

The Postal Record

Volume 137/Number 4 April 2024

The monthly journal of the NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF LETTER CARRIERS

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Enough is enough—the next step



**Brian L.
Renfroe**

Over the last several months, I've traveled all over the country to join our brothers and sisters at events to bring public awareness to the violent attacks being unleashed on our members by criminals with no regard for our lives.

The situation sickens me. Nearly every day, I learn of a carrier who has been robbed, attacked, beaten, shot, stabbed or even killed. In most of these cases, criminals are attempting to rob our members. We became a target carrying a valuable commodity for desperate thieves and more sophisticated crime

rings to steal by any means necessary.

Our members are under more pressure these days as we serve our communities. As I've said at these events around the country, we used to be able to walk the meanest streets and no one messed with their letter carrier. Something has shifted in recent years. Since 2020, there have been more than 2,000 crimes against letter carriers nationwide. Last year alone, 643 letter carriers were attacked or robbed while on the job, a 30 percent increase from the prior year. Most of these attacks involved a gun or another weapon, leaving our members shaken and fearful to do their jobs.

When I talk to letter carriers who have been victims of this type of crime and those they work with every day, I notice the impact it has on their mental health. Our jobs are stressful enough due to poor management and the long hours we endure as a result of staffing issues in many locations. The crime we're experiencing adds immeasurably to an already difficult job.

It's why we are fighting a prolonged battle for a contract that rewards letter carriers for what we do under the most difficult circumstances we've faced in the modern era. Our job is harder, more dangerous, and more important than it has ever been before.

The newly introduced **Protect Our Letter Carriers Act** (H.R. 7629) and soon-to-be introduced companion bill in the Senate are critical pieces of legislation to fight back against this wave of crime. I want to thank our friends,

Reps. Brian Fitpatrick (R-PA) and Greg Landsman (D-OH), for introducing this bipartisan legislation in the House of Representatives. The bill will help the Postal Service modernize its infrastructure to better secure our safety, and it also will act as a deterrent to criminals who have gotten away with these crimes for too long, by ensuring that crimes against letter carriers are prosecuted federally and that those who attack us are appropriately sentenced.

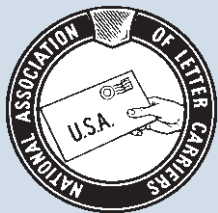
A few weeks ago, as I write this, a criminal in California was sentenced to just 30 days in jail after robbing a letter carrier at gunpoint. This is outrageous and unacceptable. This legislation will make changes that will stop this from happening again.

“Our job is harder, more dangerous, and more important than it has ever been before.”

While we fight back against this escalating crime and work to end it once and for all, we must support our members who need help, whether as a result of an attack or some other circumstance. We were proud to launch the initial phase of our new NALC Emergency Response Team (ERT) with a training session near Baltimore in March. More than two dozen members attended the training to learn skills needed to provide support to letter carriers who are affected by difficult situations. This group is composed of people who have served letter carriers in a variety of ways for a long time, and now they are prepared to provide a different kind of service.

In just the first week following the training, these newly trained NALC ERT members responded to three incidents around the country. We were there almost immediately, and the positive impact on our brothers and sisters going through a difficult time was evident.

Unions are about a group of members banding together to create strength and achieve positive results for their members. This includes helping one another. The NALC has a long tradition of vigorously fighting for what we deserve and for what is right for its members. Our resolve to fight has never been stronger. We also have a history of compassion and service. We take care of our own. The newly formed ERT will continue to build on that history.



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Communications: A, B, C



**Philip
Dine**

We've periodically discussed in this space how NALC benefits from having a myriad of voices at all levels that contribute to getting out our message on key topics, why our union is in this enviable position, how rare that is in the labor movement, and why it's essential to our success on behalf of America's letter carriers.

So, let's not waste time or space reiterating those points. Let's instead get practical, focusing on the A, B and C of effective communications. From my perspective, that's A, B, C *literally*—as in accuracy, brevity and clarity.

Note: To be clear, none of what follows stems from any issues I've noticed; on the contrary, I'm continually struck by how well you communicate with the public and with the media, whether in writing or speaking. The goal here is simply to put some broad thoughts in one place in case it proves useful as you continue to get the word out.

Accuracy is the foundation on which all else in the communications process is built. If those trying to advance a position sacrifice their credibility through exaggeration, dubious statements or flat untruths, it's game, set, match. The most elegant wording cannot make up for the erosion of credibility—because if folks don't trust the messenger, they won't trust the message.

So, stick to the facts, whether in interviews, op-eds, speeches, letters to the editor. Assert only what you're sure of and what is germane to the case you're making; be prepared to back up statements if asked to; steer clear of hyperbole. Departing from any of these guidelines simply isn't worth it. No single assertion, no matter how powerful, will win the day by itself, but an erroneous contention, no matter how trivial, can lose the day all by its lonesome, because many folks will wonder about the veracity of everything else being said or written.

Our messages resonate because they're fact-based and reason-based, calmly presented and logically argued. NALC succeeds in this arena because our members and our leaders have earned a reputation as straight shooters.

Moving down the alphabet, we'll shuffle the last two letters, going next to C, because in terms of making the argument/persuading folks, nothing trumps clarity. Those absorbing your message—whether in print or on TV/radio or in person—should leave knowing exactly what you said and what it meant. Nothing should be confusing or ambivalent or open to interpretation, not the broad points, not a single sentence.

