast this fall. Almost as soon as the hurricanes had passed, the NALC Disaster Relief Foundation (DRF) followed to give immediate assistance to affected carriers.

Hurricane Helene made landfall as a Category 4 storm at Florida's Big Bend on Sept. 26 and moved north to swamp Georgia, North Carolina and Tennessee, causing widespread flooding in mountainous regions. Hurricane Milton struck two weeks later, hitting Florida's western coast Oct. 9 as a Category 3 storm and traversing the state before going out into the Atlantic Ocean.

The wind, storm surge, rain and flooding from both storms caused damage to the homes or cars of several letter carriers. Fortunately, there were no reports of carriers losing their lives.

NALC created DRF in 2018 after many branches asked for help getting donations or other assistance to their

fellow carriers facing disasters. DRF acts as a central unit to provide carriers in need immediate help.

Led by DRF President Christina Vela Davidson, the foundation quickly identifies carriers who are affected by disasters and disseminates aid as soon as possible. The aid might include emergency grants or supplies such as water, food, clothing and postal uniform items. Working closely with local branch leaders, DRF also helps NALC members whose homes are uninhabitable by offering emergency grants so they may be able to find temporary housing or transportation, as well as helping them apply for additional grant funds once the weather clears and they are able to assess their damage.

The foundation maintains a trained volunteer network to respond quickly to disasters. Grants are provided for property damage sustained to a primary residence, automobile or personal property from causes such as hurricanes, floods, tornadoes, wildfires, earthquakes or severe storms, and are provided only to NALC members.

The foundation relies on donations from NALC members. "Our donors make our work possible," Davidson said. "It's gratifying to know that you can help a fellow letter carrier in need, and that if you need help someday, DRF will be there for you."

A one-two punch in Florida

Florida's Gulf Coast was soaked by both hurricanes—before the state had time to clean up from Helene, Milton pummeled it again.

Milton made landfall between Tampa and Fort Myers, an area represented by West Coast Florida Branch 1477. Branch President **Joe Henschen** said a number of carriers were displaced

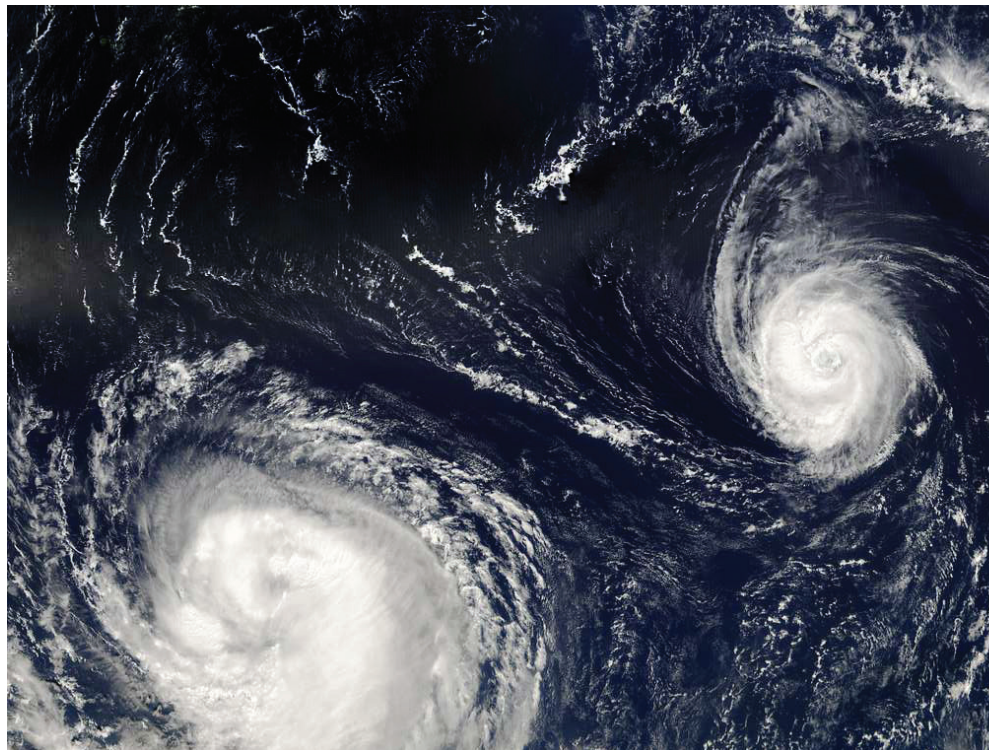
from their homes or lost other property. “I’ve probably verified, I want to say, 27 carrier families that lost a substantial amount of property, personal property, cars,” he said. “I think 12 of them are not in their homes right now. They’re drying it out and then trying to get back.”

“We have carriers at Madeira Beach and St. Pete Beach, Bradenton Beach, you know, and all of those communities were pretty much off-limits. I mean, the carriers that lived out there lost pretty much everything.” Henschen said. “We had a carrier in Punta Gorda who, just as she was getting the flood waters out of her house, then Milton came along and took off part of her roof and things, and then rain got in,” he said. “She’s back to square one.”

Some postal facilities were also damaged, forcing carriers to relocate temporarily. “Right now, Bradenton Beach is working out of an adjacent city in Largo,” he said. “Our carriers at St. Pete Beach are working in another St. Pete office. So they’re having to commute to go out to St. Pete Beach.” Some carriers evacuated before the storm and had trouble getting back home due to gas shortages.

The storm surge from the hurricanes brought so much devastation, he noted, because wet homes in the hot, humid conditions grow mold, and the water can be contaminated. At St. Pete Beach, adjacent to St. Petersburg, “everything you can imagine was in that water, so sewage and everything else,” he said. The sand that was carried inland can’t simply be dumped back on the beach either. “They’ve got some pretty big machines out there just sanitizing the sand in order to put it back on the beach.”

Carriers seeking help from the Disaster Relief Foundation filled out a



simple form, and some received immediate deposits to their bank accounts to help them get back on their feet. “If their home wasn’t habitable,” he said, DRF “immediately deposited money in their accounts to help them get a place to stay. Then they can apply for additional monies.”

“The amazing thing is, honestly, the carriers who are out carrying mail every day, many of them didn’t have as bad of damage, but they may still have blue tarps on their roofs and they’re showing up for work and doing the job, so that’s pretty inspiring.”

Safe from water but not wind

Retired Branch 1477 member **Robert Brown** stayed in Florida after hanging up his satchel following 36 years of carrying the mail. He rode out Hurricane Milton at his home in St. Petersburg, which was made of sturdy cinder block and was not in an evacuation zone. But Milton found a way to damage his house.

“I’m not in a flood zone. I’m on higher ground in St. Pete. I’m not waterfront. So I didn’t have to worry about storm surge,” he said. “The only worry was the 100-year-old oak tree in my back yard.”

Milton’s eyewall, where the highest winds were blowing, went over

his home. The area experienced wind gusts of more than 100 miles per hour.

“Down came the tree,” he said. “I was home when it happened. It’s like, ‘Oh, crap.’ And then you hear a board breaking, plywood breaking, board splitting, cracking. Then it starts moving, cracking more as the wind shifts, it falls a little deeper,” he said. “Oh, crap.”

“Then the rain was coming in,” Brown said. “The wind is still blowing. The trees are falling deeper. The water is coming into the kitchen. I’m throwing a few towels down. That isn’t something that just keeps coming and coming. Between the wind and the rain and everything is pitch black, you can’t see anything because the power was already out. So it wasn’t until the next morning that I went out the front door and looked and went, ‘Holy crap, the whole tree came down.’ I was hoping it was just a branch.”

Brown had to wait three days to find a tree company with a crane to remove the tree. The tree company charged him \$25,000.

As soon as he contacted DRF, it provided him with cash to help.

“Boom, they put in a \$1,000 [deposit directly to his bank account] right away, which is, wow, fantastic,” he said. DRF later committed to providing more funds, he added, “which is great,

Hurricanes, DRF donors (continued)



Joseph Constandy shows where his house was knocked off its foundation.

because that will cover the deductible from the home insurance.”

Until the roof is fixed, Brown is living in the home with a tarp over it.

Disaster far from shore

Hurricane Helene brought damage far inland by dumping rainwater in mountainous areas, causing flash floods. Asheville, NC, was hit hard, and Asheville Branch 248 member **Joseph Constandy**, a 10-year carrier, was one of the carriers affected when his home in Black Mountain, east of Asheville, was knocked off its foundation.

“My house sits near a creek,” he said, “and the creek came higher than it’s ever been. It flooded me out. Then

it took my back yard, took the foundation with it. Now my house is hanging over the creek.” Downstream, many homes were washed away completely, so he considers himself lucky.

Constandy tried to evacuate, but couldn’t because bridges on either side of the road were washed out. He was able to seek shelter at a neighbor’s house and is living there until his home is repaired. The bridges and roads were repaired a few days later so he could leave the area, but when power and cell service were down, he had to climb a mountain to get a signal on his phone to reach the outside world.

Constandy said his house can be saved by putting it back on the foundation, but that’s obviously not easy. He’s hoping to get a contractor to get it done before another flood.

DRF sent him a simple application for help by email and sent him an initial grant immediately, with more relief pending. “They said that they heard about some of us carriers out here were hit pretty hard,” he said. “They said, ‘Definitely with all your damages, we’ll help you out, and just get in the paperwork and all that.’”

How to help

As 2024 comes to a close, letter carriers should consider donating to DRF, NALC President Brian L. Renfroe said.

“The foundation helps letter carriers in need every year,” he said, “but to continue to help them, we need support from our members.”

The foundation provides aid in the form of supplies or grants, and it maintains a trained volunteer network to respond quickly to disasters. Grants are provided for property damage sustained to a primary residence, automobile or personal property from

causes such as hurricanes, floods, tornadoes, wildfires, earthquakes or severe storms, and are provided only to NALC members.

Members do not have to wait for emergency relief or insurance claims to be settled to apply. Applications must be received within 120 days from the date of the natural disaster, unless the applicant can provide sufficient reasons for a delay. The application for a relief grant is on the foundation’s website, nalc.org/disaster.

Every penny of donations to DRF go directly to individual carriers or branches needing assistance—no administrative costs are deducted.

“Your donations help our members who receive assistance to get back on their feet quickly,” Davidson said. “Those carriers, and the DRF, are eternally grateful for your continuing support. Remember you never know when it may be you who needs the help,” Davidson said. “Giving a little or a lot helps make a difference; thanks again from the bottom of my heart, sisters and brothers. Today and every day, I am here for you.”

Donations can be sent to: NALC Disaster Relief Foundation, 100 Indiana Ave. NW, Washington, DC 20001-2144; or made by credit card at nalc.org/ndrf-donate. The foundation is a 501(c)(3) organization; contributions to DRF may be tax-deductible. It is recommended that you consult your tax advisor.

On the following pages are this year’s donors to DRF. Please donate now to be recognized in the December 2025 issue.

“I hope every carrier will find it in their heart to donate to the Disaster Relief Foundation now so that it can be ready when the next disaster strikes,” President Renfroe said. **PR**

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The open enrollment period for the Combined Federal Campaign (CFC) ends on Jan. 14, 2025, so don't wait too long to make your contribution. CFC is the world's largest and most successful annual workplace charity campaign, raising more than \$100 million a year on average. Since its inception in 1961, the CFC has raised nearly \$8.7 billion for charities and people in need. Federal and postal employees participate in the CFC by choosing from a list of charities to support through automatic deductions from their paychecks.

"For letter carriers, there's no busier period than the holidays, but it's also the time when we focus most on the needs of others," NALC President Brian L. Renfroe said. "Please try to find a moment to pledge to give a little each pay period to the charities you support."

All active or retired letter carriers can participate in the CFC. Active carriers may use payroll deduction, credit or debit cards, or bank accounts to make recurring donations. They also can make a one-time donation using any of these methods except payroll deduction. Participants can even volunteer for the charity and count the value of the hours as money raised.

The easiest ways to sign up are through the CFC Donor Pledging System at cfcgiving.opm.gov or through the CFC Giving smartphone app, available on the App Store and Google Play.

Retired letter carriers may donate through a deduction from their annu-

ity, by making a one-time or recurring donation using a credit or debit card, or through an automatic deduction from their bank account using the CFC Donor Pledging System.

Letter carriers can choose from among 2,000-plus nonprofit charitable organizations to support through CFC. By looking at the list and choosing a charity's CFC number, you can donate an amount of your choosing directly to one or more charities. You can search for charities at cfcgiving.opm.gov/offerings.

NALC is directly involved with two charities eligible for support through the CFC: The Muscular Dystrophy Association (MDA) and United Way Worldwide.

MDA, which has been NALC's official charity since 1952, is the world's leading nonprofit health organization sponsoring research into the causes of, and effective treatments for, neuromuscular diseases. MDA research grants support research projects worldwide, as well as camps and activities for children who have any of these diseases. MDA's CFC number is 10561.

United Way Worldwide is the leadership and support organization for the network of nearly 1,800 community-based United Way organizations in 40 countries and territories. United Way focuses on creating community-based and community-led solutions that provide the foundation for a good quality of life. The CFC number for the United Way Worldwide is 11188.

For more information, go to nalc.org/cfc. **PR**

Still time to give through CFC

Benefit selections for letter carriers converted to career employees

Are you a city carrier assistant who is getting close to converting to career? If so, there are some important career benefit decisions you need to prepare for and deadlines you definitely don't want to miss. Conversion to career is an exciting time for city letter carriers, as they become eligible for additional benefit options, but it's important to know the enrollment time frames so that you can make the most out of your benefits for you and your family.

Most career benefit selections must be completed within 60 days of conversion. Newly converted letter carriers need to be mindful of these time limits and complete the enrollment process before the applicable deadline. Some of the benefit programs may offer opportunities to enroll or to amend your coverage during open season or with a qualifying life event (QLE); however, these opportunities may be restricted and might vary based on the program. Letter carriers should not wait until open season or a QLE to enroll.

New career letter carriers will receive a benefits booklet in the mail from USPS Human Resource Shared Service Center (HRSSC). This booklet will contain documents needed for processing changes to benefits available to career letter carriers. In addition to the booklet, letter carriers can enter changes online using the MyHR Apps and PostalEASE at liteblue.usps.gov. If you do not receive your booklet soon after conversion, contact your local branch officer or regional office so they can investigate.

Here are the benefits new carriers will have to make decisions on:

Postal Service Health Benefits (PSHB) Program—The PSHB is a

new, separate program within the Federal Employees Health Benefits (FEHB) Program, administered by the Office of Personnel Management (OPM). PSHB will provide health benefits plans to eligible Postal Service employees, Postal Service annuitants, and their eligible family members starting on Jan. 1, 2025. Once you are converted to a career position, you have 60 days to enroll in a PSHB health plan.

The PSHB program has many plans to choose from, including the NALC Health Benefit Plan (HBP). The NALC HBP is a comprehensive plan that has provided letter carriers and their families with first-rate health insurance since 1950. The plan is owned and operated by letter carriers and pays particular attention to their health needs. The plan is not-for-profit; its only focus is the health of its members.

The premiums for the plan you choose will be split between you and the Postal Service. Article 21 of the National Agreement sets the percentage of the premiums that will be paid by each. USPS pays 72 percent of the weighted biweekly premiums as determined by OPM.

If you were enrolled in the USPS Non-Career Employee Health Benefits Plan and converted to a career position, your enrollment is terminated the last day of the month that is 28 days after you were converted. If you choose to enroll in an PSHB plan, your USPS Non-Career Employee Health Benefits Plan coverage will end when your PSHB coverage begins.

It is recommended that you enroll in the PSHB program as soon as possible to avoid any gap in coverage or to start receiving health benefits. Enrollment is not retroactive. Your

coverage in the PSHB plan will begin the first day of the first pay period after Human Resources receives your election.

To sign up for a PSHB plan, you can use the PostalEASE website at liteblue.usps.gov, or an employee self-service kiosk (available in some postal facilities). Have all your enrollment information available; this is the fastest way to receive coverage.

Federal Employees Group Life Insurance (FEGLI)—All career letter carriers are entitled to life insurance coverage under the FEGLI program. The amount of coverage for a full-time letter carrier is based on their annual salary. Part-time flexibles receive coverage based on their hourly rate and step.

Enrollment in FEGLI basic coverage is automatic upon conversion unless you waive coverage, but if you would like to purchase additional optional coverage, you must apply within 60 days of conversion by completing and submitting SF 2817, Life Insurance Election Form. Carriers should be aware that eligibility to enroll in optional insurance after your first 60 days is limited, and open season for FEGLI is rare. The most recent FEGLI open seasons were in 2004 and 2016. If you want additional optional FEGLI coverage, do not miss the 60-day deadline. FEGLI basic coverage begins the first day you are in a pay and duty status after you are converted to career. USPS pays the entire cost of the basic coverage. The amount of basic coverage is your annual rate of base pay rounded up to the next even \$1,000, plus \$2,000.

Accidental Death and Dismemberment (AD&D)—AD&D insurance

is automatically included in basic life insurance at no additional cost. It is equal to your basic insurance amount described above. Above the basic insurance, FEGLI has additional optional coverage that you can purchase for you or your spouse and dependents. To select any of the optional coverage, you must enroll within 60 days from the day you were converted to career status. The cost is determined by the amount and type of coverage you choose, as well as your age. Optional insurance for new employees is effective on the first day you are in a pay and duty status in an eligible position or the day after the HRSSC receives your election.

NALC also offers its members a variety of life insurance options at affordable rates through the U.S. Letter Carriers Mutual Benefit Association (MBA). MBA was created with the sole purpose of serving letter carriers. MBA offers a variety of life insurance products, including whole and term life. In addition, annuities (non-qualified), traditional IRA and Roth IRA are offered. For more information about MBA and its plans, contact your local MBA representative, call the association at NALC Headquarters at 202-638-4318 or visit nalc.org/mba.

Federal Employees Retirement System (FERS) and Thrift Savings Plan (TSP)—Newly converted career letter carriers are automatically enrolled in FERS and TSP. Participation in the TSP is voluntary. However, after conversion, 5 percent of your base pay will be automatically deducted from your paycheck each pay period and deposited in your TSP account, unless you have made an election to change or stop your contri-

butions. To increase, decrease or cancel your contributions, log onto liteblue.usps.gov. To change the allocation of your TSP investments, log onto tsp.gov once you receive your TSP account number and password. Some contributions to the TSP are tax-deferred, which provides you with a tax benefit at the time of your contribution.

When converted to career status, CCAs who participate in the NALC CCA Retirement Savings Plan may transfer their traditional retirement funds to the TSP with no surrender charge. The surrender charge will be waived in this instance only.

For more information on FERS, visit opm.gov/retirement-center/fers-information. For more information on the TSP, visit its website at tsp.gov.

Federal Employees Dental and Vision Insurance Program (FEDVIP)—FEDVIP is a voluntary program designed to provide supplemental dental and vision benefits, which are available on an enrollee-pay-all basis (no USPS contribution toward premiums) to federal civilian and U.S. Postal Service employees, retirees, and their family members. Letter carriers are eligible to enroll in FEDVIP upon conversion to career status. You do not need to be enrolled in the PSHB program to be eligible for FEDVIP; however, to enroll in FEDVIP, you must meet the same eligibility requirements as PSHB. If you are newly eligible for FEDVIP, you have 60 days from the date you became eligible to enroll in a FEDVIP dental and/or vision plan. You can enroll in FEDVIP using the BENEFEDS online portal at benefeds.gov.

Flexible spending accounts (FSA)—An FSA is a tax-favored pro-

gram offered by employers that allows their employees to pay for eligible out-of-pocket health care and dependent care expenses with pre-tax dollars. By using pre-tax dollars to pay for eligible health care and dependent care expenses, an FSA gives you an immediate discount on these expenses that equals the taxes you would otherwise pay on that money. Career letter carriers are eligible for all FSA options and may enroll up to 60 days from their conversion date but before Oct. 1 of the calendar year or wait for open season.

For the 2025 benefit year, Inspira Financial is the administrator of the Postal Service's FSA program. Inspira's health care flexible spending account (HCFSA) lets you put pretax money aside for eligible health care expenses such as contact lenses, allergy and pain relief medications, hearing aids and prescription eyeglasses. Inspira also offers a limited-purpose flexible spending account, which is like a health care FSA but is specifically for dental and vision expenses. The Inspira dependent care flexible spending account also lets carriers use pretax money for eligible expenses to care for dependents through day care or in-home care.

For more information or to enroll, go to liteblue.usps.gov, select "Sign In," enter your employee ID and enter your password. Verify your identity with a security method. Enter your security code. Select the flexible spending account icon from the LiteBlue employee applications page.

Use the information here to make the most out of your benefits. Congratulations on your new career position. **PR**

Prepare now for a successful food drive

Each year, NALC branches are encouraged to register for the Stamp Out Hunger® Food Drive held on the second Saturday in May. Stamp Out Hunger is the largest single-day food drive in the nation. The food drive's success is due to the dedication of letter carriers and volunteers, and to support from partners and local food agencies.

Here are tips for branches to organize a successful food drive.

Registration

Work on the food drive must start in advance and must be a priority. The process begins with the branch selecting a food drive coordinator.

Once the food drive coordinator has been identified, the branch president should log in to their Members Only portal via the NALC website. Once logged in, the president will select the "Stamp Out Hunger" icon and from here will designate the food drive coordinator.

To designate a local coordinator, branch presidents should select the "Coordinators" tab, click "Add Coordinator" and a dialog box will appear. Click "Member Search," key in the member's last name, double-click the member's name to select, and click "Submit Search." Click the "Submit" button when the dialog box from the previous page appears and auto-populates with the member's information. The local coordinator will then have access to the food drive database via their Members Only portal and will be able to register the branch.

Registration is simple and requires only a few minutes to complete. Please visit nalc.org/food for a step-by-step guide to register.

Groundwork

Once the branch is registered, the food drive coordinator should explore NALC's Stamp Out Hunger webpage at nalc.org/food to find information, such as deadlines (to receive postcards, registration must be completed by **March 21**), the coordinator's manual, a sample press release, and a list of state and regional coordinators with up-to-date contact information.

The food drive coordinator should first review the coordinator's manual and then enlist help, as the branch will need volunteers. Start by asking the branch members to sign up by placing a sign-up sheet at your monthly branch meeting and on your branch web page and/or social media pages. Be mindful that the coordinator can solicit help from other crafts and food drive co-sponsors, such as United Way.

Review the coordinator's manual and then create a timeline of duties and the branch's available budget to share with your volunteers so they'll know what is expected of them. Schedule a meeting with the volunteers to identify skills or useful contacts. Make sure to set realistic expectations, assist with training if needed, provide reassurance, and follow up regularly with the volunteers.

Building partnerships

Take advantage of local opportunities to solicit donations from businesses. Letter carriers have an advantage, because they interact with businesses daily and have a relationship with the point of contact. The coordinator's manual contains tips and talking points on how to secure local support.

Prior to meeting with a potential partner, the food drive coordinator should create a folder and include material that

can be left with the prospective partner, including a letter explaining the cause, what type of donations are requested, and how those donations will be used. The food drive coordinator should create a list of the possible partners and include the date the meeting with those potential partners took place, or the date the packet of information was mailed if no meeting was held, so the coordinator can follow up.

The local United Way might be able to assist with finding local pantries, coordinating distribution of food, and attempting to get sponsors for bags. More information is available at unitedway.org/find-your-united-way.

Other partners who may be able to assist include the AFL-CIO, Kellanova, and the United Food and Commercial Workers International Union (UFCW), which can be found by visiting ufcw.org/members/find-your-local. The most common sponsors for bags are local grocery stores. Bag deadlines can be found at nalc.org/food under the heading "Important information for coordinators."

Advertising

There are numerous ways a branch can get the word out. One way is by establishing media contacts and asking them to help publicize the drive. Also, contact elected officials and ask them to declare the second Saturday in May as Food Drive Day. A sample press release for news and radio stations, along with a sample proclamation for elected officials, are in the coordinator's manual.

Other ways include wearing food drive T-shirts; putting out lawn signs; hanging posters and flyers inside apartment complexes, banks, churches and grocery stores; providing stand-up talks



with carriers to get them excited about the food drive; working with apartment complexes to send out community emails and set up a common area drop-off location for food; and sharing information on social media. This will help boost community support and improve the outcome of the food drive.

NALC's social media team and the Department of Communications and Media Relations, both at Headquarters, along with NALC's national partners, will continue spreading the word and raising awareness for the Stamp Out Hunger Food Drive. Remember to follow NALC's social media accounts on Facebook at facebook.com/StampOutHunger and at @StampOutHunger on X (formerly known as Twitter) for more ideas. To find or send messages about the food drive on either platform, use #StampOutHunger.

Next steps

After the food drive, what's next? The food drive coordinator should visit the food drive database via their Members Only portal. The coordinator will select the "Sponsors" tab, click "Add Local Sponsor" and a dialog box will appear, input money collected and/or pounds of food collected, and click "Submit." The money collected will be automatically converted to pounds of food. To verify that the information is accurate, click the "Collected" tab. The total pounds of food with the converted dollars to pounds will be populated under this tab. Once the final results have been submitted, the coordinator should compile the information that has been collected and provide it to the branch president. The information should include lists of volunteers, ven-

dor and partner contacts, food banks in the area with their contact information, and a timeline of events leading up to the food drive, along with notes on what worked and areas to improve.

Finally, a food drive coordinator needs to determine whether it is something they are interested in doing again. If not, help find a replacement. For a branch to succeed, leaders must train the next generation.

"Thank you for helping continue the fight to end hunger within our communities with our annual Letter Carriers' Stamp Out Hunger Food Drive," President Brian L. Renfroe said. **PR**

NALC wins four ILCA awards

The Communications and Media Relations Department of the National Association of Letter Carriers collected four awards in the 2024 Labor Media Awards contest of the International Labor Communications Association (ILCA), with three of them for work published in the union's monthly journal, *The Postal Record*.

The awards were announced by ILCA on Oct. 28. Its contest recognized excellence among member publications, websites, film, video and electronic media during 2023.

In announcing its winners, ILCA wrote, "Annually, the organization hosts what is now the largest competition exclusively for labor journalists. Thousands of entries that tell the story of the global labor movement are judged by experts in the field across the industry."

"Communication lies at the heart of what NALC does. It is in our DNA," NALC President Brian L. Renfroe said. "The work our digital and traditional Communications Department does is vital to our efforts, and we're proud that ILCA has recognized that again. Congratulations to the entire communications team."

NALC won two first-place awards.

In the Best Use of Earned Media category, Director of Communications and Media Relations Philip Dine's work engaging the media to cover NALC's "Enough is enough" campaign to draw attention to crimes against letter carriers received first place.

Dine also took home an honorable mention for his January 2023 *Postal Record* letter from the editor, "Flipping the script," which told the story of retired letter carrier **Thomas Barnes** being

rescued by a Teamsters member before a train crashed into Barnes's car.

Managing Editor Mike Shea won first place in the Best Labor History category for "How a fight with President Teddy Roosevelt stripped letter carriers of their right to strike" from the August 2023 issue of *The Postal Record*.