As you're preparing your message, make sure there's nothing that could be taken two ways; if there is, revise it so it can be taken only one way—the way you intended.

Look it over with a skeptical eye—for anything that's vague or unnecessary—from the perspective of someone far less-versed in postal matters than you.

Close the deal by being brief, which isn't as easy as it might seem; shorter requires far more work than longer. Counter-intuitively, it's more difficult to get a message across in 500 words than in 2,000 words. But it's worth the effort, because folks will be more likely to grasp, and carry with them, a concise message than a long-winded one. They'll also appreciate that you respected their time, and therefore be predisposed to view you and your message more favorably.

The trick to being clear and brief, perhaps surprisingly, isn't primarily about the writing. A good 80 percent of achieving those goals stems instead from what precedes the writing—the thinking, the analysis. If you're crystal clear in your own mind about what you want to get across, the writing will reflect that in its absence of meandering or fluff, in the non-nonsense approach. You'll get to the point briskly, your points will be unmistakable—and the whole package will resonate.

So, before you sit down at the computer to write, take a walk, clear your head, and ponder what you'd want to communicate given two minutes in an elevator with someone you hoped to inform/win over. Then use that sparse and disciplined framework to construct your op-ed or speech or interview points.

The remaining 20 percent is indeed about the writing and the word choice—but not about making it flowery, rather the opposite: simple and taut. Don't transition, for example, via "That having been said," but rather with "That said."

That said (smile...), please let me know of any thoughts or questions, and most of all, please continue your unparalleled communications activities. With each passing month, on each new issue or the ones that persist, you are making a difference for your letter carrier brothers and sisters, your union and, indeed, for the country itself.

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

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

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

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

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Protect Our Letter Carriers Act (H.R. 7629) introduced in House of Representatives



Above: House Minority Leader Hakeem Jeffries
Below (clockwise from top l): Reps. Greg Landsman, Brian Fitzpatrick, Steny Hoyer and Donald Norcross



On March 13, the Protect Our Letter Carriers Act (POLCA) (H.R. 7629) was introduced in the House of Representatives by Reps. Brian Fitzpatrick (R-PA) and Greg Landsman (D-OH). The bill was announced at a press event outside the Capitol in Washington, DC, where NALC President Brian L. Renfroe, Reps. Fitzpatrick and Landsman, House Minority Leader Hakeem Jeffries (D-NY), and Reps. Steny Hoyer (D-MD) and Donald Norcross (D-NJ) spoke in support of the legislation.

AFL-CIO Secretary-Treasurer Fred Redmond and AFL-CIO Transportation Trades Department President Greg Regan also spoke at the event, reflecting the large outpouring of support from the labor movement.

“Targeted robberies, assaults, and even murder have become part of our job,” President Renfroe said. “Think about that. Today we are here to send a very clear message: Enough is enough is enough.”

“The next step is critical, and that next step is federal legislation that will deter these attacks from happening, prosecute every criminal who attacks one of our members, and protect letter carriers while doing their jobs,” Renfroe said. “We are very grateful for two of our great friends in Congress, Congressman Brian Fitzpatrick and Congressman Greg Landsman, for introducing legislation, the Protect Our Letter Carriers Act.”

This bipartisan legislation would provide \$7 billion in funding for the Postal Service to secure its infrastructure, including the installation of high-security collection boxes and the replacement of Arrow Keys with more

secure electronic versions. The funding would be appropriated over five years, \$1.4 billion annually in fiscal years 2025-2029. When key infrastructure is devalued and more secure, letter carriers will be safer on their routes.

Additionally, the legislation would increase prosecution rates for these crimes by requiring the attorney general to designate an assistant U.S. attorney in each judicial district to prioritize cases involving an assault or crime against a letter carrier. Their principal responsibility in the district would be to coordinate and supervise the investigation and prosecution of these crimes.

The bill also would strengthen sentencing guidelines for these crimes, ensuring that they are treated in the same manner as assaults on federal law enforcement officers.

“I urge the House to pass this bill that would protect the nation’s letter carriers who dutifully deliver medications, checks, ballots, packages and other essential mail that all Americans depend on,” President Renfroe said.

Since 2020, there have been more than 2,000 crimes committed against letter carriers on the job. Many of these attacks involve a gun or another weapon. The amount of letter carrier robberies climbed to 643 last year, an increase of nearly 30 percent, and the number of robberies resulting in injuries doubled, according to the United States Postal Inspection Service.

Detroit, MI Branch 1 letter carrier **Matt McBee** spoke at the press conference about his own experience. “When it happened to me, it was two young men wearing ski masks and holding an AK-47. They stuck it to my head



Above: NALC President Brian L. Renfroe

Below: Matt McBee

Bottom: Ryan Pierani

and all they wanted was the key,” he said. “I don’t want to see any one of my brother or sister carriers going through what I went through. It was a year ago, almost, last July, and I’m still dealing with a lot of mental PTSD.”

Cincinnati, OH Branch 43 member **Ryan Pierani** told the crowd, “I was having lunch and the guy came up and checked the side of my ProMaster and he noticed I was in there and he pulled a gun and it was in my head.”

Renfroe then told the assembled crowd about Milwaukee, WI Branch 2 letter carrier **Aundre Cross**, who was fatally shot from behind when he tried to escape from two robbers in 2022.