Former Editorial Assistant Joelle Dine was awarded second place in the Best Series category for the ongoing series "Letter carriers and the mail on social media." The series shines a light on online news and social media posts that celebrate the mail and letter carriers.

Dozens of international unions and individual locals enter the ILCA contest annually, including some of the nation's largest unions. NALC rejoined ILCA five years ago and has won multiple awards each year since. **PR**

A season for caring



Every December, letter carriers work hard to ensure that families across the country experience the joy of the season by delivering special messages and packages. But they don't stop there. After their shifts end, they deliver care beyond the last mile.

Carriers bring extra joy to their communities in many forms. Some supply gifts to families in need. Others donate the vital gift of blood. And many participate in holiday parades or make the holidays special with a letter from Santa.

In this special holiday issue of *The Postal Record*, we bring you stories about

letter carriers who go above and beyond to make sure that everyone shares in the delight of the holiday season. Their extra effort reminds us all that the spirit of the season is about spreading joy to others.

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

Lifting his community with gifts and art



Matthew Ross Sr. always looks for ways he can help out in his community. As a letter carrier, he sees more than most the needs of the people he serves. As an artist, he helps his community to see in new ways.

Contributing to the community has long been a commitment for the Syracuse, NY Branch 134 member. In 2020, during the COVID-19 pandemic, he helped raise funds for the local community center on his former route in Westcott for a new van to transport seniors.

Last year, when he delivered mail and noticed that some report cards from the local middle school were going to a hotel, he decided to find

out more. Knowing that child poverty in the area was a real concern, Ross checked in with the school counselor to see what he could do.

"I told them that if they needed me to help out somewhere in a specific spot, to let me know," he said. The counselor suggested some students who might benefit from holiday help and reached out to the parents, giving them Ross's phone number.

Ross said he felt for the kids, some of whom were constantly moving. "They're growing up in a place that's not so nice, and they don't really have any options, and they're just going from house to house, always getting evicted," he said. "It was important





for me to be able to help out these people.”

The seven-year carrier soon fundraised every cent he could from the community to buy some local middle-school students Christmas gifts. “I was able to help out three different families,” he said, providing items such as a Christmas tree, toys, video games, winter clothes, craft supplies and art—the latter a newfound hobby of Ross’s.

Ross picked up abstract acrylic painting in 2021 and created Mattropolis Art Gallery. He uses social media to show artwork in what he calls a “nice, safe little area of the internet.” It wasn’t long before Ross figured out a way he could use his pastime to help in the community as well.

When he visited the school, Ross met one youngster in particular who was having behavioral issues. “He was breaking pencils and being rather violent,” the carrier said, and added, “He started to pick up painting as, like, a way to not get angry anymore. And I got a couple of his little paintings here in my art gallery that I put up on the back of my stream sometimes.”

In addition to donating paintings to raise money for the Muscular Dystrophy Association, he has proposed to the local Young Women’s Christian Association on one of his routes the idea of making a group painting on a 36-inch by 48-inch canvas sometime in December to be displayed in the YWCA building’s foyer afterward.

“Unfortunately, one of our letter carriers died this past year, and I’m using all the paint that he had bought and left behind,” Ross said. “I’m going to take all of these young girls and the coordinators and everyone there and we can make a painting.”

Walking around the city every day, “I find it very depressing,” Ross said. “I walk through a lot of trash and filth and garbage. I try and let people know that art’s a way of escaping from what you’re dealing with at a certain time and place, and that can alleviate some stresses in your life.”

Ross uses his “imagination and dedication” to try to be a good role model for others, but he never expected recognition for any of his good deeds. He’s been featured on local TV and newspapers in the Syracuse area over the years, sometimes getting honked at by parents on the street, indicating that they want their kids to be like him.

“It was very self-gratifying, because I had planned on doing this without being on TV,” he said of his efforts, adding, “Because this happened, I know that these people look up to me and they know that I can, you know, do the right thing. You can do things to impact your community at a local level.”

Delivering mail makes doing good that much easier, too. If any carriers want to make a difference on their route, it’s easily doable, says Ross.

“Chances are, they already know with their gut intuition who actually needs the help. [They need] to just follow through on their own intuition and use their own creativity. It doesn’t have to be elaborate,” he added. “As letter carriers, we have access to a lot of involved people, places, things—and if you just put all that together, you can make good things happen.” **PR**



Matthew Ross Sr. (l) and some of the items he donated for gifts (below)





An inaugural holiday parade



Del Rio, a small city in southwest Texas about 150 miles west of San Antonio, holds a Christmas parade down Main Street on the first Friday evening of December. While the parades have been held for several years, the one in December 2023 featured a new float—one by volunteers from the Postal Service who also collected letters to Santa from children along the parade route.

It almost didn't happen. But some of the clerks decided to put together the float and asked Branch 2511 Secretary-Treasurer **Lino Hernandez**, "Hey, you think the carriers would be willing to do it?" Hernandez said that even if it was only him, he would do it, but that he'd see if he could get other letter carriers to participate, too.

After he talked to the carriers in his station, about 10 of the more than 40 city letter carriers in Del Rio joined him.

Hernandez, who has been involved in the annual Stamp Out Hunger Food

Drive, went on the radio stations that announce the food drive and told listeners that the postal workers would be in the parade and would be collecting the letters for Santa. It doesn't hurt that his son works at one of the stations and got Hernandez a meeting with the station manager. The clerks also posted about it on social media to help spread the word.

"We would tell the kids, 'Hey, bring your letters to Santa,' and they'd say, 'Oh, no, no, no.' And I'd tell them, 'Man, how are you going to get your Christmas gifts if you don't write letters to Santa?' You know, we made it a fun time," Hernandez said.

During the parade, the letter carriers would walk along with the float and collect the letters from children along the parade route while also handing out candy. They'd then hand the letters to the clerks on top of the float, who would stick them in a barrel.

"They did a marvelous job on decorating the float and everything," Hernandez said. "Then we had a couple of guys. One dressed up as [the Grinch] and then another one dressed up as Santa Claus."

The parade route is a mile or two, ending in a park where Santa meets the kids and hands out more candy.

Despite retiring from USPS in April, Hernandez is still involved in the branch and was preparing for this year's parade.

"We're going to get some more people involved this year," Hernandez said. **PR**



Above and below: The Del Rio postal workers who participated in the parade last year





The gift of blood

Some branches measure the success of their community service in dollars, food, clothing or toys. Flushing, NY Branch 294 measures its progress in blood.

After two decades, the branch's blood donation efforts have reached a milestone—1,500 pints of blood donated. Since each donor gives about a pint, that represents 1,500 times a letter carrier or other donor sat down and gave their life-saving gift over the years.

The tradition began in 2001, when then-Vice President **Brian Keelen**, who served in Vietnam as a combat medic, organized the branch's first blood drive as a service to the community. The branch made it an annual tradition, then began holding them twice a year. Now they hold three every year—in winter, spring and summer. When Keelen retired, he handed the reins to current blood drive coordinator **Andrew Fontanetta**, who organizes the events with the help of Branch President **Tony Paolillo**.

The local Knights of Columbus Hall hosts each blood drive after a regular branch meeting. To remind branch members of the role their donations play in saving lives, the branch votes to dedicate each blood drive to a deceased branch member. The branch also holds a "hero's night" before the blood drive to recognize a heroic member who has come to the aid of someone while out on their route or who has gone out of their way to serve the community, Paolillo said.

To reach the milestone, the branch must first coordinate with the New York Blood Center, a not-for-profit blood bank that sends medical personnel to collect and store the blood.

The branch's main job is to bring people out to donate—the more people

giving blood, the more blood they can collect, of course

"In theory, to donate, we get anywhere from 30 to 50 people" for each drive, Paolillo said. But sometimes would-be donors find that they are ineligible for medical reasons—anything from high blood pressure to low iron to having a recent tattoo could disqualify a donor, either to protect the health of the donor or recipient.

Even if carriers know they can't donate blood, he added, they can still help. "We always encourage the members, even if you yourself can't donate blood," he said. "We tell them, 'Perhaps you could bring a family member, a neighbor, a friend who is eligible to donate.'"

The branch attracts donors by sending flyers to each of its 21 postal stations, while the New York Blood Center mails reminders to previous donors. But with three events happening each year, carriers are usually aware that the next one is approaching. And the branch makes each blood drive a fun event, too.

"Anybody who donates or attempts to donate," Paolillo said, "we have their name, and we raffle off a bunch of prizes for them during the meeting. We have a lot of prizes, a lot of gifts that are donated to our branch from the members. That's nice. Plus, on top of that, we have the catered food."

"It's just a great feeling knowing that you made a difference, knowing that one donation can save up to three lives," he added, because a donated pint might be used in more than one transfusion. "There's always an emergency blood shortage going around. It's something that I'm very proud of our branch [for] that we've been able to host this on a regular basis." **PR**



Members of Branch 294 have helped collect 1,500 pints of blood.





Christmas cheer for kids



A simple conversation can sometimes be the impetus to put kind thoughts into action.

Last fall, **April Lee** was chatting with fellow Freehold, NJ Branch 924 member **Tom Caizza** in their Atlantic Highlands post office about wanting to make a difference in their area during the holidays.

The group from Atlantic Highlands, NJ, led donations to give gifts to some needy kids.

“We used to do a turkey giveaway at Thanksgiving, and it’s kind of just subsidized,” Lee, a 24-year carrier, said. “Now we said, ‘We should probably start something up.’ No reason, just something nice to do.”

They began talking to other carriers, and Lee put up a sign in the station, asking if people would be willing to donate \$20 to help some children from the local elementary school for Christmas. “Everybody kind of hopped on board, surprisingly easy,” Lee said, adding that co-workers including carriers, clerks and managers participated in droves, some for more than double the suggested amount, to help.

In all, Lee estimated that there were nearly 20 people

from their offices across crafts and management who chipped in for the effort in 2023.

Soon after, Caizza went to the elementary school to speak with the nurse, who suggested two (unrelated) children in particular, and specific items that were on their holiday wish lists.

Once Lee collected the money in the office, branch representatives, including Caizza, went shopping for the boy and girl. They bought the boy a pair of “fancy sneakers” he wanted and a remote-control car, Lee said, and the girl got a dollhouse she wished for as well as a jacket and remote-control car. Since there was some money left over, the carriers got movie tickets and gift cards for a local pizza restaurant for the kids to enjoy with their families.

“[The school] asked us if we wanted to present it to them, or have it be a secret,” Lee said. “So we said, ‘No, have it be from Santa.’ And that was it.”

Because of the success, the group is planning a Round 2 this year. After Thanksgiving, the group was set to start a word-of-mouth effort to collect funds, check in with the school, and go shopping.

“Let’s promote some Christmas cheer” is the general consensus for the office in wanting to put this effort together, Lee said. “I feel like it makes us feel good about ourselves, and then also the kids, of course, will feel good about themselves. And you know, I think it’s easy to say to your co-workers, ‘Hey, you want to donate a couple bucks?’ ”

“We’ll do it again, definitely,” Lee added. “If you could help others, why not?” **PR**





Supporting their neighbor

In the Tacony neighborhood in northeast Philadelphia, the Branch 157 letter carriers at the local post office give back to the community they serve, by raising funds for charitable organizations.

For about 20 years, they had collected annual donations for the Knights of Columbus and delivered them during the holiday season. Knights of Columbus is a national fraternal organization that provides children in need with Christmas gifts such as bikes, gift cards for food and toys, along with other charitable outreach throughout the year.

But three years ago, the Tacony post office employees decided to instead give to the Jack Costello Boxing Gym.

The boxing club holds community programs for kids, such as “Down with Boxing,” a program for kids with Down syndrome, during which the kids would come in and get a taste of boxing. “Costello Boxing Club ended up moving right next to us, right next door,” **John Hoban**, who organized the donations for many years, said. “So that’s when we decided, ‘Hey, listen, maybe instead of giving to the Knights, we give right back to our next-door neighbors.’”

The primary way in which they raise money is through 50/50 raffles, when



the names of those who donate money go into a pot. Whoever’s name is called for the raffle receives 50 percent of the raffle money and the rest goes to the charity. They hold the raffle once a week throughout the year.

The gym wasn’t the only organization the postal employees gave to over the past year; they also donated to The Block Gives Back, an organization that provides food for people in need in the neighborhood, as well as for veterans.

Last year, they raised \$1,000 in donations solely for the Costello Boxing Gym at Hoban’s request, as it was his last year before he retired in January. **PR**

The Tacony Post Office makes a donation to their neighbor, the Costello Boxing Club.



Delivering a magical message

Lafayette, IN Branch 466 has been involved in the city’s Christmas parade for a long time. Branch Vice President **Jeremy Swift**, who joined the Postal Service in 2017, said that the branch had been doing it for decades before he arrived.

The parade’s theme is lights, so it is held at night and each float or vehicle

has to be decorated with lights. None of the floats can have anyone dressed up as Santa, as the parade has a single Santa for the whole event.

The letter carriers decorate one of the postal vehicles—this year an E-Transit—and some of the walkers carry the branch’s banner. There’s usually a clerk who joins in the festivities

and sometimes rural carriers.

It can be difficult to get letter carriers to volunteer because the parade is held on an early evening in December, when many letter carriers are still hard at work. “But those who can make it, they go out,” Swift said.

Most of the carriers wear postal uniforms with satchels to collect letters



Members of Lafayette, IN Branch 466 go all out for the Christmas parade through their city.



and to hold the candy they hand out. Some friends and family will join in and wear seasonal costumes, including one that is in the shape of a collection box.

The branch usually has about 10 walkers who collect Santa letters from anyone who has brought them. Sometimes a walker will fall behind to make sure the letters have a return address so the kids can get a response through the mail.

Some of the letters—whether collected through the parade or on their routes—are addressed to 123 Elf Road, North Pole, 88888, which is the official USPS address for letters to Santa Claus in its Operation Santa program. The letter carriers make sure those letters have the proper postage and send them on to the Postal Service’s official program. But for letters and envelopes that are addressed to “Santa” with no address, the branch collects them and will make sure the kids get a response.

At the December meeting, the branch will open them up, draft a short response and mail them back to the children as though they came from Santa. The Postal Service will cover the return postage, or the branch will pay for it, or some combination.

“It’s a fun way to read the letters, to kind of break up some of the long days and get a little bit of joy,” Swift said. He said they receive all kinds of letters.

“We’ve had letters from newborns that a parent wrote in, just talking about how the child’s been a good boy or girl, just kind of letting us know how they’ve been.

“Sometimes we’ll get a big envelope from a teacher from one of the schools.

We’ve encouraged the schools to participate. And then we just send a big envelope back.

“We’ve received letters from kids that are pretty heartbreaking that just talk about their current situation and how they just want their parents to get a new job or to not have to struggle or not be sad.

“We’ve received letters from parents who are struggling and asking for help. They don’t know how they’re going to provide a Christmas for their children.

“So, yeah, I mean, it is a big mix of emotions as you’re reading through those letters, for sure.”

Sometimes, individual branch members will see one of those sad letters and sponsor a family or a child to buy gifts or provide help to make their holidays better.

And for many families and children, the letter itself makes the holidays better.

“I have three [kids] of my own, who over the years received a letter back from Santa. Seeing the joy in their eyes is pretty cool,” Swift said. “So, to know that that’s happening out in the community is very special.” **PR**

NALC President Brian L. Renfro commended all NALC members who work to improve the lives of those around them. “The holiday season gives us such a rewarding opportunity to give back in different ways to the communities we serve,” he said.



Carriers and the mail make news online

Mail-centered stories frequently appear on social media and online news sites. The following are a few that have come to NALC's attention recently. If you find a story you'd like us to consider featuring, send it to postalrecord@nalc.org.

Wisconsin carrier delivers 100 letters for centenarian's birthday

Milwaukee, WI Branch 2 member **Michelle Kuenn** has maintained a friendly relationship with Bob Charles, a now-100-year-old man who lives on her route in Grafton.

Kuenn wanted to do something nice for Charles, so she delivered him 100 birthday cards that she wrote and decorated herself, one for every day leading up to his 100th birthday.

"Bob's a nice guy," Kuenn said in an interview with the local CBS affiliate. "We talk often, when the weather's nice and he's out, and we chat a little bit when I'm walking into the building. And I don't know, it doesn't take much to make someone else's day better."

Charles called Kuenn "a great friend" and kept every one of the 100 letters.

Postcards used to teach AANHPIs contributions

The important contributions of Asian Americans, Native Hawaiians and Pacific Islanders (AANHPIs) to American history are being showcased in many schools across the country. Some state legislatures, including those in Illinois and New Jersey, have chosen to pass legislation to mandate that this material be included in the state curriculum for students kindergarten through 12th grade. Others, including in Ohio and Texas, continue to advocate for inclusion.



Michelle Kuenn delivers mail to 100-year-old Bob Charles.

In 2023, the Smithsonian Asian Pacific American Center, in collaboration with the YURI Education Project, launched the Co-Creation Initiative to develop educational resources about local AANHPI histories. Teams of educators worked together to create diverse resources for students to learn from. They made cookbooks, postcards and zines, small booklets providing relevant information on the topic, to demonstrate the importance of AANHPI history in the United States.

Orange County, CA, chose to create two postcards to incorporate into its schools' lesson plans. One postcard says *Ăn Quả Nhớ Kẻ Trồng Cây*, a Vietnamese saying that translates to "When eating fruit,

The postcards used to highlight the contribution of Vietnamese Americans





John Leslie

Online news (continued)

remember who planted the tree,” and depicts a colorful array of fruit in the background. The second depicts the Asian Garden Mall, Phước Lộc Thọ, the first and largest Vietnamese-American shopping mall in the United States. Another hope its creators had for the postcards is that it would help students learn how to send mail through the postal system.

The Co-Creat Initiative enabled them to launch the Community History Postcard Project, which included AANHPI communities all over the United States, according to *Smithsonian* magazine.

‘Hearsemail’—the goth way of getting mail

Jennifer Chesson, a rural carrier in Rocky Point, NC, delivers mail five days a week, but not in an LLV or a customized Jeep. She instead opts for a hearse, a vehicle typically used for transporting the dead, but in this case it is a vehicle bringing the mail to the living.

She used to have a Jeep Wrangler to deliver mail, but someone hit it, totaling it.

Jennifer Chesson uses this hearse to deliver the mail.



“I said, ‘You know what, I’m going to get a hearse,’ because [of] everything that I could fit in it. And I figured, who’s going to hit me in a hearse?” Chesson said in an interview with WWAY-TV, an ABC and CBS affiliate.

When she asked her supervisor if she could, he said something like, “Well, I think it will be kind of weird, but OK,” Chesson said. Then she asked her postmaster, who told the carrier that she thought it was genius.

The carrier says that people are always taking photos of her, and little kids ask her to beep her horn at them.

Chesson called herself a “goth kid” and told the news outlet that she always had wanted a hearse as a child, so it was something of a dream come true for her.

Georgia carrier honored for 44 years of service

John Leslie was recently celebrated for 44 years at the Postal Service and 43 years on the same Hogansville, GA route. The Branch 3091 member’s unwavering commitment to his community has made him a beloved pillar of the neighborhood.

He is known to check on elderly residents, and in his free time he volunteers coaching baseball, basketball and football for youngsters in the community. He also is a small business owner—he has run John’s Tax Shop for 35 years, where he helps people prepare their taxes and he has a DJ and entertainment business, Windjammers Entertainment, as well.

Leslie has been praised for his impact on the community and his overall high character.

Hogansville Post Office Officer in Charge Leigh Goodman said Leslie is “an exemplary employee with perfect

Emily Conn was surprised by Brenda Stowe, her 60-year pen pal.



attendance” and highlighted his “great work ethic, positive attitude, and [the fact that he] comes to work every day.

Another community member, Hogansville Utilities Customer Service Manager Ameia Williams, spoke highly of Leslie: “You can see his smile and hear his laugh from a mile away,” Williams said. “John is always willing to lend a helping hand to anyone.”

New York carrier celebrated for 50 years of service

In August, Flushing, NY Branch 294 member **Henry Moslen** was celebrated for more than 50 years of service. He has been on the same residential route with large apartment buildings since 1974.

He manages 900 delivery points each day he works, and walks about 3 miles daily with his mail cart.

“I learned to do my job correctly and stay focused,” Moslen said in an interview with the *Jackson Heights Post*. “I really don’t think about weather patterns. I think about keeping the customers satisfied—whether it’s a snowstorm outside or if it’s 100 degrees. I focus on the job.”

60-year pen pals finally meet

Emily Conn from Pennsylvania and Brenda Stowe from Georgia were paired as pen pals by their middle school teachers to help them learn to write cursive.

In the beginning of their penpalship, they wrote weekly or monthly letters to each other. Eventually, they began to call each other and were there for one another in difficult times. Their friendship never took to modern forms of communication such as email, text or video call. Even after 60 years of a friendship, the two never met in

person until September, when Conn’s daughter, Christina Schrecengost, organized a meeting.

She contacted Stowe and got her to surprise Conn with a visit, where Stowe walked up from behind Conn, putting her hands in front of Conn’s eyes. “I don’t recognize the voice,” Conn said. Once she realized who it was, she exclaimed, “Brenda!” before turning around to embrace her friend for the very first time.

The video of their meeting went viral on Instagram and now has more than 480,000 likes, and has been featured on national media including NBC’s “Today” show.



Henry Moslen

Ohio carrier showered with love on his last day on the job

Cuyahoga Falls, OH Branch 1629 member **Bill Buda** celebrated his last day on the job in September. His daughter made a video that went viral on Instagram. He had worked as a letter carrier for 31 years, nearly 25 of which were on the same route.

His customers decorated their porches with balloons and streamers and gave him handwritten notes as he delivered the mail.

“I guess for 24 and a half years on this route I must’ve done something right. It was a fantastic day,” Buda told ABC’s “Good Morning America.” **PR**



Bill Buda

Proud to Serve

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Honoring heroic carriers



Carlos Vlaun

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

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

Cry for help alerts carrier

One day in May while on his route, **Anthony Scardino** of South Jersey, NJ Branch 908 was delivering to the house of an 85-year-old woman who he knew lived alone in Stratford.

"There's a woman that's been living there forever," the 18-year carrier said. "She's a retired schoolteacher."

After putting the mail in the box and preparing to leave, Scardino heard a cry for help. Upon investigating, he was able, through the screen door, to see the woman lying on the floor.

She asked him, "Could you please help me?" He quickly called 911 and stayed with her until paramedics arrived and took her to the hospital.

The woman's daughter, who lives about 45 minutes away, wrote a note to the postmaster to thank Scardino. "I cannot stress enough how commendable it was that he chose to get involved," she wrote. "Without trying to be too dramatic, I do believe it's quite possible that his actions helped save her life."

She said she had been visiting her mother every three days and told him that her mother had fallen shortly after her most recent visit.

"I wouldn't have gotten to her for another three days and she could have lost her life," the woman told him, adding that though the woman was wearing a medical alert necklace, she hadn't been in a state to use it.

"She was very grateful," Scardino said.

After being checked into the hospital, doctors discovered that the woman had had a stroke, which likely caused her to fall.

The daughter didn't just write a nice note for Scardino—she also brought him a large bag of goodies from the grocery store where she works.

"I was in the right place at the right time," Vlaun said. "Somebody needed help and I called 911."

A rescue during a route inspection

San Antonio, TX Branch 421 member **Carlos Vlaun** was driving his LLV in the middle of a route inspection in May when he saw a car swerve, almost hit a pole near a fast-food restaurant and bang into the curb.

The 24-year carrier pulled his LLV next to the inspector and said, "I have to find out what's going on with the vehicle in front of me."

The inspector responded, "You're in the middle of a route."

The carrier told the inspector, "Look at what's happening." The car just kept going at the curb, bumping it.

The inspector told him to do what he had to do.

Vlaun walked up to the car and found an unconscious woman behind the wheel, her foot on the gas pedal, and a Chihuahua jumping on her chest. Figuring that something was wrong with her chest, he got into the car with her and made sure she was still breathing. He pulled the car out



Jillian Hess

of the road and called 911. Having served in the Army before joining the Postal Service, he said that his training kicked in as he was doing CPR while waiting for the ambulance to arrive.

“Once I felt calm enough and I was like, OK, now it’s time to go back to work and just continue to deliver the route,” Vlaun said.

Later, he found out that the son of the woman he helped save had posted on social media about the rescue and was trying to find out who had helped his mother. It turns out that she had had a heart attack while driving. Since Vlaun doesn’t have social media, and he hasn’t talked to her, but people told her that she had been assisted by the letter carrier.

As for the route inspection, “Believe it or not, they took that time off my route,” he said.

Carrier helps attacked dog

Buffalo-Western New York Branch 3 member **Jillian Hess** was on her route on July 26 in the town of Tonawanda when she heard the sound of a dog attack. She turned and saw a man near two fighting dogs across the street. He had been walking his dog when another dog came running out of a customer’s house and attacked the first dog.

The man “managed to get the dog off of his dog and then he started screaming, ‘Help!’ And I saw blood on his hands,” the two-year letter carrier said. “He appeared to be in shock.”

Hess ran over and since the man didn’t have anything to stop the bleeding, and since she was wearing an undershirt, she removed it and used it to compress the dog’s ear. A neighbor appeared and offered to give them a ride back to the man’s house, since it was a good distance away.

“And the whole time, I’m trying to calm him down because he was clearly in shock and he didn’t know what to do,” Hess said. “I was like, just calming him down, constantly telling him, ‘It’s going to be OK’ and he’s going to be OK. There’s a lot of blood and it’s just because of the ear. Ears are very vascular. So, if they get caught or something, they bleed a lot.”

The woman who owned the attacking dog came out of her house and asked what happened. When she found out, she secured her dog inside her house.

Hess helped the man and dog into their car and then continued her route.

The neighbor later followed up and told Hess that the woman had paid for the emergency veterinarian treatment.

Meanwhile, the owner of the dog who was attacked told the carrier that his dog had gotten stitches and is doing much better. “I am just so thankful for her willingness to run in and quite literally give the shirt off her back to help someone in need,” the man wrote to the postmaster.

“I’m a huge animal lover, so of course I’m going to help,” the carrier said. “I just think that it’s important for letter carriers to help people or animals in need, as long as the situation is safe. I think we make a huge difference and on a daily basis, whether we realize it or not.”

Odor of natural gas alerts carrier

Joseph Morales Caraballo of Western Massachusetts Branch 46 was making a delivery to a house in April when he opened the glass storm door to get to the mail slot in the exterior door.

“As soon I opened the glass door, a very strong smell of gas hit me,” the carrier said.

He immediately began knocking on the door and windows to see if there was anyone in the house. Getting no response, and worried that someone might be passed out, he looked through the windows and saw a light on, but couldn’t tell if anyone was at home.

“I was so scared, thinking that maybe somebody’s inside the house,” the carrier said.

He saw some neighbors and told them what was going on. They contacted the homeowner, who was out of town on vacation. They then called the fire department.

Firefighters arrived and entered the house to deal with the leak, and made sure no one was in the house.

“So, thank God for that,” Morales Caraballo said.