“We can never let this type of violence happen again,” Renfroe said.

Rep. Landsman concurred. “Our letter carriers are such a big part of our lives,” he said, “and we have to keep them safe. This bipartisan effort will do just that.”

“The rise in robberies and violent assaults being committed against letter carriers in recent years is deeply concerning and Congress must act to ensure their safety,” Rep. Fitzpatrick said. “I am proud to be leading this bipartisan effort, which provides necessary resources to protect our dedicated letter carriers while making sure we are punishing criminals to the fullest extent of the law. The men and women of the Postal Service are often the backbone of a community, and they work hard around the clock, rain

or shine, to deliver essential goods, and I will always have their back.”

Rep. Norcross, an original co-sponsor on H.R. 7629, said he thinks that this bill will have widespread support, because it is about “one of those common-sense issues.”

Renfroe called on NALC members to urge their members of Congress to become co-sponsors of H.R. 7629. The goal is to surpass 290 co-sponsors to force the bill to be considered on the House floor.

House Minority Leader Jeffries said that Congress must support the passage of this bill: “We’re going to be there with you from the very beginning until we can get this legislation over the finish line. The fact that any worker is subjected to any act of violence while doing a job on behalf of the American people is not something that we should ever tolerate in the United States of America.”

Hoyer echoed those sentiments. “This is not a partisan issue. This is about America, not Republicans and Democrats,” he said.

AFL-CIO Secretary-Treasurer Redmond vowed that labor would support NALC in this cause. “The AFL-CIO consists of 60 national unions and 14 and a half million members. And we all stand in solidarity with you because, the fact of the matter is, every worker in this country has a right to go to work, work safely, and return home to their families safely,” he said. “That’s a fundamental union principle that we all stand for.”



Regan agreed: “We’re going to make sure that we have your back.”

President Renfroe said that passing H.R. 7629 is NALC’s legislative priority. He encouraged letter carriers to contact their members of Congress, and to ask supporters within their communities to do the same. Go to nalc.org/action to learn more. **PR**

Letter carriers in Texas, Oklahoma and Florida say ‘Enough is enough’



Above: NALC President Brian L. Renfroe leads the Jacksonville rally.

Below: The rally in Oklahoma City

Bottom: The rally in Dallas



“**N**early every day, we learn of another incident of violence against a letter carrier. Targeted armed robbery, assault, shootings—and yes, even murder—have become part of our job,” NALC President Brian L. Renfroe told a crowd of NALC members, supporters and the media in Oklahoma City on Feb. 29.

The rally was one of three that NALC branches held in a span of 11 days in late February/early March to raise awareness about the increasing incidents of attacks and robberies against letter carriers. In all, there have been 13 rallies since they began in early August. The rallies occurred before the introduction of H.R. 7629, the Protect Our Letter Carriers Act. (See page 4.)

“Access to mail is their primary

target,” Renfroe said about those committing the crimes, at a rally a week earlier in Feb. 22.

Ahmaud Fleming, a Branch 132 letter carrier whose delivery route is just east of downtown Dallas, spoke at that rally. He said that being robbed at gunpoint

“caught me off guard, man. You would just think it would never happen to you. He comes over there quick with

a gun talking about ‘Give me the Arrow Key! Give me the Arrow Key!’ ”

Fleming said he took three months off after the robbery and had to get counseling to process the trauma.

“There was a time when letter carriers going through neighborhoods carrying mail were off-limits to criminals—those times have changed,” Region 10 National Business Agent Shawn Boyd told rally attendees.

Dallas Branch 132 President **Kim Lewis** said at the rally that since November, more than a half-dozen local postal workers have been targeted.

“Now you’re afraid,” she said of the outlook of her branch’s members. “All of these robberies have caused a big change in the way a letter carrier performs their duties. I’ve had several letter carriers that have been involved in these attacks that have not returned to work.”

At the Oklahoma City rally on the steps of the state capitol, **Jeremiah Grant** spoke about being robbed on his route in April 2022. A masked man came up to him and pointed a gun at him, the Branch 458 member told the rallygoers.

“He kept pulling on the chain and eventually I was able to remove my belt and he took the key,” Grant said. “He is standing behind me telling me not to look at him. I presume there was still a gun pointed at me. The next thing he told me was to give him my cell phone. I took my cell phone out of my pocket, handed it to him. The next thing I heard was the sound of my phone being thrown to the ground and getting smashed.”

After the man took off in a vehicle, Grant was left with an overwhelming fear. He said that he still feels that fear two years later.



The rally attendees march through Jacksonville to raise awareness about crimes against letter carriers.

These attacks aren't random, North Florida Branch 53 President **Jim Thigpenn** said at a March 3 rally in Jacksonville. Hundreds of branch presidents, who were in Jacksonville for a Committee of Presidents meeting, attended the march and rally.

"I mean, every single neighborhood [has been affected]; we've had situations where it happened on the Northside, and then a half hour later, it happened on the Westside in one day," he said. "This is just not tied to a certain side of town or anything like that. It's more of a targeted type of situation."

Eight letter carriers were robbed at gunpoint in Jacksonville last year, in addition to 12 smash-and-grabs. "The community needs to know we are under attack," Thigpenn said. "We are being preyed upon out on the streets."