Joseph Morales Caraballo (left) jumped into action when he smelled natural gas on his route in April at the home of a customer who was out of town.

Proud to Serve

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Carrier helps woman screaming for help

Jeremy Burnett, a nine-year letter carrier, was delivering to an apartment complex on his route in Wichita, KS, in July when he heard a scream. It was difficult to tell where it was coming from, and the



Branch 201 carrier initially thought it was just kids playing in the distance. However, he soon realized that it was a woman screaming for help.

"I couldn't live with myself if I just ignored that," Burnett said.

Burnett followed the sound and checked each floor of the

three-story apartment complex. After reaching the top floor he hadn't found anyone, but the screams continued. When he got back to the first floor, he found a woman in her 90s with her apartment door cracked open. She had fallen out of her wheelchair.

"I, kind of, tried to comfort her, and reassured her that I was going to get her some help," Burnett said. "I was glad that I found her." He also assessed her for injuries to see if there was any way he could immediately help her.

Then, Burnett called emergency services and explained the situation to them. He waited with her for EMTs to arrive before continuing on his route.

Letter carrier helps man being stabbed

Brian Meyers Sr., a 15-year letter carrier, was delivering mail on Aug. 13

when he heard a man screaming for help.

The Johnstown, PA Branch 451 carrier saw two men wrestling in the side yard of a house on his route. One of the men appeared to have stabbed the other.

"I didn't think about nothing," Meyers said. "I just went up and took the guy down. Just to help him, that's all I thought of doing."

Meyers quick action prevented the assailant from stabbing the other man again.

"I just grabbed his arm and threw him straight down to the ground and jumped on him and held him there," said Meyers.

He subdued the man until the police, who had been called by someone who heard the commotion, arrived. "I had the situation under control," Meyers said. Once officers arrived, Meyers answered their questions, and the victim was taken to the hospital. Police soon charged the suspect with felony aggravated assault.

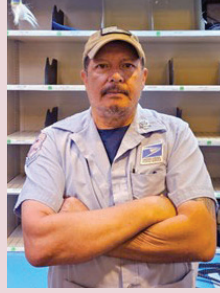
Meyers talked to the man after he returned from the hospital—and learned that the man had two big gashes on his stomach, and that the knife had just missed his spleen.

House fire interrupts carrier training

On Sept. 12, Centennial, CO Branch 5996 carrier **Roy Zuniga** was going about his route with **Becky Koch**, who was shadowing Zuniga for a day before going to Carrier Academy. As they were driving the route, they spotted heavy black smoke.

"I was like, 'Oh no, this is not good,' " the four-year letter carrier said.

As they approached the home, they realized that there was a fire in between the two houses. Zuniga called



Roy Zuniga (left) came across a fire between two houses (above) while delivering mail. He and his trainee called 911 and then evacuated the residents from the burning buildings.

911 and told Koch to start knocking on the door of one house while he knocked on the other.

A woman answered one door. She was unaware of the fire and quickly evacuated the house with her baby, husband and two dogs. In the other house, the carrier evacuated a couple, their 21-year-old daughter and a dog.

Once emergency personnel arrived and the carriers saw that the situation was in good hands, they continued on the route.

"I've never seen a fire like that before," Zuniga said.

Zuniga and Koch's actions were potentially life-saving, but the homes were almost completely destroyed by the fire.

Zuniga spoke to one of the families and learned that they wanted to remain in the area even though they couldn't stay in their house.

"So, what I told him was, 'Look, I drive my route every day,' " Zuniga said. "Every house that I see for sale or whatever, I will take a picture. I will text it to you or I'll grab a flyer."

Their carrier came through again. "They just bought a house on my route," he said.

Carrier helps crying toddler

As **Keith Minchillo**, a Branch 55 carrier, was approaching a house one day in April in Woonsocket, RI, he heard a child crying. Investigating further, the 24-year letter carrier saw a toddler face down in an alley, where the child had fallen from an open window about 10 feet above.

"I was in shock that a baby would actually fall from a window," Minchillo said.

Seeing no one around, "I rubbed the baby's belly and talked to him, told him it was going to be OK," Minchillo said.

During that time, he called 911.

“At one point the baby stood up and looked at me and gave me a big hug—put his arms out to give me a big hug,” Minchillo said. “So, I hugged the baby back and he stopped crying.”



Keith Minchillo

The ambulance soon arrived, and paramedics assessed the boy’s condition. Fortunately, there were only minor injuries. Once Minchillo knew the boy was safe after the incident,

he continued on his route.

Minchillo was unable to find out how the toddler had fallen from a window, but he noticed that the family moved out just a few weeks later. Nonetheless, he said he was happy he had been able to help.

Letter carrier helps severely ill co-worker

One day in May in Magnolia, DE, **Patrick Raymond** arrived at work a little earlier than usual. The Southern Delaware Branch 906 carrier spotted his co-worker and friend, **Dan Miller**, standing outside his truck coughing and struggling to breathe.

After assessing Miller’s condition, the 17-year letter carrier asked their supervisor, Michelle, what to do. She told him to take Miller to the hospital, despite Miller’s reluctance.

While Raymond was driving him to the emergency room, Miller lost con-

sciousness. At the hospital, Miller was immediately laid on a gurney and CPR was performed. His heartbeat resumed a few minutes later, and he was soon admitted and put on a respirator.

“It felt really surreal, like it wasn’t happening,” Raymond said.

Miller had severe double pneumonia and heart issues, and, after this incident, he had to always wear a life vest for his heart and was unable to continue work as a letter carrier.

He is thankful for his co-workers’ actions, though. “Lacking either of them or the rescue crew at the hospital, I would not be here today,” Miller wrote to *The Postal Record*. “They saved my life, and I want people to know about it.”

Raymond reflected on his friendship with Miller, saying, “I don’t feel like a hero. I just feel like I was there for my friend. Thank God I was there, and I’m glad he’s doing better.”

Carrier warns family about fire

Brittany Nowak was walking her regular route one August day in South Buffalo, NY, when she saw small flames and smoke coming from a house’s upstairs patio, which she initially thought was from a lit cigarette.

The Buffalo-Western New York Branch 3 member called 911 and



Patrick Raymond

knocked on the front door of the house after realizing that the fire had expanded. She helped evacuate the family and two dogs from the house. The woman living there

initially tried to extinguish the flames herself, but Nowak told her that it was time to get out.

“I didn’t expect it to be as bad as it was,” the six-year carrier said. “I was relieved and just grateful they all got out.”

After ensuring that everyone was safe and making sure the fire department got there, Nowak continued with her route. The fire caused significant damage, leaving the upper part of the house uninhabitable. The building ended up being condemned, and the residents had to move out.

Letter carrier saves man trapped in burning car

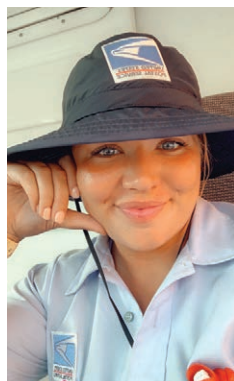
Tesfaye Deyasso was driving home from work in St. Louis Park, MN, on April 18 around 6:30 p.m. when he witnessed a man driving off the highway and into a highway barrier. As the car smashed into a pole, the front caught on fire.

“Everything happened within, like, a second,” the Minneapolis Branch 9 member said.

The four-year letter carrier pulled over and ran up to the car. Seeing that the driver was unconscious, Deyasso attempted to open the door, but it was locked.

Deyasso finally got the attention of the driver, who unlocked the door. With the help of some good Samaritans, Deyasso got the door partly open.

“We tried our best to open the door [farther], but it was like six inches from



Brittany Nowak

Proud to Serve

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Tesfaye Deyasso

the barrier... so we could not let him out," Deyasso said.

Deyasso told everyone to try to find something to break open the window. One person tried using a large piece of plastic he had found on the ground, but it didn't work. Finally, a highway assistance person arrived with a device that could be used to open the window. The group hoisted the driver out of the car and to safety.

Seconds later, the rest of the car, including where the driver had been sitting, burst into flames.

"I think, like, maybe 20 seconds later the whole car just burned," Deyasso said.

Seeing the driver was in good hands, Deyasso, who was feeling the effects of the spreading smoke, left the scene. For the next six hours, Deyasso struggled to breathe and wheezed due to smoke inhalation. As he was driving back, he recalled it being so bad that he called a doctor, who instructed him on how to slow his breathing.

The smoke had been intense enough that one of the Samaritans had to go to the hospital with the driver due to

smoke inhalation, Deyasso said. The driver is doing fine now, having sustained only minor injuries.

The local Fox affiliate aired footage from a dashcam that captured the incident.

"A lot of people think that we only deliver mail and packages, but I would like to let them know we can also save a life," Deyasso said. "We can help people."

Carrier performs CPR

Brandon LaRoach, a seven-year carrier, was delivering on his route on Halloween when he spotted something spinning. The Buffalo-Western New York Branch 3 carrier realized that it was a man in an electric wheelchair spinning out of control in the middle of the street. LaRoach then saw the man fall out of the chair. The carrier immediately reacted, driving down the street to help and calling 911.

"I flew over in the ProMaster," LaRoach said.

Once he arrived on the scene, he recognized the man as Mr. Knowles, a customer with whom LaRoach chatted nearly every workday. Knowles was lying on the ground unconscious and had no pulse. LaRoach promptly began rounds of CPR and a passerby soon stopped to help.

"[CPR] kind of takes a lot out of you," LaRoach said. "Once one of us was getting kind of tired, we would switch then."

After 30 to 40 minutes, the responding EMTs had been considering pronouncing him dead, but at the last moment, they found Knowles's pulse.

"It felt amazing when he got a pulse," LaRoach said.

Unfortunately, Knowles died of a heart attack a day later. Knowles's

family was happy that they had been to spend his last day with him and say their goodbyes.

"In my opinion, I don't even think I deserve [recognition], but ... his family still, like, thanked me because of what I did," LaRoach said. "They were able to say goodbye to him."

Hearing alarm, carrier alerts fire department

Michael Pentico, an eight-year carrier, was at the beginning of his route one day in May in Des Moines, IA, when he heard a beeping noise from a house. The Central Iowa Merged Branch 352 carrier thought that it was probably nothing, so he finished a couple more deliveries and on his way back decided to see if it was still beeping.

"If it was still going off when I came back around, I was going to stop and check," Pentico said.

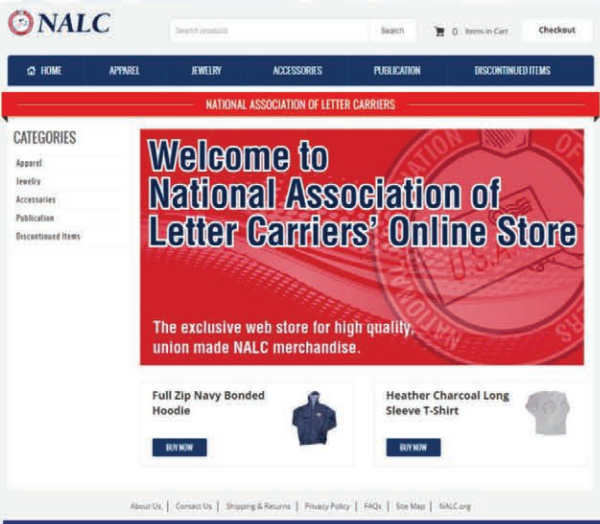
He went up to the window, which was open, and could clearly hear the beeping of the fire alarm and could also smell smoke.

He went to the front door and knocked, but no one answered. Pentico called 911 and operators sent out the fire department. Firefighters told him he didn't need to stick around, so he continued his route.

Later in the day, one of the firefighters stopped him to thank him. The firefighter told him that without his intervention there could have been "a full-blown house fire," Pentico said.

Although there were no people in the house, there was a dog, cats and reptiles. The heat lamp used to keep the reptiles warm was what had caused the smoking. **PR**

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Start your hiring with employment verification compliance done right



**Paul
Barner**

We all know that finding the right people to serve our members is critical to our success. But what we cannot forget is that lack of compliance with the employment verification form—the I-9—could represent a serious financial and legal threat to our branch offices and state associations. In recent years, the federal government has escalated its efforts to oversee and enforce I-9 compliance through workplace audits and raids. The I-9 is more than just a compulsory onboarding employment form; it is a legal document requiring every employer (remember, that’s you if you have anyone earning W-2 wages) to verify their employees’ immigration

status under penalty of perjury. Non-compliance with those verification requirements is a civil violation and can result in heavy fines and penalties. Given this emphasis, I-9 compliance is more important than ever.

Here are some tips to protect your branch or state association against I-9-related penalties:

- Download the up-to-date form at uscis.gov/sites/default/files/document/forms/i-9-paper-version.pdf, or simply direct your employees to the easy-to-populate e-form.
- Section 1 of I-9 must be completed by each employee (again, anyone earning W-2 wages through your branch or state association) by their first day of work—the period of time after the job offer has been accepted and before the end of the employee’s first day.
- Section 2 must be completed by you (the employer) within three business days of the date of hire.
- The instruction document and “List of Acceptable Documents” (page 3 of the form) should be made available to employees at the time they complete.

Employees can choose which legal documents they submit to establish their identity and eligibility to work in the United States. They must present original, unexpired documents in person to the company representative (a branch officer or other designated employee who is completing Section 2).

I-9s should also be stored in a secure location separate from personnel files. Although photocopies of employment identification are not required, if you choose to make photocopies of documents, they should be made for every employee retained with the I-9s and presented during an investigation or audit by an authorized agent. Completed I-9s must

be retained for as long as an individual is employed. I-9s for employees who have separated must be retained for three years after the date of hire (first day of work for pay) or one year after the date employment ends, whichever is later.

There are two cases in which completing the Form I-9 deviates from normal circumstances:

- **Reverification**—If the employee’s work authorization document has an expiration date, you must reverify the employee’s right to work prior to that expiration date. Also, when an employment authorization expiration date is provided in Section 1, you are required to reverify employment authorization on or before the date shown. The need for reverification is triggered by the document presented by the employee and by the box the employee checks in Section 1. Branches should create a system to remind them when the employee’s documents will expire and need to be reverified. Reverification is not necessary for identity (List B) documents. U.S. passports, whether valid or expired, never require reverification, nor do alien registration or permanent resident cards.
- **Rehires**—A new Form I-9 does not need to be completed for people rehired within three years of completing a prior Form I-9. Branches can instead update the prior Form I-9 by confirming that the employment eligibility document originally presented remains valid. If it does, you can merely record the rehire date in Section 3 of the form. However, if a new version of Form I-9 has been issued, the employee must provide documents from the current list of acceptable documents, and you must complete the current version of Form I-9 and retain it with the previously completed I-9. Some branches and state associations find it easier to complete a new Form I-9 for all rehires.

To ensure compliance with the law, you must accurately complete Form I-9 at the outset. Mistakes happen, however, and you may later discover errors on these forms. It is good practice to periodically audit and make any necessary corrections to the I-9s. Remember to make all corrections in a different color ink (red is suggested) to avoid the appearance of tampering with the timing or other compliance requirements.

Some Form I-9 errors are technical and can be corrected, but others are substantive and could require new I-9s in addition to the original forms. Important: Never backdate a form! Periodic self-audits and corrections may assist employers in demonstrating a good-faith effort to comply with the law in the event of a government audit.

Given that both audits and raids are becoming more commonplace—and the criminal penalties and fines are severe—it is critical that branches and state associations have a robust I-9 compliance practice in place.

The gift



**James D.
Henry**

The job of a letter carrier is very demanding, both mentally and physically. Everyone recognizes it as an important job. If ever the aforementioned is put to the test, it's during all sorts of calamities, times of national emergencies and the holidays. Yet letter carriers are always there and never fail to meet the moment. Rain, sleet or snow—and might I add “pandemic”—are just the tip of the iceberg of dedication and devotion to duty displayed regularly. Letter carriers are truly a gift that keeps on giving to the nation.

This is the time of year where the United States Postal Service's volume of mail and packages increases dramatically, thereby increasing the workload of letter carriers. However, despite the demands of performing their duties, most see it as a labor of love and willingly accept the challenges. As letter carriers, we recognize that our customers are depending on their letter carrier to deliver their normal mail, and yes, that highly anticipated Christmas gift in some instances. With the emergence of e-commerce and the huge role the USPS is playing, carriers are responsible for an inordinate number of packages these days destined to be delivered as holiday gifts.

Not only do letter carriers deliver the physical packages during this time of year, but they also deliver a hello, a smile and a familiar face that provides a bit of comfort for the families and communi-

ties they serve. They deliver messages that convey the gift of good news, and expressions of love. It is a gift to be able to serve others, and letter carriers are the epitome of gift giving. The meaning of life is to find your gift. The purpose of life is to give it away. Every single day, letter carriers give the gift of service.

The most precious gift of all, for anyone, is the gift of time. Time is something that we should never take for granted nor can we ever get it back. It often seems like we spend more time at our jobs than with our families. The demands of the job may cause us to not take the necessary time for rest, recreation and wellness as needed. We'll reflect over our careers on how we should have heeded the call of our bodies to rest, the request of our friends and loved ones to spend more time with them, and to have a wellness day to recharge.

The holiday season is a time to take time and be grateful for our family and friends. To provide expressions of care and love. To not allow anything to deprive us of our most precious gift to each other, and that is to spend time with one another.

Another year is ending, and another year is approaching fast, and I do not want to end the year without expressing my sincere gratitude for your letting me to serve you in any way. Moreover, I thank you for the friendship and shared love of letter carriers. The Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. once said, “Life's persistent and most urgent question is, ‘What are you doing for others?’ ” Your gift of service is what you are doing, and it is immensely appreciated.

Be safe and enjoy your holidays. Merry Christmas and happy new year to all!



Branch Officers Training



Nicole
Rhine

As previously announced, there will be two Branch Officers Trainings held next month. The first class will be held Jan. 6-9, 2025 in Los Angeles. The second class will be held Jan. 27-30 in Minneapolis, MN.

Branch Officers Training sessions consist of three and a half days of educational classes tailored to assist branch presidents, vice presidents, treasurers, recording secretaries, financial secretaries and trustees in the performance of their duties as an officer.

As a reminder, branches and state associations must use the registration form that was sent out in the *NALC Bulletin* to register for

the session, and no travel plans should be made until an acceptance letter is received. The classes are limited in size and do fill up quickly. Preference is given to officers who have not attended recent training sessions ahead of those who have attended.

If you applied and were unable to get into the January classes, we will offer additional trainings later in 2025.

Branch Officers Training covers the basics for financial officers: reporting to the Department of Labor, fiduciary duties under the Landrum-Griffin Act, bonding and IRS reporting requirements.

Here's an overview of what the three and a half days of training cover:

- **Constitution and bylaws**—This session will cover what is required in branch bylaws and common errors that the Committee of Laws sees when reviewing bylaw submissions.
- **DOL reporting**—This session reviews the history of the Labor-Management Reporting and Disclosure Act (LMRDA) and how it impacts the activities of unions and union officers. Participants will learn about each title of the LMRDA and the reporting requirements under the law.
- **Travel, per diem and reimbursements**—This session is designed to help branches comply with the tricky IRS and Department of Labor (DOL) rules involved in travel payments.
- **Handling MDA funds and PAC funds**—This session will cover the rules for collecting and remitting funds for the Muscular Dystrophy Association and NALC's political action committee.

- **Preparing LM forms and 990s**—Participants will get into the nitty-gritty of completing these required yearly filings with the DOL and the IRS.
- **Auditing branch records**—This session is for trustees and will teach how to ensure a complete audit.
- **What am I signing?**—This session is for branch presidents/vice presidents and will cover the responsibility that goes along with signing certain documents.
- **Policies**—This session is designed to identify policies that every branch or state association should have in place.
- **Why minutes matter**—This session will assist recording secretaries in maintaining accurate and complete minutes.
- **Member notification requirements**—This session will cover required notifications and the proper way to make them.
- **Payroll and wage Issues**—This session will cover the ins and outs of payroll.
- **Recordkeeping**—This session provides an overview of the proper way to keep records consistent with DOL guidelines.
- **Dues and membership**—This session is intended to guide branch officers through membership issues they deal with daily and how to read a dues roster.
- **Fiduciary issues and practices**—This session is designed to give participants practice applying what they learned in the DOL reporting and *Constitution* and bylaws segment.
- **Managing branch finances and creating transparency**—This session is designed to provide guidance on the day-to-day aspects of running the financial affairs of a branch.
- **Fraud prevention and detection, internal controls**—This session is designed to identify the biggest risks of fraud and how branches can establish procedures to prevent it.
- **Branch elections**—This session covers the *NALC Regulations Governing Branch Election Procedures*.
- **I was just elected, now what?**—This session is focused on helping officers learn more about branch operations.
- **Risk management and cyber security**—This session is focused on helping officers identify and mitigate possible exposures and ways to address them.
- **Introduction to QuickBooks**—This session is designed to provide guidance on how to use QuickBooks.
- **Innovations**—This session will focus on new programs made available to officers through the Members Only portal.

Installation of officers



**Mack I.
Julion**

It's probably common knowledge that travel is a big part of the workload for your national officers. Local branches, state associations and the regional offices regularly have events or trainings where the presence of our national president or a resident national officer is requested. Obviously, there are times of the year when the demand is even greater. Next year, being an off-convention year for National, we expect to see a lot of state conventions. Then there are the regional or state rap sessions, branch picnics, fundraisers and retiree celebrations. Also, this time of year as we get into the holidays and the new year, there are many instal-

lations of officers.

The installation of branch officers can be any time of the year, depending on their nominations and elections as indicated in their bylaws, but it appears that most branches have theirs toward the end of the year to coincide with the nomination and election of delegates. With that, there are a couple of provisions in the *Constitution* that I want to spotlight this month as they relate to the installation of state and branch officers. I have been to several state association conventions with their election and installation, and one of the most repeated errors I see is *when* the installation takes place. Some state associations have their convention with a dinner on the last day, or the following day of the convention.

The only potential problem is that the installation of officers should be the last official act of the convention. I pointed this out to a couple of state associations last year. Article 7 of the *Constitution for the Government of State Associations* (Elections and Nominations) states that "the installation of officers shall take place just prior to adjournment." Now, this doesn't mean that you can't have it at dinner; it just requires that it needs to be a part of the convention. Or rather that the convention shouldn't be adjourned until the installation of officers has taken place. As for the branches, they also have certain requirements.

The Constitution for the Government of Subordinate and Federal Branches (CGSFB) requires that the installation be done at the branch meeting. Article 5, Section 6 of the *CGSFB* states:

The installation of Branch officers shall take place at the first or second meeting of the Branch following their election and shall be by such ceremony as the National Association provides. Any National officer, a Past President of the National Association, a President or Past President of a State Association, shall act as the Installing Officer provided that in their absence any officer of a State Association or the Past President of a Branch may act as such.

That pecking order for the installing officer is also repeated in the chapter "Form of Installation Ceremony" that is found in the back of the *Constitution*; it also applies to the national association and state associations for the installation of officers.

The timeline for the installation of branch officers can often be overlooked. We see that with the submission of proposed bylaw changes, as well as the events scheduled as installations that are not a "meeting of the branch." Some branches choose to have their installation as a banquet-style dinner for the membership, which is not a problem; it just needs to be incorporated into the first or second meeting following the election of officers. So, remember, if you are planning an installation, whether a state association or branch, the *Constitution* has certain requirements.

"Good luck, Dan!" I recently had the opportunity to represent President Renfro at a retirement and membership appreciation dinner for South Suburban Merged, IL Branch 4016 right outside Chicago. Branch President Dan Smith has decided that he is not seeking reelection as he paves the way for the next generation of leadership. He has served the members of Branch 4016 admirably for more than 30 years, and I wish him all the best. I am pictured here with Dan (in the back) and Chicago Branch 11 President Elise Foster, Branch 4016 Vice President Patrice O'Banner, Region 3 National Business Agent Michael Caref, and officers of both Branches 4016 and 11.



In closing, I wish all a very merry Christmas, a happy Hanukkah, joyous Kwanzaa and a prosperous new year, from my family to yours!

Carrier Academy roundtable discussion



Christopher Jackson

NALC is committed to making sure that new hires receive the proper training that provides essential tools necessary to have a lasting career as a city letter carrier. Proper training for new hires better prepares them for the unique career of being a letter carrier.

Unlike many other jobs, there is nowhere else a person can get experience carrying mail. Carriers must be prepared to identify different classes of mail, to properly case and pull down mail, to carefully handle and deliver packages, to identify hazardous items, and to safely deliver in tough weather conditions.

A properly trained carrier provides better service for our customers. Providing a service that we can all be proud of is what has always won us the trust of the public and kept us in good standing with communities across the country. In this month's column, I will touch on efforts being made in City Delivery to update training materials for newly hired city letter carriers.

Currently, all newly hired city carriers must complete the Postal Service's Standard Training Program for City Letter Carriers and the Carrier Academy as they begin their careers. The complete training program consists of five phases: orientation, driver training, shadow day, Carrier Academy and on-the-job training.

Recently, my staff and I met with the Postal Service to discuss updating the training materials for the Carrier Academy. During the meeting, I was able to share my thoughts on the importance of bringing the program up to speed from its latest update in 2020. Postal Service representatives welcomed the opportunity to update the materials and agreed to continue joint discussions.

Getting input from active Carrier Academy facilitators has always been important when developing the training materials, but this time NALC did an in-person roundtable discussion. In August, I requested that each national business agent (NBA) across the 15 NALC regions select a local facilitator to join me and my staff in the roundtable discussion regarding the program. Each participant was asked to communicate with other Academy facilitators in their region to bring as much insight to the discussion as possible.

In early October, my staff and I met with the 15 facilitators in the conference center at the Region 9 NBA office in Marietta, GA, for the weeklong meeting. Each facilitator was able to share their experiences with the program and identify issues they have had within their areas. The facilitators raised issues such as receiving late notices of participant scheduling, lack of communication with their USPS counterparts, insufficient training equipment, a lack of training materials, failure to consistently abide by the 1-to-6 ratio of facilitators to new hires, and staffing shortages. As a group, we discussed the best ways to address these issues, and the facilitators were able to hear from others who have been in their shoes. Many of the facilitators appreciated the opportunity to discuss these issues in this setting.

The group reviewed training guides, the current Carrier Academy PowerPoint presentation, and the latest updates to the Mobile Delivery Device-Technical Refresh (MDD-TR). Relying on their experience and knowledge, we were able to identify out-of-date sections on topics such as Flat Sequencing System, Managed Service Point barcodes, the Electronic Badge Reader and others. Since many daily carrier responsibilities, such as timekeeping, parcel loading, vehicle inspections, and hazard notifications, are affected by the MDD-TR, creating a new section focused solely on the functionality of the device was proposed by the group.

I want to extend my sincerest gratitude to each of the facilitators who took the time to participate in this weeklong discussion: Darryl Johnson of Region 1, Deidre Milhorn of Region 2, Candy Hummel of Region 3, Andrew Chapa of Region 4, Frank Enlow of Region 5, Ron Karus of Region 6, Jon Raven of Region 7, Renee Maxey of Region 8, Patricia Coney of Region 9, Darren Collins of Region 10, Angela Talom of Region 11, Leslie Greene of Region 12, Mark Adkins of Region 13, Louie Poste of Region 14, and Isaac Harper of Region 15. The input from this group will significantly improve the training experience for new city carriers across the country.