Thigpenn told the attendees that a gun had been pulled on him while he was delivering mail in 2015. "It was by a teenager who was just showing off for a couple of friends while I was delivering on the Westside of Jacksonville. It was intimidating," he said, before adding that letter carriers shouldn't have to worry about what they will face while doing their jobs.

Unfortunately, it's a fear that letter carriers are coping with throughout the United States.

"It's unacceptable, it's appalling and it's out of control," President Renfroe said. "No workers should ever live in fear while they're doing their job. This violence against our members must stop."

He added: "We're here because this violence should come with an increase in protection, awareness and community. But instead, as is often the case, it feels like we only have one another."

The NALC president noted that, of those 2,000 cases, only 14 percent have led to an arrest and prosecution. Some prosecutions that have occurred have been at the local level, where penalties are not as severe as those available to federal prosecutors.

It takes a joint investigation among the Postal Inspection Service, the U.S. attorney general's office and local police force to hand the case to federal prosecutors. That, combined with the low number of such cases being prosecuted in the first place, reduces the deterrence to potential lawbreakers who aim to attack letter carriers.

"Do you know what message that sends to people on the street?" Renfroe asked. "Our members are left to defend themselves, because the Postal Inspection Service is not doing its job, and the Department of Justice is failing to prosecute the criminals responsible."

Renfroe called on the Inspection Service's leaders to do more: "Times have drastically changed, and methods for protecting our members while we do our job must reflect the current circumstances."

In addition to more frequent and stronger prosecutions, President Renfroe said that NALC would like to see newer technological versions of the Arrow Keys that criminals often are after.

He told rally attendees that NALC is working with members of Congress on legislation to help speed up these improvements. He vowed that NALC would make such legislation NALC's top priority in Congress.

The rallies are part of NALC's effort to get out a multifaceted message:

- to the Postal Service to better protect letter carriers on their routes;

- to locally based federal prosecutors to take these cases and apply the harsh federal penalties that local district attorneys do not have available;
- to residents to alert authorities if they see anything worrisome and to preserve evidence, such as doorbell or other surveillance videos, for use by investigators; and
- to their elected representatives to be aware of the need for solutions.

Another way NALC is getting out the message is through interviews with reporters for local and regional TV broadcasts, radio shows, newspapers and online news outlets about the surge in violence nationwide. Having the letter carrier perspective as a central element in these media reports increases community awareness of the issue and helps strengthen NALC's push for solutions. That is especially so because of the widespread public support for letter carriers, who in poll after poll have for years topped the list of the most trusted and highly regarded federal employees.

President Renfroe called on local branches to hold rallies such as these. Branch leaders are encouraged to contact their national business agents' offices for information and material to help organize a rally or for help contacting the media to amplify our message to their communities.

"Events like these make a difference and bring awareness to this growing problem," he said. "I encourage all NALC branches, especially in areas that are experiencing an uptick in crime, to mobilize and plan similar events. When we all come out with a unified message, we are heard." **PR**

Interest arbitration panel chair named



Dennis R. Nolan

NALC and the Postal Service have selected Arbitrator Dennis R. Nolan to serve as the neutral chair of a three-person interest arbitration panel to set the terms of a new national agreement between NALC and USPS. Under the law, each side will also appoint a representative to serve on the panel and represent their respective positions.

Arbitrator Nolan is a member of the American Arbitration Association's labor panel and has been a full-time labor arbitrator since 1976, serving for many years as a national arbitrator on the NALC/USPS panel. In 1985, he was selected for

membership in the National Academy of Arbitrators, and eventually served as its president in 2006.

Arbitrator Nolan served as the parties' neutral arbitrator in the interest arbitration proceedings for the 2019 National Agreement, which were near conclusion when the parties reached a negotiated settlement late in 2020.

As final preparations for interest arbitration are made, NALC and the Postal Service continue to negotiate in an attempt to reach a tentative agreement. Further updates will be provided as the collective-bargaining process moves forward. **PR**

NALC trains first Emergency Response Team

NALC held a weeklong training session for the first 29 members of the Emergency Response Team (ERT) March 3-8, as NALC prepares to launch the ERT program.

ERT members are NALC members from around the country who will help other NALC members when they're dealing with trauma. They won't act as counselors, but instead will offer peer-to-peer support with critical events, such as deaths and life-altering injuries. The hope is that they also could be used for situations involving suicide awareness, suicide prevention, mental health issues or substance abuse.

"The members of our union, if given the skills, the knowledge and the opportunity to help other members, they will do that," NALC President Brian L. Renfroe said of the initiative at the NALC rap session in November.

The training was held at the Maritime Conference Center in Linthicum Heights, MD, near Baltimore and



The attendees go through critical incident training led by the International Critical Incident Stress Foundation.

was led by Director of Safety and Health Manuel L. Peralta Jr., Assistant Secretary-Treasurer Mack Julion, Special Assistant to the President Michelle McQuality, and Assistants to the President for Administrative Affairs Chris Henwood, Tamara Twinn and Ed Morgan.

The first three days featured in-depth training by Dr. Jeffrey M. Lating of the International Critical Incident Stress Foundation (ICISF), a leader in providing training on comprehensive crisis intervention and disaster behavioral health services to emergency responders and other professions. Lating has co-ed-



ited and co-authored three books in the areas of stress and post-traumatic stress and has served as a clinical consultant and crisis-management trainer with the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) and other organizations.

Lating is “a professional who comes in and teaches a lot of skills that are necessary to deal with difficult circumstances where people are experiencing trauma,” Renfroe said.

In the ICISF training, the attendees were given tools, often described as “emotional first aid,” to assist people experiencing trauma-related mental health effects. They learned the core elements of a comprehensive, systematic and multicomponent crisis intervention curriculum both for individuals and groups. They left with the knowledge, tools, and techniques necessary to provide crisis support to groups and to recommend follow-up services. Upon completion of the three-day training, the attendees were certified by the ICISF.

In addition, the team members learned about the postal-specific resources for responding to members in crisis, including through the Employee Assistance Program (EAP), the Office of Workers’ Compensation Programs (OWCP), the Mutual Benefit Association, the Federal Employees’ Group Life Insurance, the Federal Employees Retirement System and some of the health plans in the Federal Employees Health Benefits program.

They also were made aware of NALC’s plans for the administration of the ERT, how incidents will be reported, and the decision on whom to deploy and to where.

Though ERT members are prepared to help with crisis situations and follow-ups, they do not file grievances,

investigate accidents, or represent members with OWCP.

“The first phase after we train them, is that we will utilize them to go help our members in response to what we would call ‘critical incidents,’” Renfroe said. “The type of things that happen around the country that cause grief, that cause trauma on workroom floors and even outside workroom floors. The type of thing that the Postal Service sends the EAP folks to respond to now.”

At the rap session, the president said that the then-recent mass shooting in Lewiston, ME, where an NALC member was killed, would be the kind of situation that NALC’s ERT could be called upon to assist with. He said he hoped that peer-to-peer support can be the gateway to getting members who deal with trauma the help that they need.

“This is something that is going to be really beneficial to all of our members,” Renfroe said. **PR**

The ERT training attendees and facilitators



In addition to critical incident training, the team members learned about postal-specific resources for responding to letter carriers in crisis.

Carriers ask for understanding about autism



Jeff Maure

April is Autism Awareness Month, a time for people to better understand the disorder and how it can affect them or people they may encounter. Several letter carriers share their experiences of living with autism or with a loved one who does.

Autism spectrum disorder (ASD) denotes a wide range of conditions including difficulty with social skills, as well as repetitive behaviors and speech. As a spectrum disorder, the effect it has on people can differ sharply from person to person, according to Autism Speaks—an organization that advocates for enhanced services, inclusion, resources and support for the autism community. Once considered a severe disability, it's now understood as a condition that many people living typical lives may have, including letter carriers.

The causes of autism aren't fully known, but scientists believe that there is a genetic component to it, with a growing area of research focusing on the interaction of genetic and environmental factors, according to the National Institute of Environmental Health Sciences. (No link has been found between autism and vaccines.)

Jeff Maure, a Mishawaka, IN Branch 820 carrier, said that being a letter carrier is a great career for him because his autism makes him very organized and efficient at his job. He has been a letter carrier for 28 years.

Maure said that when he was tested for autism, they also tested his processing speed and found that he processed information 90 percent faster than the average person. He said that this helps him with reading letters quickly. On the other hand, his fast process-

ing speed can complicate things when people are speaking to him.

"Sometimes it gets me in trouble because I'll be too fast," said Maure. "[My wife will] explain something to me and I've already processed it and moved on."

For most of Maure's life, he didn't know he was on the autism spectrum. It was only a year and a half ago that he was diagnosed. When he found out, he said he wasn't surprised because, "I've always known I was a little different." As far as the autism spectrum goes, Maure said he has Asperger's syndrome, a form of "high-functioning" autism.

He likes having his routine on his route. Every day he likes to get to a certain spot by a certain time and if he doesn't get there on time, he feels anxious.

"I've got certain time points," said Maure. "I've got to be at this place at a certain time. I hate being behind; I hate being behind schedule."

Maure said that because of autism he does struggle with social skills.

"I'd say one of the negative things about it is I've always been kind of socially awkward," said Maure.

For people who don't know much about autism, Maure said that "the main thing is to be understanding." That includes, he said, just asking if you don't understand something. For example, Maure organizes his truck in a certain way that makes sense to him, but that's different from how many of his co-workers organize their trucks. He positions all of his letters with the address side facing up so he can see the addresses, whereas many carriers do the opposite, he said.

“A lot of people think it’s weird, but I just do it because that’s what makes sense,” said Maure. “If you ask me a question, I’m more than happy to explain, but you’ve kind of got to get me started a little bit.”

Despite feeling as though he can be socially awkward at times, Maure ran for vice president of his branch and won, serving in the role for the past two years. This year he became branch president.

Michael Hynes, a Buffalo-Western New York Branch 3 carrier, has been a letter carrier for 10 years and says that being a letter carrier is “one of the best jobs that I’ve ever had.”