Vehicle cleaning and safety



Manuel L. Peralta Jr.

Recently I was asked about management's responsibility to wash vehicles. I have written about this subject in the past, so in preparing this month's column, I noted that the regulation has been updated or, better said, downgraded.

Chapter 7 of the *Postal Operations Manual* covers postal vehicle service.

Section 712.5, Vehicle Appearance, provides that:

The clean and uniform appearance of postal vehicles is essential to projecting a positive image of the Postal Service. Postal vehicles must be washed as needed, but not less than once each month. Vehicles must be constantly scrutinized by managers at all levels for paint deterioration; missing, torn, or faded markings; and corrosion or damage to the body. Managers should schedule immediate repairs, as needed.

The above passage used to require twice-a-month "washing" of each vehicle in the fleet. The new wording does not limit the washing to only once a month. Rather, it now requires a monthly washing and more as needed.

This same passage also places a responsibility on your managers to "constantly scrutinize" (to examine in detail with careful or critical attention) the appearance and safety of the vehicles and to schedule immediate repairs to meet the obligation written into the above passage.

If your managers are not doing their job, we should address this with them or file a grievance if they refuse to do what is required. After all, this affects our working conditions.

Sometimes vehicle safety is negatively affected by a lack of proper cleaning. Take, for example, what happens when no one keeps the windshield or other windows clean. Not just on the outside, but on the inside as well.

How often have you uttered words to yourself while driving, because your ability to see through the windshield is obstructed by glare that may be magnified when the window is dirty. Your ability to pay attention to your driving tasks and the hazards ahead of you are inhibited. Take the time to write up your vehicle if your view is obstructed to a degree that you feel is unsafe. If you remain silent, you just pass the hazard on to the

next driver and your inaction is putting their safety at risk.

The matter of glare does not end when the sun sets. The National Highway Traffic Safety Administration also cautions that glare continues as a safety factor when driving at night.

We know well that our craft is on the road delivering at night. How is your vision of the road affected when your windows are not as clean as they should be?

"If you remain silent, you just pass the hazard on to the next driver and your inaction is putting their safety at risk...Ignoring a dirty windshield is no different than any other hazard that can cause or contribute to an accident."

Many a time we escape harm on our routes or in our vehicles, not because we are being safe, but rather because we know what to avoid. It could be a low hanging limb over your path to the next house, faulty emergency brakes, unsafe drive patterns, or that dog that you have not reported.

Ignoring a dirty windshield is no different than any other hazard that can cause or contribute to an accident.

Every hazard that you fail to report might harm one of your fellow workers, if not yourself. Turn in a hazard report (1767) or vehicle repair tag (4565).

In closing out this year, I wish you all a merry Christmas and a happy new year.

Be safe and keep an eye on each other.



Thrift Savings Plan withdrawal methods



**Dan
Toth**

The Thrift Savings Plan (TSP) makes a great retirement account for active employees and retirees alike. Active employees benefit from low fees and expenses. Although retirees continue to receive those same benefits, they also get to take advantage of the flexible withdrawal options. This column will review the withdrawal options and some of the considerations one may make.

The TSP has a publication titled *Distributions*, which is intended for all separated and beneficiary participants. It has a great introduction about considering the impacts of making withdrawals, planning your

income during retirement, and the potential impact of even modest inflation over the years. I recommend that all retiring employees grab a copy of this publication, found at tsp.gov.

Active employees can make in-service withdrawals based on financial hardship or after age 59½. To qualify for a financial hardship, you would need at least one of the following: recurring negative monthly cash flow, medical expenses, personal casualty losses, legal expenses, and losses due to a major disaster declared by the Federal Emergency Management Agency. Age-based withdrawals can only be vested funds, must be at least \$1,000, and limited to four withdrawals per calendar year. Remember that the TSP is your retirement vehicle, so in-service withdrawals should generally be a last resort.

For retirees or separated participants, there are three ways to make a withdrawal: installments, partial or total distributions, and annuity purchases. Each basic method has its own options and considerations.

Partial or total distributions are straightforward. They are a single transaction or withdrawal. Partial distributions must be at least \$1,000. You can make partial distributions even while you are receiving installments, but of course a total distribution would stop any installments.

Installments are payments received monthly, quarterly or annually and will continue until you stop them or until you run out of money, though the minimum duration is one year. Installments can be either a fixed dollar amount greater than \$25 that you specify, or payments based on IRS life expectancy tables. With life expectancy installments, the payment amount depends on your age and account balance at the

time of the first installment. Then, each January, the installments will be recalculated on the same factors. This means that the payments will change from year to year depending on your current balance (which is influenced by how you have the money invested, how the market performs, and by the amount and frequency of your installments).

It's easy to make changes to installments. You can call or go online any time to change the dollar amount, change the frequency of payment, change the source of your installments (traditional, Roth or both), change from fixed dollar to life expectancy or vice versa.

A third option is to purchase an annuity through TSP's outside vendor. You can use any part of your account to do so, meaning you could use 50 percent of your account to purchase an annuity, and use the rest with fixed-dollar installments, for example. When purchasing an annuity, you are essentially giving up control of your money in exchange for a particular monthly payment for the rest of your life (or you and your joint annuitant if you purchase a joint annuity). Unlike partial distributions and installments, an annuity cannot be canceled or modified.

For those with both a traditional and Roth account, you can specify the source of your distributions. This is a newer feature and can provide more flexibility when planning and managing your tax liability. You can specify that your distribution comes from only your traditional account, only from your Roth account, or both.

Taxes are an important consideration when planning how to use your funds and they depend on the source (traditional or Roth) and method used. Those interested in learning more should start by consulting the TSP booklet *Tax Rules about TSP Payments* or check out IRS Publication 721, *Tax Guide to U.S. Civil Service Retirement Benefits*.

Once you retire, USPS will provide TSP with your separation date. This is vital so that you can proceed with any post-separation withdrawals. It can take up to 30 days for TSP to receive this notification. To initiate a withdrawal, log into My Account at tsp.gov or call the ThriftLine (877-968-3778).

Once you reach a certain age, you may need to take required minimum distributions (RMD). The particular age depends on your year of birth, but it is age 73 or higher if born after 1950. RMDs are calculated based on your age, traditional balance at the end of the previous year, and the IRS Uniform Lifetime Table.

The TSP remains a great choice with its low fees and flexible withdrawal options. Retirees who consider moving their money into the control of a financial planner should read my October 2023 column, "Financial planners."

Unclaimed property



**James W.
“Jim” Yates**

Each year, the Mutual Benefit Association (MBA) turns over thousands of dollars of unclaimed property to state treasury departments. This is an obligation that applies to all financial institutions. Unclaimed property is money belonging to a policyholder who never cashed a check from MBA. Additionally, unclaimed property can be an account that has had no activity for a defined period.

MBA makes several attempts to contact the owners of these funds before turning them over to a state’s treasury department. Most of our unclaimed property is a result of outstanding dividend checks. These are

often small amounts, but some can be several hundred dollars. A long-forgotten bank account could be much more.

In addition to uncashed dividend checks, MBA matches death records provided by one of our vendors against our active policy files. This provides us with notice of when one of our policyholders has died, but it does not always help us find the beneficiary who is entitled to be paid the proceeds of the policy. The proceeds of these policies are often several thousand dollars. This would best be paid directly to the beneficiary whom the policyholder has designated rather than being remitted to the state.

As director of MBA, I have a legal and fiduciary responsibility to pay our policyholders, or their beneficiaries, the funds that are due and to minimize the amount of these funds that we are required to remit to state treasury departments. This article highlights some of the actions that MBA takes to minimize its unclaimed property obligation and informs you of some of the things that you can do to minimize the risk that funds that are due to you will be turned over to the state. It is important to note that not only does MBA perform its unclaimed property due diligence, but all insurance companies, banks and other financial institutions may be making similar attempts to contact their policyholders/payees about unclaimed property prior to turning the funds over to their state of jurisdiction.

What does MBA do to find policyholders or beneficiaries who have unclaimed funds? We send several letters to the policyholder informing them of checks that have not cleared and how to receive a replacement check. We traditionally

have good luck with this method, but we do not always have a current address for the policyholder. In addition, when we have life insurance benefit payments, we use software to try to locate the beneficiary we have on file or relatives of the beneficiary. While these methods are often successful, they don’t always result in finding the payee.

Things you should do:

- Cash any check within 90 days of date it was issued.
- Maintain contact with your financial institutions and inform them of any address changes. Banks also have an unclaimed property obligation and will remit property to the state because of account inactivity. In addition, unpaid fees on safe-deposit boxes may lead to box contents being turned over to the state.
- Review statements and correspondence from MBA or other financial institutions that may require a response and respond accordingly.
- Maintain copies of important documents and make sure that family members know where they are kept.
- Periodically review your beneficiary designation. This is extremely important, as we are required to pay the beneficiary on file with MBA even if those individuals listed aren’t important in your life today. We have paid more than one benefit payment to a divorced spouse because the policyholder’s benefit designation was not up to date.

In addition to those items listed above, I also suggest that you check your state’s unclaimed property website. Most states’ websites are easy to navigate and normally have a location where you can search for unclaimed property that has been turned over to the state. You can periodically do an internet search of the states where you have lived to see whether there have been any funds remitted to the state that belong to you or a close family member.

Each state has procedures to claim unclaimed property that they have received. It is often easier to do those little things that will ensure that your hard-earned money isn’t misplaced than to take the steps necessary to recover this money from a state’s treasury department.

For information regarding any of the MBA products, please call the MBA office at 202-638-4318, Monday through Friday, 8 a.m. to 3:30 p.m. Eastern time. You also can visit our website at nalc.org/mba.

I’d like to take this opportunity to wish each of you and your families a happy holiday season and a happy new year.

PSHB coming up



Stephanie Stewart

It's hard to believe that we are at the end of 2024, but also on the brink of what we know as the Postal Service Health Benefits (PSHB) Program. For the NALC Health Benefit Plan, we have worked hard over this past year, and we are excited to take monumental steps into the future with our fellow letter carriers by our side.

While over the last few months you may have received a substantial amount of information regarding all the impending changes, this article will provide a timeline to help ensure that you are on the right path during the

coming year. For informational purposes, let's start with today, move through the month, and then jump ahead to 2025. We will discuss what you should have received, what you will receive, and then each member's expectations and actions needed moving forward.

As of today, depending on when you receive *The Postal Record*, Open Season is either closed or nearing the final day of Dec. 9.

By the end of December, all PSHB enrollments will be finalized. All NALC Health Benefit Plan members will receive a new 2025 PSHB member identification card. If you were a member in 2024, be sure to destroy your current card on Dec. 31, as you must use the new card with updated information.

Next, from the end of December 2024 into the first part of January 2025, watch your mail for a welcome packet sent by the Health Benefit Plan. It will define the plan option you selected during Open Season and offer pertinent benefit information to assist in the coming months. From competitive copay amounts, medical care and prescription coverage to wellness programs and more, you have made a great choice trusting us and we are ready to deliver.

Skipping ahead to 2025, it is essential to understand that the Office of Personnel Management will be the official eligibility record holder for PSHB. What this means for members is that once Open Season is over, should you need to add or remove a dependent, com-

plete an address change, or establish marriage or divorce documents, you must act through the new PSHB enrollment platform. It also is important to note that if you have had any of the above policy changes after you received your auto enroll plan crosswalk letter from OPM before the Open Season, you will need to submit them through the new platform. This will ensure that all information is up to date, that your claims are processed correctly, and that all the plan information is received. This is a significant change that all members should note. In past years, individual insurance carriers could make some of these changes to assist the members; however, this is not the case after we transition to PSHB.

If you are not sure how to use the OPM enrollment platform, detailed information regarding how to set up an account or access an account can be found in the *USPS Open Season Benefits Guide*, which is located on our website homepage at nalchbp.org.

Let's talk about 2025 and Medicare Part D and how this may affect your coverage. Although in 2024 enrollment into the Medicare Part D program was optional, in 2025 it is not. All eligible annuitants and their eligible family members will be automatically enrolled into the PSHB Part D prescription drug program.

Though Medicare requires us to permit members the ability to opt out or disenroll from their insurance carrier's PSHB Part D program, if you do, you will no longer be eligible or have prescription drug benefits under PSHB. Please research this and consider the consequences should you choose not to participate.

The Plan's Medicare Part D Prescription drug plan is called SilverScript PDP. For our Plan, all Medicare eligible members who are not currently enrolled in the NALC Health Benefit Plan—Aetna Medicare Advantage Program will be automatically enrolled in SilverScript. There is no additional cost for your enrollment into the Plan's SilverScript PDP; however, those with higher incomes could be subject to the Medicare IRMMA.

As we move into the new PSHB program, remember we are here to help. If you have any questions, please reach out to us at 888-636-NALC (6252).

In closing, I would like to take the opportunity to wish you a wonderful holiday season and happy new year.

Route inspections, Part 4

Recent *Contract Talk* articles have discussed the route count, inspection and evaluation process found in Chapter 2 of *Handbook M-39*, Management of Delivery Services. In Part 4 of this series on route inspections, we will discuss the route adjustment process.

Once the route evaluation is complete and management determines adjustments are necessary, they must prepare the reverse side of PS Form 1840, Carrier Delivery Route—Summary of Count and Inspection. Once completed, the form will display the following information:

- Office and street times chosen for the adjustment
- Addresses added or removed from the route as well as the office and street time associated with these deliveries
- Adjusted office and street times
- Whether the route has an office break
- Evaluated street time and the source
- Street time used for the adjustment and the reason for the selection of this time
- Method used to transfer office time

Office time: The amount of office time needed for the deliveries is determined by applying Section 243.316 of *Handbook M-39*, which states in part:

243.316 Office Time Column

b. The character of the route more or less governs the method of computing the office time for the territory being transferred between routes. Following are some methods which may be used:

(1) If the deliveries on the route are similar in character, the following simple formula for determining the amount of office time for the deliveries transferred may be used: Divide the average office time of the inspection period appearing on Form 1840 for the route from which territory is being transferred by the total number of possible deliveries. For example: a route has 400 possible deliveries and the average office time for inspection period was 120 minutes: 120 divided by 400 equals .3 minutes per delivery. The total number of deliveries being considered for transfer should be multiplied by minutes or fraction of minutes per delivery.

(2) Another method to determine the office time percentage factor is to divide the average office time for the count week by the average total time. For example: 165 minutes office time divided by 486 minutes total time equals 34 percent. Therefore, the allowance of 34 percent of the total time value of any territory to be added or taken away from a route must be allowed for office time to prepare the mail for delivery.

(3) Another method when utilizing the hand-held computer is to count the mail by ZIP+4 sector/segment so the number of mailpieces delivered in a segment can be calculated to determine the office time allowance for each segment to be transferred between routes. To calculate the office time allowance when transferring particular route segments, any other following three methods may be used.

(a) Apply the current casing standards of 18 (letter size), 8 (other size), and 70 (strap out) to the actual segment(s) mail count from the day of inspection. For example: A segment receives 220 pieces on day of inspection; 180 letters divided by 18 = 10 minutes; 40 other size pieces divided by 8 = 5 minutes; 220 divided by 70 = 4 minutes.

The office time allowance for that segment would be 19 minutes.

(b) Follow (a) above but factor in the percentage of standard office time used during the week of inspection from the carrier who serviced that segment(s) in the most recent inspection. For example: The carrier who serviced the segment utilized .80 of standard office time allowed during week of inspection (19 x .80 = 16 minutes). The office time allowance for that segment would be 16 minutes.

(c) Follow (a) above but factor in the percentage of standard office time used during the week of inspection from the carrier whose route is gaining the segment(s) being transferred. For example: The carrier whose route will pick up the segment utilized .85 of standard office time allowed during the week of inspection (19 x .85 = 17 minutes). The office time allowance for that segment would be 17 minutes.

Note: The effort here is to arrive at the most accurate time allowance for the transferred segment(s), negating the need for corrective adjustments.

Street time: As discussed in previous articles, the goal of any route count and inspection is to adjust routes to as near eight hours as possible. If a route evaluation shows a total daily time in excess of eight hours on most days of the week, management must provide permanent relief by transferring workload to another route.

Permanent relief may be provided in several ways. Section 243.21.b of *Handbook M-39* identifies the methods for providing permanent relief:

(continued on next page)

Route inspections, Part 4 (continued)

(continued from previous page)

243.21 Routes of More than 8 Hours

b. Permanent relief may be provided by reducing carrier office or street time. Consider items such as additional segmentations, use of routers, hand-offs, relocating vehicle parking, withdrawal of mail by clerks or mailhandlers, providing a cart system for accountable items, etc. When routes require a current adjustment and Delivery Point Sequencing will commence within 6 months, management will adjust using non-territorial, non-scheme change adjustments. Where actual transfer of territory is necessary, see 243.23. If a hand-off is the method selected for providing relief on the street, the time value associated with the delivery of the hand-off must be deducted from the route getting relief and transferred to the gaining route.

On routes evaluated at less than eight hours, permanent additions are made to make the assignment as near eight hours as possible in accordance with Section 243.22 of *Handbook M-39*:

243.22 Route Less than 8 Hours

On routes where the evaluated time is less than 8 hours, make permanent additions by transferring territory through a realignment of the territory in the delivery unit. This realignment could reduce or eliminate an existing auxiliary route, reduce a regular route to auxiliary status, or eliminate it entirely.

If routes are adjusted by transferring territory, the reverse of PS Form 1840 will indicate the proposed changes. Section 243.31 of *Handbook M-39* explains how to record territory transfer on the reverse of PS Form 1840:

243.31 Completing Reverse of Form 1840

Record office and street adjustments, on the reverse of Form 1840 or on a separate sheet of paper, as follows:

243.311 Transferring Territory from One Route to Another. A tentative selection of the block or blocks that can be most efficiently transferred should be made, using a map of the territory. The time used to deliver the mail on each block will be found on the reverse of Form 3999 covering the current inspection of the routes.

243.312 Relief and Addition Columns. Enter an (R) if deliveries are relief and an (A) if deliveries are addition.

243.313 Street, Blockface Numbers, and Sector/Segment Columns. Enter the street name, beginning and ending blockface numbers, and the ZIP+4 sector/segment number for the blockface. Refer to the ZIP+4 printout to obtain the correct sector/segment number to ensure that no segment is split (see 243.231c).

243.314 Transferred To or From Route Number Column. Enter the route number to or from which the block and street is to be transferred.

When transferring delivery territory, management determines the amount of time needed for each sector segment, or range of addresses. This data comes from the PS Form 3999, Inspection of Letter Carrier Route, completed during the week of inspection.

When a route is inspected on more than one day, the parties agreed in the Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) Re: Multiple Days of Inspection (M-01543 found in NALC's Materials Reference System) to the following:

When local management elects to inspect on two or three days, the PS Form 3999 closest to the selected street time on the PS Form 1840 will be used to transfer territory.

As explained in last month's Contract Talk, the front side of PS Form 1840 shows the average street time used by the regular carrier during the week of inspection and the 8-week average from the PS Form 1840-B, Carrier Time Card Analysis. The reverse of the form shows the street time management selected when evaluating the route. Union representatives should ensure management selected the appropriate PS Form 3999 if there were multiple days of inspection.

Upon completing the reverse of the PS Form 1840, management should conduct an adjustment consultation with the regular carrier servicing each route. Letter carriers should take advantage of this consultation to provide feedback on the proposed adjustment. Section 242.3 of *Handbook M-39* requires management to document any time disallowances and provide the PS Form 1840 to carriers at least one day in advance of this consultation:

242.347 All time disallowances and related comments will be noted on Form 1840 or attachments thereto, and furnished the letter carrier at least 1 day prior to consultation.

If management fails to provide PS Form 1840 or conduct a consultation as required, letter carriers should contact a union representative.

Available resources: Union representatives should review Chapter 2 of the *M-39* and Chapter 9 of the *M-41* to become familiar with the route inspection and adjustment process. These handbooks and other resources related to route inspections and adjustments are available on the NALC website at nalc.org/workplace-issues/city-delivery/route-adjustments. NALC members can obtain a copy of the *NALC Route Inspection Pocket Handbook* through their NBA office or the NALC Supply Department. Past Contract Talk articles pertaining to these issues are available at nalc.org/workplace-issues/resources/nalc-publications.

MDA October Branch Challenge results

The October Branch Challenge for the Muscular Dystrophy Association (MDA) was the third and final branch challenge of 2024, and it was our most successful challenge since we began hosting them in 2020. Thanks to all of you for your efforts to help MDA “Deliver the Cure.”

More than \$250,000 was raised in October from on-line donations and events around the country, and an incredible 60 branches and state associations were actively fundraising that month.

October top 10 branches:

Rank	Branch	Amount
1	#1100, Garden Grove, CA	\$ 10,643.00
2	#825, Oak Brook, IL	\$ 9,817.00
3	#56, Grand Rapids, MI	\$ 9,500.00
4	#3126, Royal Oak, MI	\$ 7,997.31
5	#63, Zanesville, OH	\$ 7,586.80
6	#343, St. Louis, MO	\$ 7,000.00
7	#124, New Orleans, LA	\$ 6,785.00
8	#908, South Jersey, NJ	\$ 6,710.00
9	#52, Central California Coast	\$ 5,602.80
10	#14, Louisville, KY	\$ 5,108.00

Remember that NALC’s community service programs help us maintain a positive public image and are a civic duty. They help us with elected officials and are an asset in negotiations. They help us build trust, relevance and relationships within our communities. The joint mission of NALC and the Muscular Dystrophy Association is to free individuals from muscle-debilitating diseases and to be a source of comfort and hope to patients and their families. Every day, people go to extraordinary lengths to advance this mission.

NALC was the first national sponsor for MDA, and letter carriers are among MDA’s top fundraisers, collecting millions of dollars over the years to finance research and provide care and services to children and adults with muscular dystrophy. Your efforts also help children go to summer camp, which allows them to just be kids for a week.

With a new year approaching, let’s start early and ask you to share your ideas for fundraising. The more we help and share with each other, the more money we can raise for MDA. You can share your ideas on the NALC MDA Facebook page at facebook.com/

deliverthecure. Participation in these events creates excitement within your branch, knowing you’ve made a big difference in the lives of kids and adults with muscular dystrophy.



MDA representatives are available to support you in your fundraising efforts as a branch and as individuals. Here are some easy ways to raise money for MDA:

- Raffles
- Car washes
- Yard sales
- Shamrocks
- Satchel drives
- Texas Hold ’em tournaments (follow state laws)
- Local credit union partnerships
- Bowling tournaments
- Pool and dart tournaments
- Comedy/karaoke nights
- Charity golf tournaments
- Corn hole and bean bag tournaments
- Bake sales
- Bingo nights
- Branch member donation drives
- Pancake breakfasts or spaghetti dinners
- Muscle Walks
- 5K Tough Mudders
- Trivia tournaments

So many ideas to choose from, and probably many more ideas out there that can be shared.

Remember, NALC’s commitment to MDA is here until a cure is delivered (#DelivertheCure), no matter how long it may take. If your branch has not participated in years, please feel free to contact me at 202-662-2489 or mda@nalc.org, and together we can make a plan for your branch to begin participating.

Please mail NALC Headquarters copies of any receipts or checks, along with copies of the NALC/MDA allocation, so that your branch can be properly recognized. Also remember, NALC/MDA allocations must be turned in the same calendar year of the event (no later than Dec. 28) in order to qualify for the NALC Honor Roll for that year.

Locally raised funds must be sent to the national MDA office in Chicago: Muscular Dystrophy Association Inc., Attn: NALC; P.O. Box 7410354; Chicago, IL 60674-0354.

—Christina Vela Davidson

OWCP and the transition to the PSHB



Regional Workers' Compensation Assistant Coby Jones

The Postal Service Health Benefits (PSHB) Program will provide health insurance to eligible USPS employees, USPS annuitants, and their eligible family members starting on Jan. 1, 2025. The PSHB Program will replace the Federal Employees Health Benefits (FEHB) Program coverage for these groups, as well as USPS OWCP claimants and death benefit beneficiaries receiving Federal Employees' Compensation Program (FECA) compensa-

tion benefits. While this transition has been outlined in detail elsewhere¹, this column will discuss how this transition will work for OWCP claimants and death beneficiaries whose FEHB benefits are currently overseen by OWCP.

“When Open Season ends, OPM will transmit a data file to the FECA program that details the PSHB plan for each claimant/beneficiary. This same data file will be provided on a recurring basis. The FECA program’s case management system will be updated to reflect the plan choice.”

Not every OWCP claimant with current FEHB benefits has these benefits overseen by OWCP. *FECA Procedure Manual* 5-0400.6.b provides that if the claimant is expected to be on the OWCP wage-loss compensation rolls for 90 days or more, the Department of Labor/OWCP must transfer in the health benefits enrollment. This action makes DOL/OWCP the controlling office for all future health benefits actions associated with the claim as long the claimant or beneficiary is receiving wage-loss compensation.

At this time, all current enrollees in a 2024 FEHB plan should have received a letter from OPM explaining the transition. OWCP claimants and death benefit

beneficiaries (referred to by both OPM and OWCP as “compensationers”) receiving FECA compensation benefits overseen by OWCP should also have received an additional letter from the DOL explaining the implications of the transition for them².

FECA Circular 25-01, “Postal Service Health Benefits (PSHB) Program,” outlines the transition to the PSHB for Postal Service OWCP compensationers receiving FEHB compensation benefits administered by OWCP:

1. The FECA program has provided OPM with a data file containing details for all claimants/beneficiaries where the enrollment has been “transferred in” and deductions for an FEHB plan are being made on the Periodic Roll (every 28 days). This same data file will be provided to OPM on a recurring basis.
2. OPM will automatically enroll claimants/beneficiaries into a 2025 PSHB plan that has equivalent/similar benefits and cost-sharing to the 2024 FEHB plan option in which they were enrolled for the 2024 plan year. If the claimant’s current FEHB plan is not part of PSHB, OPM will enroll them in the lowest-cost nationwide plan. If the claimant/beneficiary wishes to choose a different PSHB plan, they can do so during the Federal Benefits Open Season (Nov. 11 through Dec. 9, 2024).
3. Eligible FECA claimants/beneficiaries will receive instructions from OPM regarding how to select a PSHB plan prior to Open Season.
4. The FECA program is not a part of this automatic plan enrollment process and cannot assist or provide guidance on how to select a plan or which plan to select.
5. When Open Season ends, OPM will transmit a data file to the FECA program that details the PSHB plan for each claimant/beneficiary. This same data file will be provided on a recurring basis. The FECA program’s case management system will be updated to reflect the plan choice.

FECA Circular 25-01 also discusses the following PSHB general requirements for OWCP compensationers:

1. Any cancellations or terminations of PSHB coverage while in receipt of FECA benefits are consid-

¹ For an overview of the PSHB Program, visit OPM’s PSHB website: opm.gov/healthcare-insurance/psbh/#url=Overview. For information specific to Postal Service FECA claimants, visit the “Special Population” section of that website: opm.gov/healthcare-insurance/psbh/#url=Special-Populations.