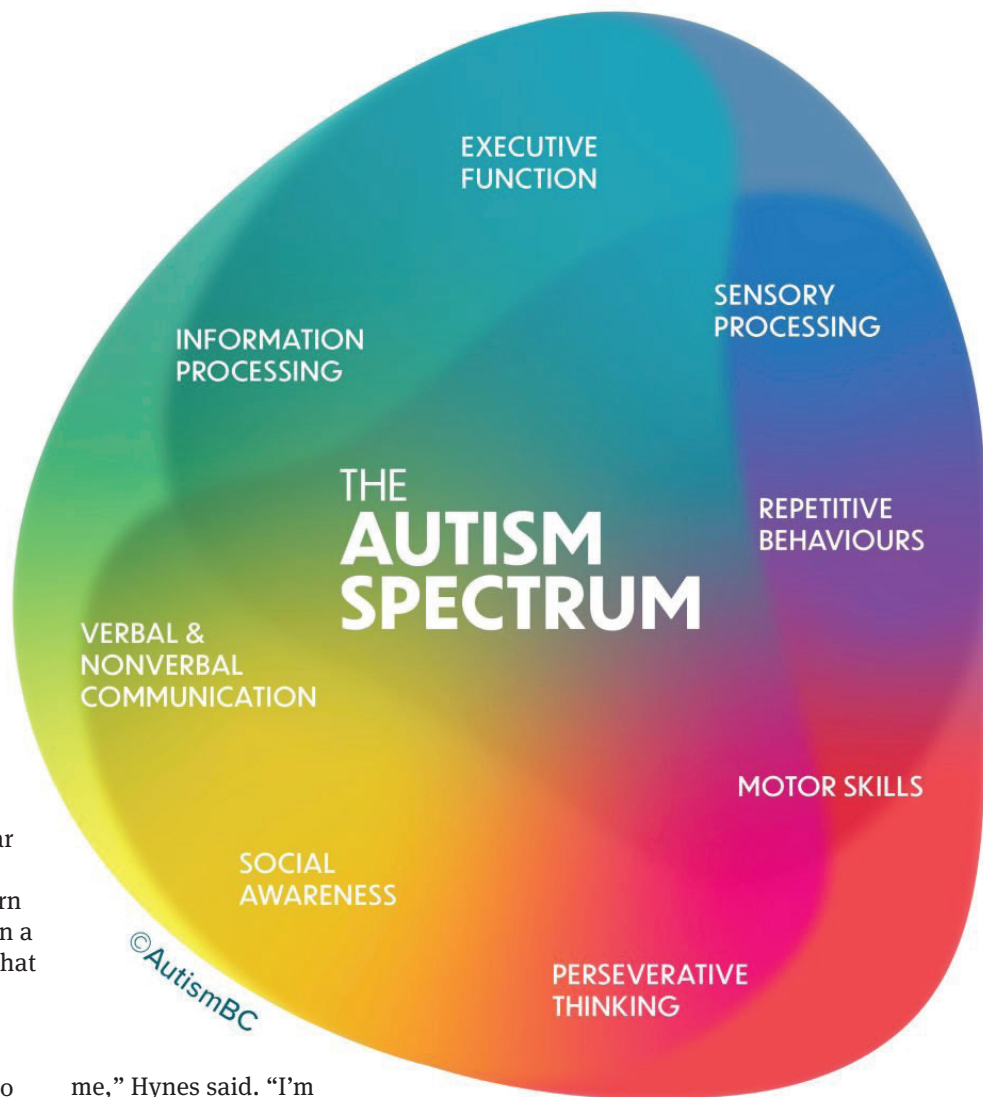
Hynes said that not only does he have a slight form of autism, he also has attention-deficit hyperactivity disorder (ADHD). This is common, with a majority—50 to 70 percent—of those on the autism spectrum having both ADHD and autism, according to the National Institutes of Health.

“Somehow I’ve been able to manage, to be able to control it. And this job keeps me focused and it helps me, keeps me on tasks,” Hynes said, but added, “Some days are harder than others.”

He likes to keep himself organized so that everyone gets their mail on time and, of course, at the correct house. For residences that have five to 10 parcels or more, he gives them their own separate bucket in his truck.

In contrast with Maure, Hynes said that what he excels at and likes most about the job is having interactions with others.

“I deliver in the town that I grew up in, so there’s a lot of people that know



me,” Hynes said. “I’m out and about and it’s just the interactions I feel. It’s very good for me.”

He said during the COVID-19 pandemic it was hard for him not to be able to see people during lockdowns, so seeing his customers out in the neighborhoods really kept him going.

Hynes echoed Maure’s opinion that people should ask those with autism why they do things a certain way.

“If they have questions, they should ask,” said Hynes. “I feel that that that they shouldn’t discredit people. Give them a chance to do it and you’d be surprised.”

Taylor Chandler, a six-year carrier from Grand Rapids, MI Branch 56, has a 10-year-old son named Quentin who has autism that doctors labeled as “high-functioning.” He was diagnosed when he was 5 years old.

Understanding autism (cont.)

Chandler said that his son struggles with becoming overstimulated, often from excess noise or wearing fabrics that he deems uncomfortable. Quentin often takes things literally, so he doesn't always understand expressions and sarcasm.

When he became overstimulated at school, he'd often run home and hide in their garage. Ultimately, the Chandlers switched to homeschooling.

Chandler said that he and his wife have to let him "info dump," which is what they call it when Quentin needs to talk about everything he wants to say at once. After he starts slowing down and calms down a bit, they are able to start asking him questions.

Instead of asking him direct questions, which could be considered confrontational, Chandler and his wife take a more indirect approach to asking their son questions. They ask in a more relaxed format, like, "Hey, I was just wondering, how are you?"