² More detailed information can be found at: dol.gov/agencies/owcp/FECA. Look for the link to “Postal Service Health Benefits (PSHB) Program” under “Latest News.”

OWCP and PSHB (continued)

ered final unless the employee returns to work and can enroll through the agency, during the Federal Benefits Open Season. This is the same as FEHB.

- If a claimant or beneficiary elects to suspend their coverage in favor of a Medicare Advantage plan, TRICARE or CHAMPVA while in receipt of FECA benefits, they do not irrevocably lose all future PSHB entitlement and can re-enroll in the future.
- Under the PSHB Program, all USPS claimants are considered employees and are not required to enroll in Medicare Part B to maintain enrollment in PSHB, regardless of their Medicare eligibility status. For those USPS compensationers who choose to enroll in Medicare Part B, the PSHB plan will be considered the primary payer and Medicare will be secondary. OPM provides guidance on secondary payer rules on their website. At retirement, compensationers may have to enroll in Medicare Part B, if eligible, un-

less they meet a qualifying exception³.

- The FECA program cannot convert coverage under a non-PSHB plan into coverage under PSHB. If a USPS employee loses their health insurance coverage under a non-PSHB plan because of career conversion they would need to seek continuing health insurance coverage through the USPS.
- The PSHB System (maintained by OPM) will be used by claimants and beneficiaries to make their initial selection of a PSHB plan and to initiate any future changes to their plan beginning in the 2024 Federal Benefits Open Season. The PSHB System also will be used by FECA staff to review and process plan changes.

Any letter carrier with questions about the transition from the FEHB to the PSHB should reach out to their local leaders or national business agent's office for assistance.

³ The exceptions can be found at: opm.gov/healthcare-insurance/pshb/#url=Medicare-Part-B.

Scholarship Contributions

NALC scholarship contributions

NALC bestows scholarships annually under two programs. In honor of NALC's president from 1941 to 1962, the William C. Doherty Scholarship Fund awards five \$4,000 scholarships to children of members in good standing. The John T. Donelon Scholarship Fund awards one scholarship in honor of Donelon, longtime NALC assistant to the president. Below are recent contributions.

\$50	Hartford, CT Br. 86	In memory of Felicia Emily (Santos) Yetke. Mrs. Yetke was the wife of Kyle Yetke, an active letter carrier out of Hartford.	\$50	Dayton, OH Aux. #138	
\$50	Robert James, Everett, WA Br. 791	In memory of Branch 791 officer and letter carrier member Scott Badgley.	\$25	Peoria, AZ Auxiliary	
\$25	Martin D'Autrechy, Capital City Branch 380, Trenton, NJ	In memory of Bill Malkin and Dan Fasanella.	\$50	Milwaukee, WI Br. 2	Quarterly contribution
\$50	Hartford, CT Br. 86	In memory of Ethan Anthony Aurigemma, the son of Joseph Aurigemma, an active letter carrier out of Bristol.	\$50	Hartford, CT Br. 86	In memory of James Holter, a retired member of Branch 86.
\$50	Hartford, CT Br. 86	In memory of Horace Rosemond, the father of Keith Rosemond, an active member of Branch 86.	\$50	Hartford, CT Br. 86	In memory of Kenneth Renfroe, the father of NALC President Brian Renfroe.
			\$50	Hartford, CT Br. 86	In memory of Orcen Newland, an active member of Branch 86.
			\$200	Long Island Mgd., NY Br. 6000	In memory of Kenneth Renfroe, the father of NALC President Brian Renfroe.

To make a donation to the scholarship fund, send a check or money order made out to The William C. Doherty Scholarship Fund to: Secretary-Treasurer's Office, National Association of Letter Carriers, 100 Indiana Ave. NW, Washington, DC 20001-2144.

Monthly CSRS annuity payments for letter carriers who retire on Jan. 1, 2025

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 Jan. 1, 2025. Estimates are computed by using the given high-3 aver-

ages, which are based on the basic pay earned by full-time Step O/P 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.

	CC Grade 1 / High-3 Average ¹ : 74,228			CC Grade 2 / High-3 Average ¹ : 75,786		
Years of Service ²	Basic Annuity	Max. Survivor Deduction ³	Max. Survivor Reduced Annuity ⁴	Basic Annuity	Max. Survivor Deduction ³	Max. Survivor Reduced Annuity ⁴
20	\$2,242	\$202	\$2,041	\$2,289	\$206	\$2,083
21	2,366	214	2,152	2,416	219	2,197
22	2,490	226	2,263	2,542	232	2,310
23	2,613	239	2,375	2,668	244	2,424
24	2,737	251	2,486	2,795	257	2,538
25	2,861	264	2,597	2,921	270	2,651
26	2,985	276	2,709	3,047	282	2,765
27	3,108	288	2,820	3,174	295	2,879
28	3,232	301	2,931	3,300	307	2,992
29	3,356	313	3,043	3,426	320	3,106
30	3,479	325	3,154	3,552	333	3,220
31	3,603	338	3,265	3,679	345	3,333
32	3,727	350	3,377	3,805	358	3,447
33	3,851	363	3,488	3,931	371	3,561
34	3,974	375	3,599	4,058	383	3,674
35	4,098	387	3,711	4,184	396	3,788
36	4,222	400	3,822	4,310	409	3,902
37	4,345	412	3,933	4,437	421	4,015
38	4,469	424	4,045	4,563	434	4,129
39	4,593	437	4,156	4,689	446	4,243
40	4,717	449	4,267	4,816	459	4,357
41	4,840	462	4,379	4,942	472	4,470
41+11 months & over ⁵	4,949	472	4,476	5,052	483	4,570

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

1. High-3 averages for both grades (formerly levels) are for carriers who have worked full time on a continuous basis between Jan. 1, 2022, and Dec. 31, 2024, at Step O/P.

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 percent of basic annuity) to a surviving spouse.

4. If covered by the NALC Health Benefit Plan, a further deduction of either \$576.50 per month if for self plus one (code 323), \$516.58 if for self and family (code 322), or \$238.29 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 CSRS rules, the maximum allowable yearly annuity cannot exceed 80 percent of an annuitant's high-three average. This limit is reached when an annuitant's years of service amount to 41 years and 11 months. Individuals with more than 41 years and 11 months of service will not get a higher annuity based on additional service, but may get slightly more than 80 percent of their high-3 average on the basis of unused sick leave accumulated under CSRS.

Monthly FERS annuity payments for letter carriers who retire on Jan. 1, 2025

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 Jan. 1, 2025. Estimates are computed by using the given high-3 averages, which are based on the basic pay earned by full-time Step O/P 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 : 74,228			CC Grade 2 / High-3 Average ¹ : 75,786		
	Basic Annuity	Max. Survivor Deduction ³	Max. Survivor Reduced Annuity ⁴	Basic Annuity	Max. Survivor Deduction ³	Max. Survivor Reduced Annuity ⁴
20	\$1,237	\$124	\$1,113	\$1,263	\$126	\$1,137
21	1,299	130	1,169	1,326	133	1,194
22	1,361	136	1,225	1,389	139	1,250
23	1,423	142	1,280	1,453	145	1,307
24	1,485	148	1,336	1,516	152	1,364
25	1,546	155	1,392	1,579	158	1,421
26	1,608	161	1,447	1,642	164	1,478
27	1,670	167	1,503	1,705	171	1,535
28	1,732	173	1,559	1,768	177	1,592
29	1,794	179	1,614	1,831	183	1,648
30	1,856	186	1,670	1,895	189	1,705
31	1,918	192	1,726	1,958	196	1,762
32	1,979	198	1,781	2,021	202	1,819
33	2,041	204	1,837	2,084	208	1,876
34	2,103	210	1,893	2,147	215	1,933
35	2,165	216	1,948	2,210	221	1,989
36	2,227	223	2,004	2,274	227	2,046
37	2,289	229	2,060	2,337	234	2,103
38	2,351	235	2,115	2,400	240	2,160
39	2,412	241	2,171	2,463	246	2,217
40	2,474	247	2,227	2,526	253	2,274
Each additional year ⁵	61.86	6.19	55.67	63.16	6.32	56.84

1. High-3 averages for both grades (formerly levels) are for carriers who have worked full time on a continuous basis between Jan. 1, 2022, and Dec. 31, 2024, at Step O/P.

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 percent of basic annuity) to a surviving spouse.

4. If covered by the NALC Health Benefit Plan, a further deduction of either 576.50 per month if for self plus one (code 323), 516.58 if for self and family (code 322), or 238.29 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 percent per year, it is highly unlikely that any FERS employee will ever exceed the 80 percent 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 percent—their annuities are calculated at 1.1 percent times years of service times high-3 average salary.

Union Member Rights and Officer Responsibilities under the **LMRDA**

The Labor-Management Reporting and Disclosure Act (LMRDA) guarantees certain rights to union members and imposes certain responsibilities on union officers. The Office of Labor-Management Standards (OLMS)

enforces many LMRDA provisions while other provisions, such as the bill of rights, may only be enforced by union members through private suit in federal court. Below is a summary of the LMRDA:

Union Member Rights

Bill of Rights—Union members have:

- equal rights to participate in union activities
- freedom of speech and assembly
- voice in setting rates of dues, fees, and assessments
- protection of the right to sue
- safeguards against improper discipline

Copies of Collective Bargaining Agreements—Union members and non-union employees have the right to receive or inspect copies of collective bargaining agreements.

Reports—Unions are required to file an initial information report (Form LM-1), copies of constitutions and bylaws, and an annual financial report (Form LM-2/3/4) with OLMS. Unions must make the reports available to members and permit members to examine supporting records for just cause. The reports are public information and copies are available from OLMS.

Officer Elections—Union members have the right to:

- nominate candidates for office
- run for office
- cast a secret ballot
- protest the conduct of an election

Officer Removal—Local union members have the right to an adequate procedure for the removal of an elected officer guilty of serious misconduct.

Trusteeships—Unions may only be placed in trusteeship by a parent body for the reasons specified in the LMRDA.

Prohibition Against Certain Discipline—A union or any of its officials may not fine, expel, or otherwise discipline a member for exercising any LMRDA right.

Prohibition Against Violence—No one may use or threaten to use force or violence to interfere with a union member in the exercise of LMRDA rights.

Union Officer Responsibilities

Financial Safeguards—Union officers have a duty to manage the funds and property of the union solely for the benefit of the union and its members in accordance with the union's constitution and bylaws. Union officers or employees who embezzle or steal union funds or other assets commit a Federal crime punishable by a fine and/or imprisonment.

Bonding—Union officers or employees who handle union funds or property must be bonded to provide protection against losses if their union has property and annual financial receipts which exceed \$5,000.

Labor Organization Reports—Union officers must:

- file an initial information report (Form LM-1) and annual financial reports (Forms LM-2/3/4) with OLMS.
- retain the records necessary to verify the reports for at least five years.

Officer Reports—Union officers and employees must file reports concerning any loans and benefits received from, or certain financial interests in, employers whose employees their unions represent and businesses that deal with their unions.

Officer Elections—Unions must:

- hold elections of officers of local unions by secret ballot at least every three years.
- conduct regular elections in accordance with their constitution and bylaws and preserve all records for one year.
- mail a notice of election to every member at least 15 days prior to the election.
- comply with a candidate's reasonable request to distribute campaign material at the candidate's expense.
- not use union funds or resources to promote any candidate (nor may employer funds or resources be used).
- permit candidates to have election observers.

Restrictions on Holding Office—A person convicted of certain crimes may not serve as a union officer, employee, or other representative of a union for up to 13 years.

Loans—A union may not have outstanding loans to any one officer or employee that in total exceed \$2,000 at any time.

Fines—A union may not pay the fine of any officer or employee convicted of any willful violation of the LMRDA.

The above is only a summary of the LMRDA. Full text of the Act, which comprises Sections 401-531 of Title 29 of the United States Code, may be found in many public libraries, or by writing the U.S. Department of Labor, Office of Labor-Management Standards, 200 Constitution Ave. NW, Room N-5616, Washington, DC 20210, or by visiting www.dol.gov.

DOHERTY & DONELON SCHOLARSHIPS

Deadline: This form must be returned to NALC Headquarters no later than December 31, 2024.

Eligibility

- Applicant must be the son, daughter or legally adopted child of a letter carrier NALC member in good standing—active, retired or deceased. Stepchildren and grandchildren are eligible if they live with the letter carrier in a regular parent-child relationship.
- Applicant's parent must be a member in good standing of NALC for at least one year prior to making application.
- Applicant must be a high school senior when making application and must submit the form provided at right, signed by the NALC member and an officer of the member's NALC branch. This form must be returned to NALC Headquarters by December 31, 2024.

Requirements

- All applicants must take the Scholastic Assessment Test (SAT) or the American College Test (ACT) in either their junior or senior year. A copy of the official scores from the administering organization must be received at NALC Headquarters by midnight, March 31, 2025. (Computer-generated print-outs of test scores will not be accepted.)
- All biographical questionnaires and secondary school reports must be received at NALC Headquarters by midnight, March 31, 2025.

Regulations

- Scholarship is to be used toward pursuing undergradu-

ate degree at an accredited college of recipient's choice.

- Winners may accept other college scholarship assistance in addition to the NALC award.
- Any change of schools or course of study must be done only with the permission of the NALC Scholarship Committee.
- A transcript of grades must be forwarded to the committee at the end of each school year.
- If winner suffers certified serious illness, scholarship will be held in abeyance for not more than one year.
- If unusual conditions are going to require an interruption in schooling, recipient must state reason(s) in writing to the Scholarship Committee and request that the scholarship be held in abeyance. Request(s) will be reviewed by the Committee and a decision rendered.
- If the NALC member is suspended by his/her local NALC branch or enters supervision, scholarship will be canceled.

Terms of awards

- The official scholarship judges will award one William C. Doherty Scholarship in each of the five USPS Regions and one John T. Donelon Scholarship. Winners are judged on the basis of secondary school records, personal qualifications and test scores. As in the past, the scholarship judges will consist of experienced persons in the educational field. Decisions of the judges will be final.

- Doherty Scholarship awards will be \$4,000 per year and the Donelon Scholarship award will be \$1,000 per year. Each scholarship is renewable for three consecutive years thereafter providing the winner maintains satisfactory grades. Award money will be deposited annually with the college. It will be credited to the winner's account to be drawn upon under the rules and regulations which the college has established for handling scholarship funds. Award money is to be used for required college fees, including room and board and transportation fees.
- Children of NALC national officers are not eligible.

In honor of NALC's president from 1941 to 1962, the William C. Doherty Scholarship Fund will again award five \$4,000 scholarships to children of members in good standing. The John T. Donelon Scholarship Fund will award one scholarship in honor of Donelon, longtime NALC assistant to the president. Applicants must be high school seniors and must meet all of the following eligibility criteria to be considered.

SCHOLARSHIP APPLICATION

Date _____ (PLEASE PRINT CLEARLY)

Please send instructions as to how I can compete for a scholarship award. I am a senior in the 2024-25 school year.

I am the _____ of _____
• daughter • son • active
• stepdaughter* • stepson* • retired
• granddaughter* • grandson* • deceased

letter carrier _____

of Branch No. _____ City _____ State _____

My name is _____

My address is _____

City _____ State _____ ZIP _____

Phone No. _____

Signature of branch officer

Signature of NALC parent member
(or spouse if deceased)

Printed name of branch officer

Last 4 digits of Social Security No. _____

Title _____ Date _____

This form must be returned no later than Dec. 31, 2024, to the NALC Scholarship Committee, in care of the National Association of Letter Carriers, 100 Indiana Ave. NW, Washington, DC 20001-2144.

* Stepchildren and grandchildren are eligible if they live with the letter carrier in a regular parent-child relationship.

When an active letter carrier dies...

- Notify the employee's immediate supervisor, postmaster and Human Resources Shared Service Center (HRSSC) at 877-477-3273. HRSSC will advise about any benefits payable, and how to apply for them. It will provide and render assistance in completing the application for death benefits under the employee's retirement system, as well as the claim for death benefits—Federal Employees' Group Life Insurance (FEGLI) and claim for unpaid compensation.
- Notify the Thrift Savings Plan (TSP) at 877-968-3778.
- Notify the letter carrier's NALC branch.
- If the employee was a veteran, notify Veterans Affairs at 800-827-1000.
- Call the Social Security Administration at 800-772-1213.
- Notify banks and other financial institutions.
- Notify insurance companies (life, health, home, automobile, etc.). If the employee had a policy with NALC's Mutual Benefit Association (MBA), call 202-638-4318 between 8 a.m.-3:30 p.m. EST, or write to MBA, 100 Indiana Ave. NW, Suite 510, Washington, DC 20001-2144.
- If the employee had health insurance through the NALC Health Benefit Plan, call 888-636-6252. If the employee had health insurance through a different Federal Employees Health Benefits (FEHB) plan, call the number on the back of the insurance card. Health insurance coverage for a surviving spouse and dependent children continues automatically if the employee had family coverage at the time of death and if a monthly survivor annuity is payable.
- Obtain a sufficient number of death certificates for your needs from the mortuary.

When a retired letter carrier dies...

- Notify the Office of Personnel Management (OPM). This should be done as soon as possible through its website, by email, by phone or by mail. To report the death of a deceased annuitant to OPM, do one of the following:
 - Visit [serviceline.opm.gov](https://www.serviceline.opm.gov) and click on "Report an Annuitant Death." This will take you to an online form to complete and submit.
 - Send an email to retire@opm.gov and include the following information pertaining to the annuitant and survivor(s): Retired letter carrier's full name, CSA number, date of birth, Social Security number, survivor's full name, relationship to the deceased, Social Security number, date of birth, address and phone number.
 - Call OPM at 888-767-6738.*
 - Write to OPM at Office of Personnel Management, P.O. Box 45, Boyers, PA 16017. Provide the information on the deceased and survivor(s) as above.
- *Calling OPM can sometimes take several attempts due to high call volumes. Callers may be on hold for 20 minutes or longer. The NALC Retirement Department staff is familiar with OPM and is well-versed in explaining OPM's processes. Upon request, the NALC Retirement Department will report the death of a retired member to OPM and answer any questions. To contact the NALC Retirement Department, call toll-free at 800-424-5186 on Monday, Wednesday and Thursday from 10 a.m.-12 p.m. and 2 p.m.-4 p.m. Eastern Standard Time. The NALC Retirement Department also can be reached Monday-Friday from 9 a.m.-4:30 p.m. at 202-393-4695. Long distance charges may apply.
- Once the death of an annuitant has been reported to OPM, the OPM will stop payment of the monthly annuity and mail the applicable claim forms to the survivor. In most cases, two forms will be included in the packet:
 - application for death benefits under the retirement system (death benefits include survivor benefits and/or any unpaid annuity balance) and
 - application for Federal Employees' Group Life Insurance (FEGLI)
 - The packet also includes pre-addressed return envelopes, color-coded pink and blue, to facilitate rapid distribution and processing within OPM.
- Notify the bank where annuity payments are deposited, as well as any other of the retiree's financial institutions. Any annuity payments deposited after the date of death will be reclaimed by OPM. Return any uncashed annuity checks to the address on the accompanying Treasury Department envelope.
- Obtain enough death certificates for your needs from the mortuary.
- Notify the retired letter carrier's NALC branch.
- If the retiree was a veteran, notify Veterans' Affairs at 800-827-1000.
- Call the Social Security Administration at 800-772-1213.
- Notify insurance companies (life, health, home, automobile, etc.).
- If the retiree had a policy with NALC's Mutual Benefit Association, call 202-638-4318 between 8 a.m.-3:30 p.m. EST, or write to MBA, 100 Indiana Ave. NW, Suite 510, Washington, DC 20001-2144.
- If the retiree had health insurance through the NALC Health Benefit Plan or any other FEHB plan, the OPM will inform the health plan. When a spouse is entitled to survivor benefits, he or she will receive continuous health insurance coverage as long as they were covered under their spouse's FEHB plan at the time of death. The health plan will automatically change to self-only and be switched to the surviving spouse's name.
- If the retiree participated in the Thrift Savings Plan, contact the TSP at 877-968-3778.

If the spouse of a retired letter carrier dies, call the NALC Retirement Department for instructions on how to restore annuity to full amount, switch health coverage from family to self (unless you have dependent children) and change beneficiaries.

Veterans Group

For more information, go to nalc.org/veterans.



North Florida Branch 53 participates in the Veterans Day parade in Jacksonville.

Additional NALC Veterans Group members

Below are the new Veterans Group members who joined after the November issue of *The Postal Record*, with the full list of Veterans Group members, went to press. Unfortunately,

- Thomas Scarpelli Jr. of Camarillo, CA Br. 4114
- Michelle Grimes of Central CA Br. 231
- Joseph Witt of Garden Grove, CA Br. 1100
- Brian James of Centennial, CO Br. 5996
- Jordan Hickombottom of Denver, CO Br. 47
- Carlos Oviedo of Central FL Br. 1091
- Robert Stevens III of Clearwater, FL Br. 2008
- Shenita Rhone-Rolle of South FL Br. 1071
- Vanessa Kowalski of Spacecoast FL Br. 2689

some of the applications did not arrive in time for that issue and their names are being run here.

To join, go to nalc.org/veterans, fill out and print the membership form,

- Patricia McNamara of W. Palm Beach, FL Br. 1690
- Howard Ward of Chicago, IL Br. 11
- David Bohler of Peoria, IL Branch 31 Br. 31
- Austin Hall of Southern IL Merged Br. 1197
- Justin Jones of Louisville, KY Br. 14
- David McHugh of Southeast MA Mgd. Br. 18
- Colin Cordima of NH Mgd. Br. 44
- James Petersen of Bozeman, MT Br. 1028
- Chester Isaacs III of Buffalo/Western NY Br. 3

and then mail the completed application to: NALC Veterans Group, National Association of Letter Carriers, 1101 Northchase Parkway SE, Suite 3, Marietta, GA 30067.

- Emily Simpson of Rochester, NY Br. 210
- Vernon Tiplados of Burlington, NC Br. 2262
- Miles Scott of Cleveland, OH Br. 40
- Lavelle Burrage of Cleveland, OH Br. 40
- James Fetters of Dayton, OH Br. 182
- Christopher Cotto of San Juan, PR Br. 869
- Ventura Bonilla of Houston, TX Br. 283
- Leonard Garvin Jr. of Seattle, WA Br. 79
- Dan Dickerson of Wenatchee, WA Br. 1350

Veteran profile: Byron Shelton

Byron Shelton has been a letter carrier for 26 years and an officer with Central Florida Branch 1091 for 18 years—the past four as president.

Before his postal career, Shelton served six years in the Navy, helping planes land and take off from military ships and performing other ship duties.

“I’m a proud veteran,” he said.

While in the military, Shelton met his wife, whom he has been married to for 34 years. As a military member, he was required to travel a lot, so when the Sheltons had their first daughter, they decided it was time to

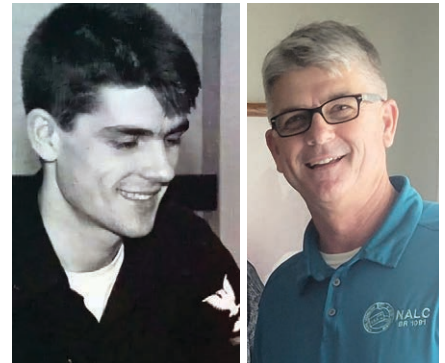
leave the Navy.

After being discharged, Shelton lived on a small farm in southern Indiana, opening a landscaping and irrigation business, which he ran for about two years. Then they moved to Florida, and Shelton looked for a new job.

A friend who was also a veteran and worked for the Postal Service told him that a lot of veterans choose to become letter carriers. USPS offered a good retirement plan and health benefits, which Shelton valued after starting his family.

Shelton was able to draw many similarities between his military and postal careers. They both require attention to detail and the ability to follow instructions. Service and dedication also are needed in both careers.

“You’re providing a service whether you’re representing carriers or representing your country,” Shelton said. “Most important is your integrity and your [sense of] responsibility.”

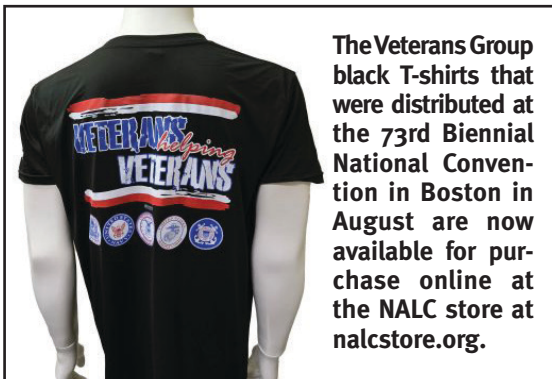


Shelton when he was in the Navy (l) and now.

In the Navy, Shelton gained the type of experience that he said helped him in his past and current leadership positions. He was in charge of 17 people on his ship, making sure they did everything to keep the ship running properly.

Shelton enjoys being branch president, saying, “It is so rewarding... The support of my co-workers is incredible.”

“There’s probably nothing that I would want to change, you know, the experiences and the relationships that I’ve made within the military or typically among the veterans,” he said. “And I think that correlates to the letter carriers and definitely within the NALC with the brothers and sisters.”



The Veterans Group black T-shirts that were distributed at the 73rd Biennial National Convention in Boston in August are now available for purchase online at nalcstore.org.

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*.



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.