Chandler said that if a letter carrier was to see his son or another person with autism in distress, it might be best to keep an eye on them and alert local authorities. Quentin can go into "fight or flight" mode when overstimulated, so the carrier said that having people unfamiliar around him could further upset him.

Chandler wants people to know that it's important to be understanding of people who have autism.

"It doesn't necessarily always look the same, even between autistic people," he said. "Being understanding and not treating them differently, that's what my son is very big on. He



doesn't want to be treated differently [just] because his mind works differently. 'I want to be treated the same because I'm normal to me. So, when you treat me like I'm not normal, then I feel bad about myself.' "

Although there are problems that Quentin faces when it comes to autism, Chandler said that his son excels at other things, such as visualizing and recreating concepts and images. Quentin does this by drawing and creating things with Lego bricks.

"He's really good at remembering the detail of something, even if he just barely saw it," Chandler said.

"April may be Autism Awareness Month, but it's best for all of us to always be aware and understanding of what those with autism are dealing with," NALC President Brian L. Renfroe said. "As letter carriers, we never know when we might come into contact with customers or other letter carriers who have autism." **PR**

Workers Memorial Day a reminder to fight for workers' rights and safety

On Workers Memorial Day, Friday, April 28, the world will remember workers who have been killed or injured on the job. This year's commemoration marks the 52nd anniversary of the enactment of the Occupational Safety and Health Act. Signed by President Richard Nixon on Dec. 29, 1970, this law made employers responsible for providing safe and healthy workplaces for their employees. Workers Memorial Day is held on April 28 in observance of the day that the Act took effect in 1971 and that the Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA), an agency established by the new law, opened its doors.

The day is a time to mourn and reflect, of course, but also to renew our call for safety in the workplace.

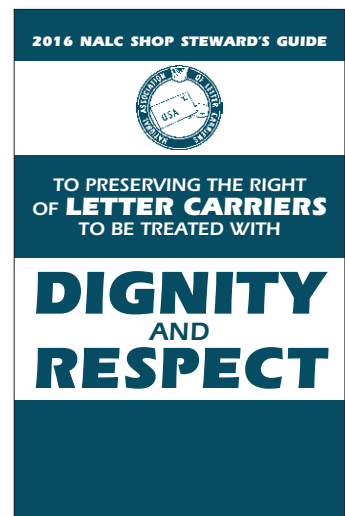
One way to ensure that letter carriers remain safe on the job is to uphold our right to be treated with dignity and respect. NALC works to highlight management's obligation and both parties' intent to ensure a working environment free from physical dangers, threats, intimidation, harassment and violence.

The NALC Shop Steward's Guide to Preserving the Right of Letter Carriers to be Treated with Dignity and Respect brings together tools, documents and guidance on these matters. The booklet is available to all members at nalc.org through the Members Only portal.

The guidebook contains the Joint Statement on Violence and Behavior in the Workplace (M-01242), with guidance on the pertinent sections to cite for various violations. The guide addresses how to document significant events on the workroom floor that may later be used to support

grievances. It also walks stewards through the five key elements required to handle grievances successfully. It is a valuable resource for branch representatives who need to deal with any number of workplace situations.

"Unfortunately, there are too many instances of mistreatment of letter carriers," NALC President Brian L. Renfroe said. "It was the parties' intent that all postal employees be able to work in a safe environment where they would receive the respect they deserve. We created this booklet to give NALC representatives guidance on using the tools available to address any mistreatment." **PR**



Proud to Serve is a semi-regular compilation of heroic stories about letter carriers in their communities. If you know about a hero in your branch, contact us as soon as possible at 202-662-2420 or at postalrecord@nalc.org. We'll follow up with you to obtain news clippings, photos or other information.

Honoring heroic carriers



Mitchell Dettman

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

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

15-foot-high trash fire put out by letter carrier

As Fort Dodge, IA Branch 645 member **Mitchell Dettman** was walking his route in Sac City, IA, one early summer day in 2022, he turned a corner and smelled smoke. The 18-year carrier spotted flames shooting 15 feet up from a trash can. The can was only about 5 inches from a single-family home, the siding was starting to bubble, and Dettman was concerned.

"The house is just about ready to start on fire," Dettman said. "All I could think of was the two little girls that were living in that house."

He knocked on the side door and the mother answered. He told her that their home was in danger of catching fire, and the family quickly escaped through the front door.

In the meantime, Dettman noticed a hose lying on the ground, so he turned it on and was able to extinguish the flames. Once the fire was out, Dettman grabbed the garbage can and threw it to the side to ensure that if anything ignited again, it would be away from the home.

"The family just said 'thank you' and they were going to take care of it [the

trash can on the ground]," said Dettman. "So, I proceeded to just go ahead and deliver my route."

Carrier recognizes stroke signs

Linda King, a 25-year Great Falls, MT Branch 650 carrier, handed an elderly woman on her route the mail every day, but one day in the summer of 2022 the customer wasn't her usual self.

"She was one of my customers that I always checked on anyway," King said. "Every day I would make sure she would answer the door."

When the woman opened the door to her townhouse and walked outside to receive her mail, the carrier noticed that she was slurring her words, was mumbling and was difficult to understand.

King called an ambulance and waited with the woman until it arrived. Friendly neighbors gathered and sat on the steps of the house with the woman. Once emergency responders arrived and King knew that her customer was in good hands, she returned to her route.