Additionally, the national secretary-treasurer's office handles

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

80-year plaques

Lindsay P. Jones	Los Angeles, CA	Br. 24
Harry D. Kovner	Los Angeles, CA	Br. 24

75-year plaques

William E. Glaser	Plainfield, NJ	Br. 396
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70-year plaques

Fred T. Ehlers	Los Angeles, CA	Br. 24
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65-year pins

Wilfred M. Char	Los Angeles, CA	Br. 24
Charles A. Hempen	Los Angeles, CA	Br. 24
Oliver Holloway Jr.	Los Angeles, CA	Br. 24
Charles E. Kennedy	Los Angeles, CA	Br. 24
Albert C. Kilgore	Los Angeles, CA	Br. 24
Frank J. Marino	Los Angeles, CA	Br. 24
John A. Willis	Los Angeles, CA	Br. 24
Timothy W. Doherty	Bridgeport, CT	Br. 32
Dudley R. Paynter	Lexington, KY	Br. 361
William F. Weatherford	Hattiesburg, MS	Br. 938
Wayne H. Fraser	St. Charles, MO	Br. 984
John B. Gormican	Fond Du Lac, WI	Br. 125

60-year pins

James H. Barry	Los Angeles, CA	Br. 24
Earl D. Dibble	Los Angeles, CA	Br. 24
Toshio T. Ishikawa	Los Angeles, CA	Br. 24
Joseph C. Desorbo Sr.	New Haven, CT	Br. 19
Birnett Gee	North FL	Br. 53
Percy W. Barnett	Hammond, IN	Br. 580
Albert D. Bailey	Lexington, KY	Br. 361
Ralph L. Ballard	Lexington, KY	Br. 361
Michael A. Ference Jr.	NJ Mgd.	Br. 38
Alvin D. Carter	Fort Worth, TX	Br. 226
Robert P. Pace	Danville, VA	Br. 595
Jerry W. Saunders	Charleston, WV	Br. 531
Elmer P. McDonald	Milwaukee, WI	Br. 2
Ronald E. Rutz	Milwaukee, WI	Br. 2

55-year pins

Michael F. Cholewa	Phoenix, AZ	Br. 576
Gentry Gray	Phoenix, AZ	Br. 576
Bertice J. Abercrombie Jr.	Los Angeles, CA	Br. 24
Ruben A. Acuna	Los Angeles, CA	Br. 24
Lawrence A. Adame	Los Angeles, CA	Br. 24
Raymond B. Alvarado	Los Angeles, CA	Br. 24
Mary F. Arnold	Los Angeles, CA	Br. 24
Arthur J. Arzate	Los Angeles, CA	Br. 24
Gaye M. Bandy	Los Angeles, CA	Br. 24
Benjamin D. Barron	Los Angeles, CA	Br. 24
William S. Bartlett	Los Angeles, CA	Br. 24
Warren A. Blackburn Jr.	Los Angeles, CA	Br. 24

Albert L. Boubion	Los Angeles, CA	Br. 24
Thomas R. Brake	Los Angeles, CA	Br. 24
Richard A. Bratton	Los Angeles, CA	Br. 24
Richard E. Bybee	Los Angeles, CA	Br. 24
Ignacio Campuzano	Los Angeles, CA	Br. 24
Andrew G. Carr	Los Angeles, CA	Br. 24
Henry D. Carrillo	Los Angeles, CA	Br. 24
Charles G. Chaffin	Los Angeles, CA	Br. 24
Raymond P. Chavez	Los Angeles, CA	Br. 24
Cecil B. Clark	Los Angeles, CA	Br. 24
William Clark	Los Angeles, CA	Br. 24
William H. Coffey Jr.	Los Angeles, CA	Br. 24
Timothy N. Colquitt	Los Angeles, CA	Br. 24
Stanley O. Combs	Los Angeles, CA	Br. 24
Samuel Craddock	Los Angeles, CA	Br. 24
Kathleen Crowder	Los Angeles, CA	Br. 24
Ernestine H. Daniels	Los Angeles, CA	Br. 24
Russell H. Darrah	Los Angeles, CA	Br. 24
Lynne B. Davies	Los Angeles, CA	Br. 24
Gladys M. Davis	Los Angeles, CA	Br. 24
John L. Davis	Los Angeles, CA	Br. 24
William G. Davis	Los Angeles, CA	Br. 24
Eddie C. Dorsey	Los Angeles, CA	Br. 24
Ralph Drake	Los Angeles, CA	Br. 24
Raymond P. Espana	Los Angeles, CA	Br. 24
Louis L. Farley	Los Angeles, CA	Br. 24
Gilbert Garcia	Los Angeles, CA	Br. 24
Steve E. Garcia	Los Angeles, CA	Br. 24
Peter A. Giammichele	Los Angeles, CA	Br. 24
Orville P. Givens	Los Angeles, CA	Br. 24
Opal G. Goldman	Los Angeles, CA	Br. 24
James J. Golec	Los Angeles, CA	Br. 24
Paul T. Greaves	Los Angeles, CA	Br. 24
Hattie L. Grundy	Los Angeles, CA	Br. 24
Ernestine Harden	Los Angeles, CA	Br. 24
Francis D. Hawkins	Los Angeles, CA	Br. 24
Zane P. Hepner	Los Angeles, CA	Br. 24
Melvyn L. Herd	Los Angeles, CA	Br. 24
Antonio Hernandez III	Los Angeles, CA	Br. 24
Bruce B. Hughey	Los Angeles, CA	Br. 24
Arthur D. Hunter Jr.	Los Angeles, CA	Br. 24
Jimmie Irving	Los Angeles, CA	Br. 24
Ernestine Jamerson	Los Angeles, CA	Br. 24
Franklin D. Jenkins	Los Angeles, CA	Br. 24
Joseph S. Johnson Jr.	Los Angeles, CA	Br. 24
Wilbur T. Jones	Los Angeles, CA	Br. 24
James C. Keene	Los Angeles, CA	Br. 24
Jeffrey E. Klein	Los Angeles, CA	Br. 24
Patrick M. Labbe	Los Angeles, CA	Br. 24
Walter J. Lacroix Jr.	Los Angeles, CA	Br. 24
Walter L. Latham	Los Angeles, CA	Br. 24
Robert G. Lawson	Los Angeles, CA	Br. 24
James H. Leaf	Los Angeles, CA	Br. 24
William D. Lewis	Los Angeles, CA	Br. 24
Richard L. Lizotte	Los Angeles, CA	Br. 24
Earle M. Mack	Los Angeles, CA	Br. 24
Barboure M. Martin	Los Angeles, CA	Br. 24

Rose N. Martin	Los Angeles, CA	Br. 24
Bertha T. Metzler	Los Angeles, CA	Br. 24
Bobbie Mijares	Los Angeles, CA	Br. 24
Donald L. Mitchell	Los Angeles, CA	Br. 24
Vernon O. Moore	Los Angeles, CA	Br. 24
John H. Morris	Los Angeles, CA	Br. 24
Samuel Morris	Los Angeles, CA	Br. 24
Goldia D. Moseley	Los Angeles, CA	Br. 24
Raymond E. Moutray Sr.	Los Angeles, CA	Br. 24
Dario A. Munoz Jr.	Los Angeles, CA	Br. 24
Oliver L. Neal	Los Angeles, CA	Br. 24
Roland R. Niederer	Los Angeles, CA	Br. 24
James S. Northup	Los Angeles, CA	Br. 24
Gregory J. Ocampo	Los Angeles, CA	Br. 24
Cecilia V. Olguin	Los Angeles, CA	Br. 24
Catalina E. Oroscio	Los Angeles, CA	Br. 24
Edward Ortega	Los Angeles, CA	Br. 24
Juan E. Perez	Los Angeles, CA	Br. 24
Charles E. Porter	Los Angeles, CA	Br. 24
Richrd T. Rand	Los Angeles, CA	Br. 24
Louis C. Rendon	Los Angeles, CA	Br. 24
Richard G. Reyes	Los Angeles, CA	Br. 24
Jose G. Reyna	Los Angeles, CA	Br. 24
Donald R. Richey	Los Angeles, CA	Br. 24
Marian Rodriguez	Los Angeles, CA	Br. 24
Luis Rojas	Los Angeles, CA	Br. 24
Michael E. Rose	Los Angeles, CA	Br. 24
Mary E. Ruiz	Los Angeles, CA	Br. 24
Bobbie L. Smith	Los Angeles, CA	Br. 24
Melvin Snell Jr.	Los Angeles, CA	Br. 24
Gary E. Spencer	Los Angeles, CA	Br. 24
James G. Stewart	Los Angeles, CA	Br. 24
Douglas Tarver	Los Angeles, CA	Br. 24
Hugh N. Tolliver	Los Angeles, CA	Br. 24
Loretta L. Tonioan	Los Angeles, CA	Br. 24
Gilio S. Trujillo	Los Angeles, CA	Br. 24
Laurence A. Vacek	Los Angeles, CA	Br. 24
Jerry L. Vandenburg	Los Angeles, CA	Br. 24
Juan M. Velasco	Los Angeles, CA	Br. 24
Oscar C. Watkins	Los Angeles, CA	Br. 24
Willie J. Weatherspoon	Los Angeles, CA	Br. 24
Ronald J. Webster	Los Angeles, CA	Br. 24
Raymond H. Welch	Los Angeles, CA	Br. 24
Earl C. Wentworth	Los Angeles, CA	Br. 24
Edward S. Williams	Los Angeles, CA	Br. 24
Harvey D. Wilson	Los Angeles, CA	Br. 24
Kenneth Wilson Jr.	Los Angeles, CA	Br. 24
Major Wooten	Los Angeles, CA	Br. 24
Miguel Yanez	Los Angeles, CA	Br. 24
Albert T. Dolyak	Bridgeport, CT	Br. 32
Vincent Acampora Jr.	New Haven, CT	Br. 19
Carl F. Anderson III	New Haven, CT	Br. 19
R. J. Bettley Jr.	New Haven, CT	Br. 19
Robert W. Brown	New Haven, CT	Br. 19
James C. Campbell Jr.	New Haven, CT	Br. 19
Joseph E. Carafeno	New Haven, CT	Br. 19
W. J. Cavanaugh Jr.	New Haven, CT	Br. 19

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

Nicholas Esposito	New Haven, CT	Br. 19	Walter R. Rowland	Danville, VA	Br. 595	Charles R. Haehlen	Lexington, KY	Br. 361
Nicholas P. Esposito	New Haven, CT	Br. 19	Chester L. Adkins	Charleston, WV	Br. 531	Danny D. Renfro	Lexington, KY	Br. 361
Walter S. Fritsch Jr.	New Haven, CT	Br. 19	Donald L. Blake	Charleston, WV	Br. 531	John W. Hejwosz	Worcester, MA	Br. 12
Paul J. Gorecki	New Haven, CT	Br. 19	David F. Boyd	Charleston, WV	Br. 531	Lorenza Cooley	Laurel, MS	Br. 1437
Robert M. Gullans	New Haven, CT	Br. 19	Ronnie E. Chapman	Charleston, WV	Br. 531	Grover E. Cruise	Laurel, MS	Br. 1437
Timothy Gould	North FL	Br. 53	Robert K. Davis	Charleston, WV	Br. 531	Michael S. Ellis	Laurel, MS	Br. 1437
Walter Ladalski Jr.	S. Suburban Mgd., IL	Br. 4016	Terry E. Guthrie	Charleston, WV	Br. 531	Charles E. Everett	Laurel, MS	Br. 1437
Ernest S. Kirkland	Lexington, KY	Br. 361	Arne L. Jones	Charleston, WV	Br. 531	Lewis G. Holifield Jr.	Laurel, MS	Br. 1437
Michael G. Smith	East Lansing, MI	Br. 2555	Donald A. Jones	Charleston, WV	Br. 531	Brinson T. Knight	Laurel, MS	Br. 1437
Eddie McGowan Jr.	Hattiesburg, MS	Br. 938	Alvaro Mendez	Charleston, WV	Br. 531	Arthur J. Light	Laurel, MS	Br. 1437
John W. Pipkins	Hattiesburg, MS	Br. 938	Paul W. Mullins	Charleston, WV	Br. 531	Percy L. Ratcliff Jr.	Laurel, MS	Br. 1437
Lorenza Cooley	Laurel, MS	Br. 1437	Robert G. Slater	Charleston, WV	Br. 531	Robert L. Swinney	Laurel, MS	Br. 1437
Grover E. Cruise	Laurel, MS	Br. 1437	Robert G. Spurlock	Charleston, WV	Br. 531	Michael P. Brevogel	New York, NY	Br. 36
Michael S. Ellis	Laurel, MS	Br. 1437	50-year gold cards and pins			Lawrence J. Brown	Syracuse, NY	Br. 134
Charles E. Everett	Laurel, MS	Br. 1437	Joe Davis	Los Angeles, CA	Br. 24	Lee B. Bass	Portsmouth, OH	Br. 184
Lewis G. Holifield Jr.	Laurel, MS	Br. 1437	Robert L. De Bose	Los Angeles, CA	Br. 24	James H. Lute	Portsmouth, OH	Br. 184
Brinson T. Knight	Laurel, MS	Br. 1437	Charles C. DeFrantz	Los Angeles, CA	Br. 24	John H. Tomlin	Portsmouth, OH	Br. 184
Arthur J. Light	Laurel, MS	Br. 1437	Martha A. Medrano	Los Angeles, CA	Br. 24	Lloyd F. Warner	Portsmouth, OH	Br. 184
Billy J. Little	Laurel, MS	Br. 1437	Carl V. Richards	Los Angeles, CA	Br. 24	Edward Duris Jr.	Fort Worth, TX	Br. 226
Percy L. Ratcliff Jr.	Laurel, MS	Br. 1437	James H. Rigby	Los Angeles, CA	Br. 24	Christi J. Fite	Fort Worth, TX	Br. 226
Robert L. Swinney	Laurel, MS	Br. 1437	George A. Rodriguez	Los Angeles, CA	Br. 24	Donald R. Granado	Fort Worth, TX	Br. 226
Augustus L. Knisely	Kansas City, MO	Br. 30	Anthony J. Celone	New Haven, CT	Br. 19	David M. Griffis	Fort Worth, TX	Br. 226
William A. Rosner	St. Charles, MO	Br. 984	Francis R. Denicola	New Haven, CT	Br. 19	Donald J. Highsmith	Fort Worth, TX	Br. 226
Gary D. Troup	St. Charles, MO	Br. 984	John A. Mele Jr.	New Haven, CT	Br. 19	Randall K. Horn	Fort Worth, TX	Br. 226
Gary L. Willbrand	St. Charles, MO	Br. 984	Ronald L. Valibus	New Haven, CT	Br. 19	Eddie G. Neeper	Fort Worth, TX	Br. 226
Frank J. Davies III	NJ Mgd.	Br. 38	Bettina G. Barbour	North FL	Br. 53	Alan D. Perry	Fort Worth, TX	Br. 226
James P. Bennett	Corning, NY	Br. 300	Timothy Gould	North FL	Br. 53	Cleon V. Lucas Jr.	Charleston, WV	Br. 531
James E. Nelson	Hudson Valley Mgd., NY	Br. 137	David L. Davis	Lexington, KY	Br. 361	Michael W. McLane	Charleston, WV	Br. 531
Lawrence J. Brown	Syracuse, NY	Br. 134				George W. Wolff Jr.	Fond Du Lac, WI	Br. 125
Rodger L. Hughes	Danville, VA	Br. 595						

Anchorage, Alaska

Well, the election didn't turn out the way labor hoped it would. If the prior Trump administration is an indicator of how things will be for federal workers and retirees, the next four years should be worrisome. And with both houses of Congress controlled by Republicans, it will only be worse.

The last budget proposed by the Trump administration would eliminate the FERS supplement. On average, that's \$15,000 to \$18,000 a year. And the FERS contributions that went up by 550 percent would increase more. Currently your annuity is based on your high-3 average, yet it was proposed to be your high-5. That would pull in two additional years of lower wages, thus making your annuity less. Their budget also called slashing or eliminating COLAs. So, whatever your annuity is when you retire, it would be frozen for the remainder of your life. My annuity has gone up \$9,204 since I retired.

Additionally proposed is for workers and retirees to contribute 25 percent more to the cost of their health insurance. When I retired, I was paying \$462 a month, and next year it increases to \$840 a month. Adding in \$25 percent more, and I'm paying \$1,050 a month. And remember, when you retire, you pay taxes on your health insurance premiums.

Elections have consequences. I very well aware that our membership doesn't always

vote for the candidate that supports unions and our values. But what is maddening is when those same members complain when our benefits are reduced or taken away by the party they voted for. So, when you lose a benefit as a federal worker, research who proposed and voted for that loss. You can have all the cheap gas you want. You'll be saving money while driving to your second (or third) job to make up for what you lost!

Jim Raymond, Branch 4319

Bergen Co. Mgd., New Jersey

Recently about 60 members of the NALC rallied in Las Vegas to demand an end to assaults and robberies happening during delivery routes. Our NALC president, Brian Renfro, was there to address the crowd. Robberies of letter carriers in the US rose to 643 in 2023, a nearly 30 percent increase from the previous year. Brian spoke of his support for a bill in Congress, the Protect Our Letter Carriers Act of 2024, that if passed would send \$7 billion in funding to the Postal Service to install high security collection boxes and replace the carriers universal master Arrow Keys used to access mail collection and delivery boxes with more secure electronic versions.

The proposed law would require the U.S. attorney general to appoint individual prosecutors assigned to prioritize cases of assault against letter carriers in judicial districts na-

tionwide and to strengthen sentencing guidelines to treat the crimes in the same manner as assaults on federal officers.

Dennis Spoto, Branch 425

Paterson, New Jersey

Recent published reports state that the United States Postal Service is looking once again to cut costs at the expense of delivering its products in an expeditious manner. Specifically, the consolidating of mail processing centers will save it tons of money with the delivery of first-class letters taking longer to deliver.

What sense does that make? Items in a communication world are becoming faster rather than slower. Did our union not just help the Postal Service save money by ending the pre-funding of our health benefits well into the future? How much talent does it take for our executives in our postal system to come up with ways to cut costs?

Executives should take the time to expand our goods and services to the American public rather than taking the time to turn more customers away. Where are the visionaries who can come up with bigger and better ideas to utilize our system of communication products and services? With a post office in every town, community and neighborhood, we should include more services and products rather than delaying or curtailing the mail system.

Joseph Murone, Branch 120

Nalcrest

Application and Confidential Questionnaire

**All questions must be answered!
Please print legibly or type.**

I, the undersigned, hereby submit application for an apartment rental at Nalcrest.

Efficiency apartment One-bedroom apartment Two-bedroom apartment
(Rent ranges starting at \$383 per month. Prices subject to change due to periodic trustee approval.
Please call 863-696-1121 for pricing and availability.)

If you are intending to reside at Nalcrest, please remit one month's rent plus the amount equal to one month's rent for a security deposit. If you have already filled out an application and need to update your information, do not send a new form – please call or write the office.

MasterCard, Visa, check or money order payable to Nalcrest Foundation accepted.

FULL NAME: _____

ADDRESS: _____

CITY/STATE/ZIP: _____

PHONE (contact number required) _____

DATE OF BIRTH: _____ NUMBER OF YEARS AS A NALC MEMBER/LETTER CARRIER: _____

NAME OF SPOUSE OR S/O: _____

CURRENT NALC BRANCH (Location and Branch Number): _____

Are you a Gold Card Member? YES NO
(50 years of membership with NALC)

Are you a Veteran? YES NO

Additional information and photos can be accessed at NALC.org

Nalcrest is committed to the spirit of, and compliance with, the Fair Housing Act and all anti-discrimination and fair housing laws. NALCREST IS NOT AN ASSISTED LIVING FACILITY.

If accepted, you must be willing to sign a 1 year lease.
However, you need not occupy or furnish the apartment immediately upon signing lease.

Signature: _____ Date: _____

NALCREST FOUNDATION, INC.
P.O. Box 6359 Nalcrest, FL 33856-6359

phone: 863-696-1121
fax: 863-696-3333

NALC's retirement community



Nalcrest is located in Central Florida, midway between Tampa and Vero Beach (ten miles from Lake Wales).

500 garden-style apartments arranged in clusters of four to 10 apartments, all ground level, around two large lagoons.

 Find us on Facebook



Nalcrest Foundation, Inc.

Apartments are leased unfurnished, on a yearly basis. Rent includes trash, wi-fi, stove, refrigerator and maintenance.

Applicants must be retired letter carriers and remain members of the NALC in retirement to receive approval to live at Nalcrest.

No pets allowed.

Smoking is only permitted in designated areas.





Nalcrest Update

From the Trustees

I attended the COP meeting Oct. 21-22 in Atlantic City. It was important to speak to almost 300 registered presidents and/or their designees. At the 73rd Biennial National Convention in Boston, the Nalcrest trustees were notified that, due to time constraints, we would be unable to present our committee report.

My portion of our report was to unveil a new initiative called "Adopt a Building." Matty, Fred and I are very excited about our new program that has begun to catch on. Nalcrest property has 66 residential buildings and 90 buildings in total, and they are all in need of a paint job. Branches, state associations and individual members can "adopt" a building through a donation. Prices vary with the four different sized buildings available to adopt: four-, six-, eight- and 10-apartment buildings.

The Nalcrest trustees sent out applications for this new program to all the national business agents to forward to all state associations and branch presidents. However, if you have not received an application, please contact the Nalcrest office. This program is even more important with the extensive damage Nalcrest received at the winds of Hurricane Milton. Nalcrest took a hit, trees down and debris everywhere, roof shingles blown off, town hall damaged, fences down, electric poles dam-

aged resulting in power loss, some flooding, and damage to vehicles. We have contacted our property insurance company representative and the roofing and tree companies we use to begin the process of cleaning up and repair. Nalcrest residents have been wonderful with the cleanup efforts. With that said, we will return Nalcrest to the beautiful place in paradise.

At the national convention, as I met and spoke to a number of delegates at the Nalcrest booth, I observed that, while members knew of Nalcrest, they did not know about Nalcrest. Our committee report at the national convention would have provided the delegates valuable information to explain more about Nalcrest.

Here are some facts/information: We now have 382 members on the waiting list. We are currently represented by members from all 50 states. We have 500 garden-style apartments that sit on 150 acres, and offer two lagoons and many, many amenities. Our newly renovated pool and Jacuzzi is located next to the Sombrotto Sports Complex. There you will find pickle ball and tennis courts, a bocce ball court, corn hole, shuffle board, a putt-putt golf course and a driving range. This is all located next to the Veterans Memorial. The Town Center offers a post office, a gym, laundromat, massage studio and a beauty and nail salon. Nalcrest has three office employees, five maintenance employees, a post office employee,

a housekeeper and three security guards. We have a fire station and paramedic station on the premises.

Please call to set up a visit with our staff; we also have 16 guest apartments so you can really experience a piece of paradise.

Tony Diaz

Apply to live at Nalcrest

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

Nalcrest Trustees

NALC Executive Vice President Paul Barner

NALC Secretary-Treasurer Nicole Rhine

NALC Assistant Secretary-Treasurer Mack I. Julion

NALC Director of Retired Members Dan Toth

Nalcrest Trustees President Matty Rose

Nalcrest Trustees Vice President Fred Rolando

Nalcrest Trustees Vice President Tony Diaz



Nalcrest sees damage to its facilities, and downed fences and trees, as a result of Hurricane Milton, which made landfall in October.

Branch Items

Albany, New York

A tentative agreement has been reached, and every active NALC member will get a chance to vote for or against it in the coming weeks. A complete summary of the tentative agreement is available on nalc.org, and President Renfroe goes over the tentative agreement in detail on a two-hour episode of the “You Are the Current Resident” podcast dated Oct. 19.

If the tentative agreement is ratified by the membership, the hourly wage for a CCA will go from \$19.33 to approximately \$20.71, capping out at the end of the contract in 2026 at approximately \$21.15 an hour. A PTF will go from \$23.11 an hour to \$24.49 an hour until the pay table can be changed to eliminate Steps AA, A and B. When that happens, a PTF will then make approximately \$26.78 an hour, capping out at the end of the contract at approximately \$27.65 an hour. A seven- to eight-year regular carrier at Step G will go from \$28.07 to approximately \$29.66 an hour, capping out at the end of the agreement at approximately \$30.92. And finally, a Step P carrier with more than 15 years of service will go from \$36.20 to approximately \$38.25 an hour, capping out at approximately \$40.36 at the end of the agreement. All amounts are approximate and based on projected COLAs that have not been calculated yet.

I strongly encourage every member to educate themselves on the pros and cons of this tentative agreement and make sure they vote in accordance with the instructions that come with the ballot. In 2018, roughly only 25 to 30 percent of the active membership voted on the tentative agreement. This tentative agreement directly affects the next two years of your life. Can you really afford not to vote? Can we really afford only 25 percent participation?

Norris Beswick, Branch 29

Charlotte, North Carolina

Branch 545 would like to wish everyone a very merry Christmas and happy holidays. We know all the hard work every carrier has to put in to make the holiday season a wonderful time for our customers, and we want to make sure that you all know how thankful we are for each and every one of you. We hope that you all get to enjoy some much-deserved relaxation and time with your family and friends.

The union leadership would like to let all of our members know that we are continuing with our in-person local union meetings. We are holding our meetings the third Tuesday of every month for anyone who is interested in an attending, and we have established a Zoom link for members to participate who cannot physically attend the meetings. Please contact the union office to receive the Zoom link. Food will be provided at the meeting for those who are able to attend. We look forward to seeing all of our members who are able to make it out. Also, if anyone is interested in participating in our local union in any capacity, please contact our local union office or speak with the union steward in your office.

Justin Fraley, Branch 545

Cincinnati, Ohio

As I sit here and write this article, our tentative agreement has been reached, and we are all waiting with bated breath for our ballots to arrive in the mail. Most of the carriers I have talked to since the agreement was reached are not very happy with what is in the agreement. We must keep in mind, until the P.O. gets rid of a lot of the top-heavy people, like Joe Schmo, who holds Joe Schmo Jr., who holds Joe Schmo III, who holds Joe Schmo IV's hand to do abso-



Flushing, NY Br. 294 holds its annual retiree brunch to honor retirees and welcome new ones. Attendees included Legislative and Political Organizer Marc Ashmon, Region 15 Regional Administrative Assistant Tony Perconte and New York State Association President George T. Mangold.

lutely nothing and free up a ton of money, this agreement is about the best we will ever get.

I have a question for the stations here in the Queen City: Is there drama at your station? Sharonville is the Soap Opera Station of stations. Every day, certain individuals are always worried about what everybody else is doing for their assignment, instead of just worrying about themselves, and cry big time if certain people get better or shorter assists that day. If you are so worried about everybody else, go into management.

We had signups for union stewards last year in the stations; nobody signed the list, except me, but when a grievance doesn't go the way they wanted, all of a sudden they want to be the union steward, or say, “You never take care of me or us.” For these people, please sign up the next time it's available, and see how easy it is to do the job, especially in Sharonville, the Drama Capital of the Post Office. It sure would be a great station if people would just worry about their job only.

Meetings are on the second Thursday of the month in Forest Park; all are welcome. Especially the wannabe stewards from Sharonville. Knowledge is power.

Chris Rought, Branch 43

Emerald Coast, Florida

Recently the stewards in one of our offices have been having steward time issues. We put in the request for steward time and what documents we need to review. We give them three days to provide the documentation. We as the union have tried to work with management under the “Bargain in good faith” motto, but it seems that it is not working. We would

get the documents sometimes in a timely manner, then other times we would have to submit a second and even a third request.

Now we are getting the documents, but not the time, due to routes being down, or “Mail is heavy; can we do it another day?” Well, we have taken the position that it is not our fault that routes are down, or mail is heavy. *Don't violate the contract*, then we will not have to request documentation for possible violations.

My belief is that for every action, there is a reaction. We just follow the management's lead. We have attempted to accommodate the management in this office, and have been understanding of their everyday issues, but requesting steward time is *not* our problem because of your management daily issues. Putting it off is only kicking the can down the road. It just built up the time needed for us to do our investigation and determine whether a grievance exists. Naturally, we do not like filing grievances, because it takes time from our normal duties of delivering the mail, but we will protect the contract and file if necessary. We don't like to, but are scared.

On behalf of Branch 4559, we wish our former vice president, Justin Hill, much success on his new journey being appointed the new regional grievance assistant for Region 9.

Percy Smith Jr., Branch 4559

Eugene, Oregon

To say that the latest tentative agreement (TA) has been divisive would be a bit of an understatement. People across the country have sounded off about the subject matter profusely. In the halls of our own stations, I have heard the echoes of descent as many of our members voice their displeasure with what has been offered to us. On Nov. 8, Branch 916 met for our monthly meeting, and on the agenda was a discussion of the TA.

One of our members stood up and made the following motion: “Branch 916 endorses voting ‘no’ on the tentative agreement.”

What followed was a discussion of the concerns about the agreement, and what would happen if we took it to interest arbitration. Some members have a real fear that we could get a contract that takes us backward. The infamous Das award, which gave us CCAs and two pay tables, was one such example.

Still, most of our members voiced their frustration with what was offered, and as the vote came to a resounding “aye,” the “nays” were nonexistent. To that end, The Emerald Empire urges everyone to consider the TA and make their own choice. However, as a branch we stand together in our disapproval of the TA and would like to let our fraternal family across the United States of America know where we stand.

Branch 916 stands with those who want to face the fear of interest arbitration, in the hope that our great union can win more on the field of battle than what the Post Office has offered us. It's time the Post Office recognizes that we are essential workers, and we won't willingly be treated as expendable. We don't just provide a service—we *are the service*.

Frost, Branch 916

Flushing, New York

On Sunday, Oct. 27, Branch 294 celebrated and honored our retired members with our annual brunch. It was held at the beautiful Douglaston Manor and produced one of our largest turnouts.

Our new retirees are Lisa Aulette, Richard Bui, Leo Cavallo, Clare Connaire, Eugene Davis, Jiann-Hwa Fang, Zhi Huang, William Lam, Johnny Lee, Kazimierz Markowicz, Michael Moore, Ingrid Montanez, Daniel Muentes, Ngar Kok Mui, Boris Peschany, Lien Cheng Wu, James Speranza and Jennifer Tran.

Our 50-year gold card members are Stephen Dasting, John Dempsey, Thomas Duncan, George Ford, Robert Godfrey, Edward Holinski, Thomas Mollico and James Spearman.

Our 60-year members are John Blackwell, John Covino, Joseph Covino, Anthony Fabiano, J. Fitzgerald, Arthur Foley, J. Gregory, Joseph Grisafi, William Grosse, H. Henkel, K. Herel, James Lies, Joseph Macchia, Walter Oppermann, William Sannuto and Angelo Siggilino.

Our 65-year members are Frank Gallo, Ralf Grottaio, Vincent Iaquinta, P. Kane, Carmine Paolini, Dan Parente, Anthony Persico and Louis Schmitt.

Our 75-year member is Peter Quagliata.

Congratulations to all; thank you for your service and the sacrifices you've made. Your strength and wisdom inspire us. Special thanks go to NALC Region 15 RAA Tony Perconte, NALC LPO Marc Ashmon and NYSALC President George T. Mangold, along with our friends from Branches 41, 562 and 6000 for joining us in celebrating this very special occasion.

Stay strong—

Tony Paolillo, Branch 294

Fresno, California

With all the complaining I hear and read from our members about the tentative national agreement that our national officers have agreed to, why would some of these very same complaining NALC members turn right around to vote for a proven traitor, an anti-Postal Service, anti-worker rights, anti-women, anti-gay repeated liar and racist slug to lead our country? He sure as hell will not defend ours—and our families'—best interests. No matter how great our National Agreement is, he will try to destroy it, along with our Postal Service. Retirees will not escape his attacks. "Fools" is a word that comes to mind for those postal workers who did vote for him. But it's a free country. Let's see in four years how much freedom we really have.

Now our hope is for the House of Representatives to be controlled by the Democrats. If not, you better start taking lessons on how to speak Russian. I will gladly accept being wrong. *But!* His past attacks, history and plans are not promising.

In case you do not know: Project 2025 has a section that concerns our Postal Service. Do you remember the last time he was in the White House? Official time, time your union is on to represent us—he wanted to eliminate that also. Four years ago, the most labor-friendly president was elected. He did help many work-

ers. And now, it's just the opposite. It's going to be a long four years.

Jesse Dominguez, Branch 231

Kansas City, Missouri

Whew! It seems like the NALC will barely have time to catch its breath before the next adventure begins. Without being fully staffed, tons of campaign mail were delivered, stretching carriers mentally, while an increased parcel load taxed physically and it's not peak season yet.

Throw in the Branch 30 Ed Gorman MDA Bowlathon, won this year by the team from The Plant, consisting of Art Cole, Jean Cole, Willie, and Daniel McNeal. The Branch 30 retirees dinner followed, as new and not-so-new retirees were honored. Columbus Day, Veterans Day (salute) and Thanksgiving makes for a holiday season like no other. With the Branch 30 Christmas party looming on the horizon, there's no doubt the "Party Poohbah" will kick it up a level.

With the general election finished, how and where will the NALC come out of it? With many of our Democratic friends gone, what will be the status of pending legislation that serves the NALC's interests, especially the Protect Our Letter Carriers Act? Many of today's letter carriers are unaware of the Republican Party's long-sought desire to privatize the USPS. Especially at times like these, any crack in union unity could lead to attempts of exploitation.

A tentative agreement released by the NALC Executive Council has been received with mixed opinions. Based on views from online media and locally, the push has been for disapproval. Whether dissatisfaction is related to comparison of contracts by UPS, UAW and others, or the loss of trust and confidence in NALC President Brian Renfro, is open to debate. Regardless, failure to ratify the tentative agreement totally places the fate/future of the NALC into an arbitrator's decision. As with the general election, each member in good standing is asked to vote their conscience.

Oh, in unity, season's greetings.

Calvin Davis, Branch 30

Knoxville, Tennessee

Hello, brothers and sisters of the satchel! Sometime this month, you will receive your ballot to vote as to whether to accept or not accept the tentative agreement (TA) that was negotiated by NALC Headquarters. This will be a major decision that will shape your careers and the lives of your family.

I hope that every one of you exercises your right to vote! In reaching this decision, you should consider *all* aspects of the TA and how it applies to you, your family, your job, and your health and morals. Please consider all factors and not one hot-button issue in determining how you'll vote! Be clear and explain your reasons for your "aye" or "nay" vote. Take yourself off auto pilot and discuss the highs and lows of the TA with your co-workers and trusted friends.

There is a tendency to think that a "no" vote will anger or disappoint your brothers and sisters, but consider that a "no" vote will lead to our officers to rethink some of the issues in the TA that warrant a review, like the 1.3 percent pay raise. There is a feeling that this pay raise doesn't make up for the lost purchasing power from inflation of the last few years. Inflation has dropped this year, but consumer prices have not reverted to where they were. Postal workers have experienced the lowest wage increase of any profession, with salaries increasing just 18 percent from 2013 to 2023, which is significantly below the national inflation rate of 31 percent and a lower rate than any other job (benefitspro.com, August 2024).

Our bottom line is *vote*, and let's see where the dice fall!

Tony Rodriguez, Branch 419

Lima, Ohio

The union and the Postal Service have reached a tentative agreement. The new contract will run from May 2023 through Nov. 7, 2026, with a total of three wage increases of 1.3 percent. Two are to be paid retroactively, leaving one more increase of 1.3 percent in November of 2025.

It included seven COLA increases, three paid retroactively at a little more than \$2,300, leaving four COLA increases—two in 2025 and two in 2026. Also, modifications of the carrier pay tables. CCAs will receive two 2.3 percent increases paid retroactively, and another 2.3 percent to be paid in November of 2025.

Clothing allowances will be increased, and there is a memorandum of understanding for filling full-time opportunities with PTFs and CCAs to full-time positions. There are many other provisions outlined in the tentative agreement. For more information, go to nalc.org and read it over before you get your ballot in the mail.

Locally, we held the retirees banquet, where members were given awards for years in the union. Three members received 60-year pins: Steve Miller, Jim Kohler and Herb Lanker. Two members received 55-year pins: Al Hefner and Steve Dankirt. Four members received 40-year pins: Fred Brinkman, Scott Stevenson, Tom McNamara and Chris Semer. One member received a 35-year pin: Donnie Wireman. Two members received 30-year pins: Dennis Salisbury and JJ Schoonover. Three members received 25-year pins: Paul Altenbach, Jeff Steegman and John Horner. Thanks to all who put it together, and we would like to see more people attend each year.

Lastly, if you haven't checked out the updated NALC Branch 105 web page, take a look; they are doing a great job. Also, union meetings are held every second Tuesday of the month at Rigali's Pizza Village, 505 W. North St. at 7 p.m. Hope to see you there!

Jeffery Steegman, Branch 105

Branch Items

Monterey, California

Are you feeling helpless at work and wondering if anyone in upper management cares about the way you are treated on a daily basis?

Working at the Post Office used to be such a great time, everyone helped each other, no one stabbed anyone in the back—it was a great job. We all stuck together and snitching on someone or writing a statement against them was unheard of. I wonder what changed? Is there something I'm not aware of? Donuts on Saturday for a select few, an extra day off that no one knows about, easier swings? I just don't get it.

When I started in 1973, the T-6 would always check on his string of carriers to make sure they were going to get out on the street in a reasonable time. They would also come by the route and make sure you were doing OK. If you were a little bit behind, they would take a swing so you got back on time.

When you are new, it's tough just trying to figure out where the mailboxes are, where to park—shucks, sometimes you don't even know the city you've been hired in, so you need a map to even find the first delivery. It takes time for a regular to familiarize themselves with a new route, and being a PTF is even crazier. Once in a blue moon someone comes along that is a whiz bang. I used to be a trainer, and I only had a handful of carriers who conquered casing in a couple of weeks.

The election is fast approaching. Make sure you vote your choice. In advance, thanks for all the work you do during this busy time of year.

United we bargain—divided we beg.

Patty Cramer, Branch 1310

North Florida

Well!!!! That election surely did not turn out the way most of us thought. Now we have to be prepared for the results next year.

Thanks go out to those members who were actively involved in the get-out-the-vote campaign. I have not heard the count of how many registered voters actually voted nationwide, but here in Duval County only 73 percent of those registered actually voted. That's 27 percent who didn't vote. Twenty-seven percent could have made a difference in the outcome.

Elections for branch officers are in progress, so if you haven't voted yet, please do so and mail your ballot back. It only takes a minute.

Branch 53 once again participated in this year's Veterans Day parade, and thanks go out to those members and family who took the time on a holiday to participate. Branch 53 wishes everyone very safe and happy holidays.

Bob Henning, Branch 53

Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania

The 2024 retiree dinner was held on Oct. 24 at the Le Mont restaurant on Mount Washington. NALC President Brian Renfroe was also in attendance. The retirees greatly appreciated the branch's efforts on the day.

President Renfroe attended the branch meeting later that evening as well. He spoke about the TA and fielded questions until almost 11 p.m. The 250 chairs were filled along with

some standing, and it was exceptional to see that number of letter carriers concerned about their jobs. It got raucous at a point or two, but everyone was engaged.

Wherever you land on the TA, I urge you to please vote. Do your homework. Talk to people in your office who are knowledgeable. Research comparable union contracts. Listen to



About 50 Florida letter carriers met with Volusia County Sheriff Mike Chitwood to talk about crime against carriers and how to stop it. Pictured (l to r) are former National Business Agent Matty Rose, Chitwood and Florida State Association District 4 Chair Frank Maranacci of North Florida Br. 53.

one of Renfroe's Zoom meetings. Only 15 percent voted on the last TA; I want Branch 84 to shatter that metric. Make your voice heard!

Lastly, management should *not* be writing anywhere but the instructed boxes when responding to your 3996s. We grieved this and put an end to it. Our Step B decision reads, "Deviations from the instructions [on reverse] are not appropriate in any of the sections." This language should stop that harassment. Line J assistance reasons should be omitted during Christmas.

If it continues, a Mutual Respect Atmosphere grievance—along with non-compliance—should be filed. Section 115.4 of *Handbook M-39* reads in part that management has a responsibility to ensure "mutual respect for each other's rights and responsibilities." Submission of PS Form 3996 is a letter carrier's reporting requirement and falls under 115.4. If yours is responded to with something like "Volume does not support request," contact your steward or branch hall.

Thank you to our veterans and have a happy Thanksgiving. We are letter carriers; we are proud and have much to be thankful for!

John Conger II, Branch 84

Portland, Oregon

After more than 500 days of waiting, we have a tentative agreement, and it has become a point of discontent in my branch as well as many other branches across the country. Members will now have an opportunity to vote it in as our next contract with the Postal Service, or vote "no" and reject it. The latter would likely send our case for a new contract before an arbitrator. People may tell you that there are risks going to arbitration, and there are. I would also say that there is a risk when your voice is not heard. The risk of putting up with dissatisfac-

tion, the risk of letting that fester, and the risk of allowing compromise to become a source of bitterness may be the greatest risk of all.

I don't know what is going to happen going forward. No one does. This TA is divisive, and many people are upset. That doesn't mean that it should destroy this union. There have been trying times at the Postal Service before, and there have been trying times in this union. Just because people feel differently than you isn't a reason to hate those people or demonize their opinions.

We are living in a time of partisanship, and this country is divided politically. If half the country holds a different opinion from yours, that doesn't mean that you can hate half of the country. Our union may now be divided on whether to vote "yes" or "no" for this contract. We can't hate our brothers and sisters if they disagree with us. We as a union are bigger than our disagreements and bigger than this moment. Don't forget that. No matter what the members decide, we must work together for the betterment of letter carriers, regardless of what happens.

David Norton, Branch 82

Racine, Wisconsin

Back in the day when your mom actually made a cake from scratch, as a kid you had the option of licking either the beater or the spoon. The beater trumps the spoon all day long. The beater had more lickable parts over the spoon.

So, I did not have an article for the November PR. Actually, though, I did. The article was about the unaccountability in management to properly address the no-show of our DPS and flats. Something that should never happen with all the technology at our doorstep. I pulled the article because it was too attitude-ish for my liking. Pulled the article on a Thursday. That very Saturday our flats were a no-show. Either a plant meltdown or egregious mismanagement.

There was a time prior to DPS when we cased our own mail, handled our own COAs. Both of those are currently a train wreck. No matter what anybody says, not the corporate email-reading guy or the district guys barking orders to local management or what's left of our hardworking clerks, letter carriers are the glue that holds the USPS together. Carriers are unable to give anything less than 100 percent because it's not in our carrier DNA.

Living in a swing state has been nothing less than brutal with all the political mail, both cased and in the DPS. Couldn't catch our breath most days.

Thanks to everyone who walked Racine's holiday parade. Carriers walk the parade route collecting letters to Santa. A dedicated crew then answers these letters locally. However, the Milwaukee District commandeered our little program. Our Santa letters now go to the district for a reply. There ya have it, folks—Christmas in Racine just got corporate. Merry Christmas!

Chris Paige, Branch 436

Rockville, Maryland

I want to thank Brian Renfroe and the entire 28-member Executive Council for going over every word of the proposed changes in the tentative agreement in four separate trainings. They went to Houston, San Francisco, Minneapolis and Washington, DC, in seven days! I attended the training in DC, and for the most part it was civil. At the end of the training we were given an opportunity to ask any question we wanted, and Brian Renfroe answered every question.

On the local scene, we won a pre-arb out of our Cabin John office, where an ODL won \$1,663 due to management working carriers from other installations without maximizing the Cabin John ODL to 12 hours per day, or until the ODL worked 20 hours of overtime for the week. A big thank-you goes out to our RAA, Tonya Detrick, and to Kevin Abernathy, who put the case together and appealed it to Step B.

We recently won an arbitration out of Damascus that paid the grievant an additional \$500 due to management delaying the grievant's continuation of pay. We wish to thank our advocate, Cindy Connors, and Chuck Clark for assembling such a good case and appealing the case to Step B. We have scores of grievances out of Damascus due to violations of the FECA. Many are pending arbitration. Our NBA office has also scheduled an intervention for our Damascus unit. We have filed hundreds of grievances at this unit, and we only have 13 carriers there! *Unbelievable!*

Please visit our website at nalc3825.com. We have more than 352,600 hits! We have lots of escalating remedies posted and copies of huge checks to the branch due to repeat violations of our contract. The top three checks are for \$74,600, \$50,000 and \$40,000. Check it out!

In the struggle—

Kenneth Lerch, Branch 3825

St. Louis, Missouri

A tentative agreement has been reached, and it won't be long before it makes its way to the rank and file for a vote. It's been a long time coming and I haven't heard a lot of positive comments about it. Letter carriers have had to put up with a lot of grief from an unappreciative collection of postal managers over the last four years.

Union/management relations on the workroom floor have been and continue to be toxic. Management has ignored the National Agreement and has violated the provisions of the contract with impunity.

New hires struggling to learn their jobs receive more grief from management than they do training and wonder why so many quit within the first few months of being hired. Veteran carriers are being treated with the same disrespect that new hires are forced to endure and find themselves at wit's end wondering whether to hang on a few more years or get out now.

Everyone thought Postmaster DeJoy's intent was to run the Post Office into the ground, and he's doing a fantastic job. Under him, delivery standards are out the door, and postage rates

have exploded while the quality of service has denigrated to the point where the public can no longer rely on the integrity of mail service anywhere in the country. Personal assaults on letter carriers are at an all-time high and no one seems to be interested in addressing that problem.

Carriers have had to put up with a lot of crap over the last four years. If the Post Office is in financial straits, it's because of the incompetence of postal management, from the top all the way down to the workroom floor. Does this new tentative agreement offer sufficient solutions to warrant ratification? You decide.

Tom Schulte, Branch 343

St. Paul, Minnesota

We've finally been delivered our long-awaited tentative agreement and have heard a lot of discontent with it. Talking with our brothers and sisters on the workroom floor, it's been called everything from inadequate to downright embarrassing. In light of all the struggle and strife that we've dealt with since the ratifications of the 2020 contract, there seems to be a lot of disappointment in general with the way this round of negotiations was handled. I hope everyone takes advantage of their right to voice their opinions on the agreement by voting on it. Turnout for the last agreement's ratification vote was pretty low, and like my grandma always told me, "If you don't vote, you don't get to complain."

In other news, our branch has a new executive vice president with the election of Marty Volz. Marty has been a bulldog of a Formal A representative for a while now and I'm sure will bring that same tenacity to his new position as EVP. Members should keep an eye on the TWIGS for another upcoming position opening up for nomination as well.

Finally, I'm excited to announce the return of the kids' Christmas party. We haven't been able to hold the Christmas party for a few years because of Covid and the lack of a venue, but this year we will be hosting it at the Woodbury Chuck E. Cheese on Dec. 15. We hope to see a lot of you out there! On a personal note, this event means quite a bit to me, as my first NALC function was the Hopkins Branch 2942 Christmas party that I attended with my aunt as a toddler in the early '90s, and I'm happy that we

can continue on this tradition some 30 years later.

Solidarity forever!

Kaylee Valerius, Branch 28

Seattle, Washington

Most carriers who read me know I'm retired. Most of what I know of letter carrier current events comes to me via my guy on the inside, my Mole-Man (not his real name). He's my boots on the ground. Anyway, my Mole-Man told me that Mr. Manager (not his real name) marched up to his case and asked, "How come you only did 79 percent of your route yesterday?" He replied, "Yesterday was my day off. I wasn't here." To which Mr. Manager replied, "Oh." Oh? Really?

Let's break this down. Mr. Manager comes to my Mole-Man's case and basically accuses him of dereliction of duty. And when Mr. Manager finds out he's wrong, his response is—"Oh." Oh? Oh, yes, you're 100 percent stupid! But where did this 79 percent come from? My Mole-Man got curious, so he asked around. No one had been approached, other than him, about their percent of delivery, either done or undone. Maybe something new has been added? Maybe Mr. Manager has got his hands on the next new, shiny intimidation tool.

Should we cut Mr. Manager some slack? I mean, it's not easy being new, which, evidently, he is. But where did this "new guy" come from, inquiring minds want to know? Maybe he's running away from his past? Who knows? Possibly he's a TACS invader? I would look into it. I would look to see if there's any reason why this new guy is here, and not still—there! Seems fair. I mean, if this manager wants to go looking into and evaluating job performance, seems only reasonable that the NALC should have the right to go looking into Mr. Manager's job performance. Turnabout is fair play, as they say, and sometimes karma's a b*tch.

Don Nokes, Branch 79

Southeast Michigan

On Sunday, Nov. 10, Southeast Michigan Branch 2184 celebrated the 100th anniversary of our NALC charter. We were joined by NALC Executive Vice President Paul Barner and by Region 6 National Business Agent David Mudd, along with other special guests.

Branch 2184 received its charter as an NALC branch, signed by then-NALC President Edward Gainor, on Nov. 25, 1924. The newly formed branch was located in the city of Dearborn, MI.

COLA: Cost-of-living adjustment

- The 2025 projected COLAs for the Civil Service Retirement System (CSRS) is **0.2 percent**, and for the Federal Employees Retirement System (FERS) is **0.2 percent**, following the release of the October consumer price index (CPI). The 2025 COLAs will be finalized with the publication of the September 2025 CPI in October 2025.
- The 2024 projected COLA under the Federal Employees' Compensation Act (FECA) is **2.9 percent** following the release of the October CPI. This COLA is based on the change in the CPI between December 2023 and December 2024.
- Visit nalc.org for the latest updates.

Branch Items

The Great War, as World War I was then known, had been over for six years and it was the middle of the “Roaring ‘20s” for much of America. Despite an era of general prosperity, especially for wealthier Americans, the union movement and organized labor was struggling against corporate and political resistance, led by anti-labor Republican administrations. Not so ironically, 100 years later, labor’s struggle continues against the same coalition of historical adversaries.

The foresight of Dearborn letter carriers in 1924 led to an enduring NALC branch, now with almost 1,400 active and retired carriers across a swath of three counties in Detroit’s western and southern suburbs, and a new branch name that reflects our broadened scope of coverage. Our members participated in the legendary strike in March 1970, and their courage is honored by the framed strike signs in our meeting space as well as an iconic picture in *Carriers in a Common Cause*. Our hallmark has always been a no-nonsense approach to contract enforcement and to defending the rights of our members against an employer whose arrogance and disrespect for letter carriers and their work is as entrenched as ever.

However, the future comes, and more quickly than we realize. We celebrate the past but must be steadfast in our approach to the present and the future. Those Dearborn letter carriers of 1924 would indeed be proud.

Joe Golonka, Branch 2184

Springfield, Ohio

Sept. 24, 1988, Dave Morrow is hired on at the P.O. Just over 36 years later, on Oct. 31, 2024, he is officially retired. An avid volleyball fan, Dave and I played volleyball together in the adult rec leagues in the area. I was also his T-6 for many years. Congratulations, Dave; enjoy your retirement. You’ve earned it. That leaves our office with just one person left who was hired in the 1980s. When I first started in 1994, the most senior carrier had been hired in 1959. Another 10 years or so, and all the ‘90s carriers will be gone.

I had a piece of mail marked UTF in my DPS the other day being returned to a customer. Always trying to keep mail out of the mark-up system, I peeled back the yellow sticker and found that my customer was trying to mail a card to the local city orchestra. They used the actual street address of the performing arts center, 300 S. Fountain Ave. Though this address receives mail through a P.O. box, the physical address is correct and yet a newer carrier marked it as UTF. If you aren’t sure of an address, ask questions.

From everything I’ve heard and read about the tentative contract, the more I think we will

be going to arbitration. In that regard, I’d like to offer up what the Beastie Boys might have said about this.

Working outdoors for a living every single day

*We’ll give you 1.3 is all you have to say
Union boss busted in and said, ‘What’s that noise?’*

Aw, it’s the working class and they’re so annoyed!

You gotta fight for your right to a contract!
Union meetings are the second Thursday of the month at 6:30. Pizza at 6:15.

Jerry Martens, Branch 45

Staunton, Virginia

There is so much uncertainty and division. There are so many potential changes on the horizon for letter carriers, our friends and families, and so much disagreement on what to do about it.

Will the president-elect renew his 2020 executive order to institute Schedule F stripping many federal workers of their civil service protections? Will he execute the recommendations of his first term task force and “fix then privatize” the USPS? Will he renew Executive Orders 13836, 13837 and 13839 designed to gut federal employee collective-bargaining rights? How will you respond if the answers are “yes”?

Will active carriers vote “yes” or “no” on the TA? Will they vote based on facts and evidence, or based on emotion? Will they have their whole letter carrier family in mind, or only their own situation? Will the answers to the first questions I asked influence the outcome of the contract?

Will disagreements with fellow letter carriers be personal and divide us, or guide us to the best path?

As always, I’m proud of my branch. Its leaders are making every effort to maintain an open conversation regarding the TA and are working to see that all members have the information they need to make their personal decision. The conversation at our last branch meeting was civil and respectful, as it should be.

Management contract violations and harassment of carriers are on the rise again in our area. Enforcement begins at the local level. Kudos to the union reps in Staunton and our neighboring Branch 518—they don’t rest! Please support them in their efforts.

Since 1889, the NALC has actively fought to improve our work lives and service to the American public. Solidarity has always been the backbone of our success. May it live forever!

Safe and peaceful holidays!

Cindy Connors, Branch 513

Toledo, Ohio

It’s getting a little crazy at the union hall. We’re on pace for a record number of grievances filed in a year. We handled 2,376 in a year in the recent past. That alone kept our advocates pretty busy. Plus, arbitrations are becoming a weekly thing. Plus, we’ve had route inspections at three large stations adding to the workload. Now, with the proposed and the numerous phone calls, many involving misinformation, are consuming more time than usual. And our team is up to the challenge.

Even though we’re busy, busy with all the daily challenges of grievances, arbitrations, inspections, and now dispensing the information related to the contract and health care changes, we still found time for our retiree luncheon. We had more than 70 in attendance for our chuck wagon grub. We had a covered wagon, bales of straw, pumpkins and more, thanks to the skills of Samantha Yerg and Deb Pipes. National Business Agent Mark Camilli, NALC Director of Retirees Dan Toth, and Regional Administrative Assistant Dave Kennedy were also in attendance. Mark spoke about the contract but stressed that the most pressing issue right now is the pension offset fix coming before Congress. Dan spoke extensively about the health benefits changes coming for those currently with the Federal Employees Health Benefits Plan.

As far as route inspections go, management insists on using COR to adjust routes. COR has created routes where half is on one side of the geographical area and the other half is on the other side of the area. Another creation had two carriers delivering the same street. One on the odd side, one on the even. Typical postal logic.

Ray Bricker, Branch 100

Tri-Valley, California

We sometimes speak before we have the opportunity to think about our words. In the heat of the moment, we immediately express negative feelings without analyzing the situation first. We jump to conclusions when having conversations and speak in haste before evaluating all sides. As leaders in any setting, we must be tactful and make decisions by weighing all details. Instead of expressing emotions with our authority, we must research, process and analyze informative information within our decision-making.

Immediately after President Renfroe announced that he reached a tentative agreement with the USPS, I was questioned on what the branch’s position is on the vote. My answer was, “I don’t know, because I didn’t have the opportunity to fully review and research the agreement.” And, I haven’t discussed the tentative agreement with every active member of our branch to get each opinion. Furthermore, even if I did, I wouldn’t tell anyone how to vote. Historically, our branch inspires every member to exercise their voice. I’ll continue to stand firm on this principle: Every member of our branch has a voice. And, under this circumstance, I’m referring to the voice of the active member to be heard by vote. A member’s vote is their voice, a member’s voice is their power.

I don’t mind if a member asked for my opinion about the tentative agreement; however, I will not try to sway anyone’s vote in any direction. Moreover, I encourage everyone to vote on this contract and make an informative decision based on the way you feel is best. I also encourage you to make the decision based on facts and not rumors, gossip, and/or disingenuous posting on social media.

Lastly, congratulations to the 2024 World Series Champion Los Angeles Dodgers, and merry Christmas and happy holidays.

James C. Perryman Jr., Branch 2902



Southeast Michigan Br. 2184 celebrated its centennial. Pictured (l to r) are branch member Erik Venzke, Region 6 National Business Agent David Mudd and NALC Executive Vice President Paul Barner.

Burlington, North Carolina

This is official notice to inform all active and retired members of Branch 2262 that nominations for the spring training seminar in Durham March 21-22, 2025, and Region 9 rap session in Myrtle Beach, SC, Sept. 19-22 will be held at the regular stated monthly branch meeting on Jan. 21 at The Cutting Board.

Elections will be by secret ballot if needed at the regular stated monthly branch meeting on Feb. 18 at The Cutting Board, 2699 Ramada Road, Burlington.

Mark Bare, Pres., Br. 2262

Danville, Virginia

This is to serve as the official notice to all members of Branch 595 of the nominations and elections of branch officers.

Nominations will be held at our regular branch meeting at 6 p.m. on Tuesday, Feb. 11, 2025. Candidates must accept nominations at the time made, or if absent, in writing. Candidates may accept nominations for only one office.

Nominations will be held for the following branch offices: president, vice president, secretary, treasurer, sergeant-at-arms, health benefits representative, three trustees and Mutual Benefits Association representative. The terms of office will be for two years, beginning April 1. The candidates elected president, vice president, secretary and treasurer, by virtue of their office, shall be automatic delegates to the national and state conventions during their term.

The election will be conducted by secret ballot at the regular branch meeting at 6 p.m. on Tuesday, March 11. Any member who, for any reason, will be unable to vote on March 11 may obtain an absentee ballot by writing to: The Election Committee, NALC Branch 595, P.O. Box 10595, Danville, VA 24543. Requests for absentee ballots must be received by the election committee no later than Feb. 28. Write-in votes are not permitted.

Joseph Scott Gammon, Pres., Br. 595

Florence, Alabama

This serves as official notice that the nominations for branch officers will be at the November branch meeting, with voting to be done at the December meeting.

Lisa Jones, Sec., Br. 892

Lilburn, Georgia

This is an official notice to all membership of Branch 1537 that nominations for all officer positions for 2025-2026 will be held at the regular branch meeting in November, and the elections will be held at the regular branch meeting in December.

Torri Moore, Sec., Br. 1537

Mentor, Ohio

This is an official notice to all members of Branch 4195. We will accept nominations for branch officers at the regular Jan. 8, 2025, union meeting.

Franklin Leonard, Pres., Br. 4195

Montana

This is the official notification to all active Montana State Association letter carriers that the 2025 state convention will be held April 11-12, 2025, at the Holiday Inn in Great Falls. All state officer positions will be up for election for two-year terms, as well as three-year and one-year trustee positions.

Also, a resolution to amend the state bylaws to change the month of the state convention will be brought up for debate and vote. If approved, the resolution will be sent to the NALC for approval.

Nick Liston, Sec., MSALC

New York, New York

This is a notice of nomination and election of officers of Branch 36. Officers to be elected are president, executive vice president, first vice president/treasurer, second vice president/financial secretary, recording secretary, editor of Branch 36's *Vincent R. Sombrotto Outlook*, sergeant-at-arms, director of city delivery, MBA representative, director of retired members, director of compensation, NALC Health Benefit Plan representative, five members of the board of trustees, director of education, and director of safety and health. The term of office shall be April 2025 to April 2028.

Upon nomination, the candidate must certify that they have not served in a supervisory capacity for the 24 months prior to the nomination.

All nominations shall be submitted to the recording secretary no later than the close of the business day on Feb. 10, 2025, at union headquarters, Branch 36, Vincent R. Sombrotto Building, 347 West 41st St., New York. No candidate shall be eligible for nomination if they are not in good standing at the time of the nominations. No nomination shall contain the name of more than one candidate for the same office. Each nominee must file a written acceptance of their nomination with the recording secretary by the close of business on Feb. 14.

Election ballots will be mailed in March by an independent reputable nonpartisan election agency.

The installation of officers will be on April 10.

Melinda Wilkerson, Rec. Sec., Br. 36

Northern Virginia

Due notice is hereby given all members of Branch 3520 of nomination and election of all elected officers for the 2025-2027 term of office. Nomination will take place at the regular meeting of the branch, scheduled for 7:30 p.m. on Thursday, Feb. 13, at the Motel 6, Governor Room, 6654 Arlington Blvd., Falls Church.

Written acceptance of nomination must be received by the branch secretary-treasurer no later than 5 p.m. on Friday, Feb. 14, of those candidates nominated for office. This provision will be waived if a candidate has been unavoidably detained.

Ballots, to be valid, must be received at the post office box, rented for election purposes, no later than 10 a.m. on March 13. Election results will be announced at the regular branch

meeting on Thursday, March 13.

Officers to be nominated are: president, vice president, secretary-treasurer, sergeant-at-arms, health and insurance rep and six trustees.

Evangelina Camacho, Sec.-Treas., Br. 3520

Pasadena, California

This is the official notice to all members of Branch 3867 for the election of president and vice president for the 2025-2026 term.

Election will be held by secret ballot at the regular monthly meeting at 7 p.m. on Dec. 17 at the union hall. Any member who, for any reason, will be unable to vote on Dec. 17 may obtain absentee ballots by writing to the Election Committee, Branch 3867, 130 S. Munger St., Pasadena, TX 77506. Requests for absentee ballots must be received by the election committee postmarked no later than Dec. 1.

Write-in votes are not permitted.

Lydia Amador, Sec., Br. 3867

Pawtucket, Rhode Island

This is official notice to all members in good standing of Branch 55 that nominations for all positions will take place on Wednesday, Feb. 12, 2025. Our meeting and the nomination of officers will take place at Spumoni's Restaurant, located at 1537 Newport Ave., Pawtucket. The meeting starts at 7 p.m.

Any member in good standing wishing to accept a nomination and unable to attend the meeting must submit a letter in writing to Recording-Secretary Craig Lyons and signify the acceptance of the specific position/nomination prior to the meeting. The following positions are up for nomination: president, executive vice president, vice president, financial secretary-treasurer/MBA representative, recording-secretary, health benefit representative (must be enrolled in the NALC Health Benefit Plan), sergeant-at arms and three trustee positions. The officers/positions will be elected for a two-year term.

The election will be by secret mail ballot, and the election/results will be shared with the members in accordance with the Branch 55 bylaws.

Craig Lyons, Rec. Sec., Br. 55

San Francisco, California

This is an official notice to all members of Branch 214 that our nominations for all elective branch officers shall be held at our regular branch meeting on Dec. 4 at 2310 Mason St., 3rd Floor, San Francisco.

Officers to be elected are president, executive vice president, vice president, secretary-treasurer, assistant secretary-treasurer, health benefits representative, safety and health officer, equal employment opportunity officer, MBA officer, director of organization, sergeant-at-arms and three trustees for the 2025-2026 term.

Nominations shall be made from the floor and via Zoom. All candidates must be present at the time of nomination or shall have signified, in writing, to the secretary-treasurer their willingness to accept the nomination for the position nominated. Nomination on an official form, in writing, is due to the secretary-treasurer prior to close of the Dec. 4 branch meeting. The election shall be by mail vote. The election committee will mail ballots to all eligible voters on the first Monday of January.

Elections for shop stewards will take place on Feb. 5, 2025, at each respective station and/or city. Nomination on official form, or in writing, is due to the secretary-treasurer prior to the close of the February branch meeting.

All candidates must be members in good standing and signify in writing they have not served in a supervisory capacity within the past two years to the date of nomination.

The state convention will be held in 2025. Nominations and elections of delegates for the state convention will be held at the branch meeting Nov. 6.

Tauchia Cobbins, Sec.-Treas., Br. 214

Tinnelly District Assoc., New York

This is official notice to all members of the Joseph T. Tinnelly District Association that nominations and elections for all elected positions will take place at the spring meeting scheduled for Feb. 23, 2025, at the Schenectady VFW Post, 718 Union St., Schenectady.

Norris Beswick, Sec., Tinnelly Dist.

Regarding Election Notices

Election Notices must be submitted to *The Postal Record*, not to other offices at NALC. *The Constitution for Government of Federal and Subordinate Branches* requires that notice be mailed to members no fewer than **45 days before the election** (Article 5, Section 4). Branch secretaries must remember the time difference between deadline for submission of notices—the 10th of the month—and publication of the subsequent issue of the magazine, e.g., December's deadline is for the January publication.

To submit items 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 items by email: Send to postalrecord@nalc.org with the branch city and state as the subject. The item can be in the body of the email or as an attachment in Microsoft Word. Include the same information as listed above for items sent by mail. If you do not receive an acknowledgment that your email was received, please call *The Postal Record* at **202-662-2851**.

Auxiliary Update



Cynthia Martinez
President

National Auxiliary Board

News and updates from the officers



Crystal Bragg
Secretary



Samantha Yerg
Treasurer

From the Secretary

Greetings, everyone:
This year's convention was very productive, and several bylaw changes were approved for 2024.

Our current bylaw books had some errors, and they are currently being corrected. When we receive the books, the auxiliaries who requested copies will get them then. Thanks to all delegates who attended the convention.



Letter Carrier Barbie was introduced at the convention, and she will be traveling the country to visit auxiliaries. She'll visit the Auxiliary Board officers first to gather information for her travels.

The rules to receive Letter Carrier Barbie:

1. Your auxiliary must be registered for the 2025 year.
2. Request Letter Carrier Barbie to visit your auxiliary.
3. Show her your area sites or special events. Take lots of pictures with her.
4. Send pictures to Secretary Crystal Bragg by email (cbragg5414@comcast.net) or text (217-620-9193).



After making her debut at the NALC 73rd Biennial Convention in Boston in August, Letter Carrier Barbie makes her first trip to Decatur, IL, to spend time with members of Branch 317 and Aux. #153.

5. Keep her for two to three weeks, then mail her to the next auxiliary on the list. If you are the last name on the list, mail Barbie back to Secretary Crystal Bragg (835 Westland Drive, Mt. Zion, IL 62549).

Letter Carrier Barbie made her first stop in Decatur, IL, where she arrived on Columbus

Day to hang out with Branch 317, Auxiliary 153 and other community volunteers.

Letter Carrier Barbie was off to her next adventure on Nov. 1.

The 2025 registration forms will be mailed out sometime by the first week of December.

Happy holidays!

Crystal Bragg

AUXILIARY OFFICERS

Cynthia Martinez, President
3532 W. Mauna Loa Lane
Phoenix, AZ 85053
602-505-2215
camslm@yahoo.com

Crystal Bragg, Secretary
835 Westland Drive
Mt. Zion, IL 62549
217-864-4684
cbragg5414@comcast.net

Samantha Yerg, Treasurer
4553 County Road 137
Gibsonburg, OH 43431
419-410-6162
samanthayerg@yahoo.com



Include me in the fight for letter carrier rights

Sign me up as an Auxiliary member!

Branch No. _____ Branch City _____ Auxiliary No. _____

Name _____ Phone No. (____) _____

Address _____

City _____ State _____ ZIP _____

I am a family member of NALC member _____ of Branch _____

Return form with membership fee of \$20 to a local Auxiliary member or mail to:

NALC Auxiliary
Crystal Bragg, Secretary
835 Westland Drive
Mt. Zion, IL 62549

California

There was a part in the movie “1492: Conquest of Paradise” where a priest wanted to leave the island now shared by the Dominican Republic and Haiti to go back to Spain because of frustration over the colonists’ behavior. Christopher Columbus said to him, “Your leaving here will not help me make this place more godly.”

I know many of you find the tentative contract to be, in a nutshell, underwhelming. And, assuming you stay in the union, will have a chance in the near future to vote on said contract. Leaving the union does nothing to help you, or anyone else, make things better.

If you quit the union, you lose your voice. You can’t vote to elect your local leadership, and by extension, your national leaders; you also have no say in resolutions, which can result in needed changes, whether they be contractual or legislative. If you quit the NALC, you cannot vote for, or against, the tentative agreement. If you oppose the TA, and the “yes” vote prevails by a small margin, you will have missed your opportunity to make your voice heard in this most historic and consequential vote. Leaving the NALC will not make things better for the union at large, or for you as an individual city letter carrier.

And now, with anti-union fellows such as Elon Musk set to “reform” federal government, we need to be united. Do you think for a minute that billionaires whom The Donald will stack his cabinet with will advocate for your workplace protections, salaries and pension benefits? If anyone within sight of this article thinks they will propose rules or legislation benefiting you as a letter carrier, I have beachfront property in Kansas to sell you.

Eric Ellis

Colorado

The 2024 national elections are behind us, but the work continues. We know there will be much work to be done in 2025 educating new members in Congress on priority pieces of legislation that are critical for city letter carriers, including the Protect Our Letter Carriers Act.

While many are worried of the defensive position we’ve been put in for 2025, we are ready for it. We’ve been here before, and we will stand up on the front lines of anything that goes against city letter carriers at any level. We must come together to protect what we’ve built together and work with those who stand with us.

Stay safe out in the weather this time of year, and we hope you enjoy the holiday season with your family and friends.

Have a merry Christmas and happy new year—

Richard Byrne

Florida

History of FSALC continued: Following is a partial reprint of an article in the 1960 FSALC convention booklet, by then-State Secretary Fred M. Valdez.

“Amongst a small group of courageous letter carriers, the Florida State Association had its beginning. The original charter shows that it was issued on September 23, 1913, and that D.B. Jenks of Key West was its first president. W.H. Linwood of Jacksonville was its secretary. It must be noted that no records are presently available to show its place of birth.

For the next ten years there appears to have been a lack of activity. However, on January 22, 1923, the Vice President J.D. Dawkins requested all branches belonging to the NALC to send delegates to Jacksonville at the same time that the postal department was holding a convention and conference there.

Responding to the request were three branches, Branch 52, Jacksonville; Branch 1477, St. Petersburg and Branch 599, Tampa. Two branches who had NALC members there but did not desire to be recognized as delegates were Branch 1544, Palatka and Branch 1777, Sanford.

The wheels of progress began to turn. The first convention of which records are available took place in Tampa on October 21, 1923. The following cities were represented: Bartow, Bradenton, Clearwater, Gainesville, Jacksonville, Ocala, Orlando, Plant City, Sanford, and Winter Haven. It is quite significant that the first resolution recorded began as such ‘WHEARAS: It is no longer possible to live on the present salary, etc.’”

Note: I will continue with Brother Valdez’s brief history of the FSALC in future articles.

O.D. Elliott

Kentucky

While Kentucky voters reelected all six federal U.S. reps across the commonwealth, the obvious changes in the presidency, Senate and the House could have an impact on letter carrier benefits and USPS. NALC at the national level has working relationships with all members of Congress and related agencies. President Brian Renfro and the Legislative Department will reach out to key committee leadership like Senate Homeland Security and Government Affairs, and House Oversight and Accountability, on our behalf.

Now what is the role of our Kentucky State Association members? Continue to visit nalc.org to “Take Action” and contact Congress about bills that NALC favors. You can contact your rep and two senators by phone in DC at 202-224-3121 via the Capitol switchboard, or call the district offices. Be off the clock and out of uniform and off U.S. government property when contacting Congress, unless retired. Remind them that we are nonpartisan and deliver mail to all addresses daily.

As this was being composed for *The Postal Record* on Veterans Day, I learned that H.R. 82, the Social Security Fairness Act, was being called up for a vote on Tuesday, Nov. 12. In a rare move, it was under “suspension,” and needed a two-thirds vote to pass. This is an example how House rules can keep legislation from flowing in a straight line!

The election is over, and now NALC will deal with those in positions of power. Our customers deserve the best service from U.S. Mail

delivery. Letter carriers are usually one of the highest-rated government services.

Happy holidays! Need a 2025 resolution? Give to LCPF.

Bob McNulty

Tennessee

Hello, brothers and sisters!

Do you know that there is a second association within the NALC? It’s your Tennessee State Association. Do you know what it does? It helps inform and educate the people elected to Congress about upcoming legislation.

Do you know who represents your congressional district or what district you live in? The easy way to find what district you live in is go to nalc.org and click “Legislative Action Center,” click “Who Are Your Lawmakers?” then under “Legislator Lookup,” enter your ZIP Code. Your branch secretary can enter the member portal and download the branch membership roster, which will also show the district for each member in your branch.

Your letter carrier congressional liaisons (LCCLs) are: 1st District, Diane Harshbarger—Tony Rodriguez of Knoxville Branch 419; 2nd District, Tim Burchett—Tony Rodriguez of Knoxville Branch 419; 3rd District, Chuck Fleishmann—Laurie McLemore of Chattanooga Branch 62; 4th District, Scott Desjarlais—James Brown of Nashville Branch 4; 5th District, Andy Ogles—Angelia Hartley of Nashville Branch 4; 6th District, John Rose—Anthony Geno Lauderdale of Nashville Branch 4; 7th District, Mark E. Green—Cathy Prince Huffstutler of Nashville Branch 4; 8th District, David Kustoff—Larry Jackson of Memphis Branch 27; and 9th District, Steve Cohen—Belinda Williams of Memphis Branch 27.

Their mission is to foster a relationship with a member of their staff and gain access to pass pertinent information concerning a particular bill (e.g., H.R. 82, Social Security Fairness Act) that affects Letter Carriers. Regardless of the political party, it’s up to these officers to ensure that our message gets passed on to our House representatives.

Tony Rodriguez

Notice

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

State Summaries

Wisconsin

On Oct. 19 at 3:30 p.m., the Wisconsin State Association of Letter Carriers (WSALC) held an “Enough is enough” rally on the King Street walkway at the Wisconsin State Capitol building at 2 E. Main St., Madison. In attendance with the WSALC membership were south central labor unions, customers, family, candidates and several media outlets.



The Wisconsin State Association of Letter Carriers holds an “Enough is enough” rally in Madison.

Wisconsin letter carriers have been increasingly targets of robberies and physical assaults as they deliver essential mail in their communities. In Wisconsin there have been more than 30 robberies and one letter carrier violently killed in a customer’s yard. We rallied to bring public awareness to stop crimes against letter carriers and the need to pass the Protect Our Letter Carriers Act, H.R. 7629.

Several union leaders spoke about what is happening on the job, and the consensus is that this is beyond *enough is enough*—it is more than unacceptable. These attacks need to stop *now*. Letter carriers should not be subject to robberies or assaults!

We asked the American people to stand with and support their letter carrier. To help protect letter carriers, while they deliver essential mail. We asked them to contact their House and Senate representatives to ask them to co-sponsor H.R. 7629 and help keep their letter carrier safe as they do the work of the people.

Dawn Ahnen

FL: Naples (4/23) to Sarasota, FL or surrounding areas. Call or text with any questions. George, 727-385-5668.

NV: Las Vegas (7/20) to San Antonio, TX. Seeking mutual exchange.

Regulars only. Jonathan, 775-229-0107.

TX: Denton (3/18) to East-Central IL. Dallas area. City carrier. Large, strong union. Great co-workers. Abbie, 907-251-0661 (text).

How to place a Mutual Exchange ad

The cost of Mutual Exchange ads is \$15 for up to 30 words and \$25 for 31-50 words per month. Ads must be received by the 5th of the month preceding the month in which the ad will appear (e.g., December’s deadline is for the January publication). Mail ad with check (payable to NALC) to: Mutual Exchange Ads, Postal Record, 100 Indiana Ave. NW, Washington, DC 20001-2144.

Ads are published for NALC members only. A branch officer or steward must endorse the ad to certify membership. Include your name, address and branch number. Begin each ad with your state abbreviation, city and seniority date.

Specific route information or mention of three-way transfers will not be published, nor any wording that offers cash or property to facilitate an exchange. Mutual exchanges must be approved by both postmasters involved. Seniority of carriers involved shall be governed by Article 41, Sec. 2E of the National Agreement. Carriers may not exchange assignments, since vacated positions must be posted for bids in accordance with local and national agreements.

In Memoriam

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

Daniel M. Heath	Br. 1630	Dothan, AL
Peter P. Do	Br. 1100	Garden Grove, CA
Curtis W. Murdock	Br. 24	Los Angeles, CA
Lonzo H. Bennett	Br. 70	San Diego, CA
Carol Ann Maggio	Br. 214	San Francisco, CA
William P. Thornton	Br. 214	San Francisco, CA
Harvey D. Schonauer	Br. 193	San Jose, CA
Norman M. Wood	Br. 47	Denver, CO
Bernard D. Mikletonas	Br. 20	CT Mgd.
Orcen Newland	Br. 86	Hartford, CT
Barry D. Goings	Br. 53	North FL
Robert O. Hankerson	Br. 53	North FL
Lloyd N. Pearson Jr.	Br. 53	North FL
John A. Ambrose	Br. 599	Tampa, FL
Velma A. Worthy-Lindley	Br. 73	Atlanta, GA
Thomas R. Sanders	Br. 546	Columbus, GA
Aaron A. Patterson	Br. 1441	Gainesville, GA
Lyle A. Masee	Br. 219	Aurora, IL
Clement C. Blackburn	Br. 317	Decatur, IL
Richard L. Hicks	Br. 317	Decatur, IL
Merle D. Weaver	Br. 317	Decatur, IL
Marvin L. Workman	Br. 317	Decatur, IL
Mark Bibbs Jr	Br. 4007	Glenview, IL
Shirley M. Strobe	Br. 4016	S. Suburban Mgd., IL
Raymond M. Breshock	Br. 580	Hammond, IN
Thomas E. Flynn	Br. 580	Hammond, IN
Frederick V. Hammond	Br. 580	Hammond, IN

Thomas W. Iseminger	Br. 580	Hammond, IN
Michael Jacko	Br. 580	Hammond, IN
Priscilla D. Johnson	Br. 580	Hammond, IN
Earl F. Mosley	Br. 580	Hammond, IN
Euliss E. Royal	Br. 580	Hammond, IN
Kenneth Timmons	Br. 580	Hammond, IN
Robert C. Williams	Br. 129	Baton Rouge, LA
Robert F. Broussard	Br. 914	Lake Charles, LA
Vincent J. Ferrie Jr.	Br. 914	Lake Charles, LA
Howard J. Fontenot	Br. 914	Lake Charles, LA
Kenneth A. Lamb	Br. 914	Lake Charles, LA
Lonnie J. Neveu	Br. 914	Lake Charles, LA
Joseph C. Richard Jr.	Br. 914	Lake Charles, LA
Joseph M. Slaney	Br. 334	Frammingham, MA
Horace A. Clayton	Br. 25	MA Northeast Mgd.
Stephen M. Godzik	Br. 25	MA Northeast Mgd.
Owen T. Mcardle	Br. 25	MA Northeast Mgd.
John M. Peters Jr.	Br. 25	MA Northeast Mgd.
Peter J. Torrisi	Br. 25	MA Northeast Mgd.
Eugene T. Dooley	Br. 1	Detroit, MI
Erhard C. Brunke Jr.	Br. 4374	South Macomb, MI
Charles D. Hines	Br. 717	Austin, MN
Cody D. Lines	Br. 90	Mankato, MN
James R. Wenner	Br. 1051	Moorhead, MN
Leon W. Sanfacon	Br. 990	Rochester, NH
William P. Richmond III	Br. 5420	Brick Town, NJ
James Thomason	Br. 903	Cape Atlantic, NJ
Michael J. Schiavone Jr.	Br. 444	Garden State Mgd., NJ
Robert S. Nagel	Br. 38	NJ Mgd.
Coretta Rivers	Br. 38	NJ Mgd.
Salvatore J. Calia	Br. 562	Jamaica, NY
Rocco J. Cipriano	Br. 6000	Long Island Mgd., NY
Robert H. Dittmeier	Br. 6000	Long Island Mgd., NY
Michael T. Militello	Br. 6000	Long Island Mgd., NY
Manuel Koenig	Br. 36	New York, NY
William A. Guldenschuh	Br. 210	Rochester, NY

Kristopher Miller	Br. 210	Rochester, NY
Paul Manus	Br. 36	New York, NY
Anthony P. Ferrito	Br. 134	Syracuse, NY
R. C. Gillett	Br. 134	Syracuse, NY
Paul R. Horsman Jr.	Br. 134	Syracuse, NY
Reginald A. Nadeau	Br. 134	Syracuse, NY
James W. Childers	Br. 1250	Hickory, NC
Roger L. Doss	Br. 461	Winston-Salem, NC
Karl A. Loman	Br. 148	Akron, OH
Richard E. Garske	Br. 40	Cleveland, OH
Richard H. Burke	Br. 78	Columbus, OH
Beverly A. Midkiff	Br. 45	Springfield, OH
Charles J. Kopsic	Br. 385	Youngstown, OH
Richard J. Russo	Br. 385	Youngstown, OH
Orville C. Pettle	Br. 1358	Tulsa, OK
Paul A. Swenson	Br. 82	Portland, OR
Tristan S. Thomas	Br. 82	Portland, OR
Earl H. Lippert	Br. 500	Harrisburg, PA
Carl C. Rademan	Br. 157	Philadelphia, PA
Robert W. Beck	Br. 84	Pittsburgh, PA
Steven A. Browning	Br. 15	Providence, RI
Dan L. Crawford	Br. 439	Greenville, SS
Brian R. Villwock	Br. 4616	Cayce-W. Columbia, SC
Tony M. Cooper	Br. 4	Nashville, TN
John A. Kyle	Br. 1037	Amarillo, TX
Roy P. Gonzalez	Br. 1259	Corpus Christi, TX
Antwone X. Warren	Br. 132	Dallas, TX
Harvey J. West	Br. 283	Houston, TX
James C. Cooper	Br. 3792	Midland, TX
Manuel Acosta	Br. 421	San Antonio, TX
Steve Lopez	Br. 111	Salt Lake City, UT
Michael E. Barnhart	Br. 531	Charleston, WV
Francis H. Soper	Br. 2	Milwaukee, WI
Arthur N. Tessier Jr.	Br. 2	Milwaukee, WI
Donald K. Methner	Br. 5923	Riverton, WY

Raekwon McCalpine 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.



Install the free NALC Member App for your iPhone or Android smartphone

As technology increases our ability to communicate, NALC must stay ahead of the curve. We've now taken the next step with the NALC Member App for iPhone and Android smartphones. The app was developed with the needs of letter carriers in mind.

The app's features include:

- Workplace resources, including the National Agreement, *JCAM*, MRS and CCA resources
- Instantaneous NALC news with personalized push notifications and social media access
- Interactive Non-Scheduled Days calendar
- Much more
- Legislative tools, including bill tracker, individualized congressional representatives and PAC information

Go to the App Store or Google Play and search for "NALC Member App" to install for free

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**