The woman was treated in the hospital for a stroke, and King visited her that same night. She made a speedy recovery, and King said that by that night "she was back to normal." She was out of the hospital within a couple of days and returned to her home, where she continued to answer the door every day for King.

King had noticed similar stroke-like symptoms in her customer in 2019 and gotten help for her, the woman's daughter wrote to the local post office in 2019. "I would like to recognize Linda King, my mother's mail carrier, for her lifesaving deeds," she wrote. "Had

Linda King with
the customer
she helped



it not been for Linda’s quick thinking and attention to detail, my mom would have suffered dire consequences from having a stroke.”

Two carriers quell Wawa mulch fire

One hot summer day in 2023, **Christine Cellasio** and **Shanna Cesare**—both Clementon, NJ Branch 4623 carriers who deliver in Pine Hills—ate their lunches side by side in their trucks near a Wawa, a convenience store, as they often did.

As they did, 20-year carrier Cellasio glanced at her sideview mirror and noticed smoke coming from behind her truck. Cesare, a 19-year letter carrier, said she was initially alarmed when Cellasio pointed it out because she thought the truck might have been on fire.

“Me and my co-worker, who’s also one of my best friends, we just jumped out of our trucks,” Cellasio said—and they realized that the mulch behind her truck was on fire. “We grabbed all of our water bottles that we had, and we just started pouring.”

Despite their attempts to put out the 2-foot area that was on fire, the fire continuously reignited. They went inside the store and alerted the manager, who used a pitcher of water to completely extinguish the fire.

“Thank goodness these two were there to jump into action so quickly,” Branch 4623 President **Joseph Walder Jr.** wrote to *The Postal Record*.

Letter carrier helps elderly man from fall

San Francisco, CA Branch 214 member **Jeffrey Moore** was putting mail into a rack box one mild day in

Mill Valley when he saw a woman he recognized. She asked him, “Hey, could you please help me? My husband has fallen over,” Moore said.

The 39-year carrier followed the woman to where her husband, who was in his 90s, had fallen and injured himself, about 100 feet away. Moore said the man “was laying on the ground with a big gash in his forehead.”

Moore picked him up from his arm-pits and lifted him onto the curb that he had fallen off, so he could sit while Moore was getting help.

The man’s house happened to be only three city blocks from the fire station, so Moore got in his truck and drove 30 seconds to the fire station, where he banged on the door. Receiving no response, he drove back to where the man was sitting on the curb with his wife. He called 911 and emergency services quickly arrived. Once the customer was in good hands with EMTs, Moore continued delivering his route. **PR**



Jeffrey Moore

How your branch can help



How MDA can help your branch

It's been more than 70 years since NALC stepped up to make the Muscular Dystrophy Association (MDA) the union's official charity and to become one of MDA's most-committed fundraisers. Commitment to MDA has grown each year, because letter carriers constantly dream up new ways to support the charity.

"Letter carriers have always been there for MDA, year after year," NALC President Brian L. Renfroe said. "Through thick and thin, we keep supporting our union's official charity. Our goal is always to do a little better each year."

Our union has led the way for MDA fundraising since the charity was founded in 1950. That year, letter carriers raised money for the new group on the local level. Only two years later, NALC adopted MDA as its official charity and became its first national

sponsor. Branches nationwide took their commitment to MDA into their communities.

Since then, NALC branches have stepped up with fundraising events that grew our fundraising totals to millions of dollars. They hold bowlathons. They run golf and poker tournaments. They sponsor fill-the-satchel drives. And they put on, or participate in, many similar social or sporting events and contests to encourage both letter carriers and the people in their communities to support MDA.

The pandemic forced the cancellation of many of these traditional events, but branches shifted rapidly to online appeals, with the help of internet tools NALC created to make it as easy as possible. Though COVID-19 is no longer curtailing live events, many branches continue to use the online tools to complement their efforts.

“The online fundraising tools we set up during the pandemic are now a permanent part of NALC’s MDA fundraising tool kit,” Assistant to the President for Community Services Christina Vela Davidson said. “They can help to supplement in-person events or help make them more successful by getting the word out to a wider audience.”

Letter carriers’ efforts to support MDA help children and adults with neuromuscular diseases, as well as their families, who depend on MDA for medical research and support. Every year, NALC recognizes the top fundraising branches. On pages 19-20, you’ll find the MDA Honor Roll, listing branches that collected the most donations for MDA in 2023, along with the list of what each contributing branch brought in.

Help from MDA— New people and new tools

MDA is constantly improving the ways it supports our fundraising efforts. Beginning this year, MDA’s new account director for organizational partnerships, Tawny Saunders, will assist every branch in the country, replacing a system of regional assistants.

“I am excited to be the director working with NALC branches across the United States,” Saunders said.

MDA’s new structure will streamline the support branches get for fundraising, volunteering at summer camps and anything else MDA-related. “It’s just one contact,” Saunders said, “and it’s easy for them whenever they have any questions at all—just contact me.”

The change in organization, she added, “allows more money raised to go toward our mission and our families.”

MDA offers many ways to handle the event details for branches so that letter carriers can focus more on the

fundraising, Saunders said, and those efforts are expanding.

Branches can get help from fundraising websites that track donations. Many branches already use these for their donation drives, but the sites can also track donations from in-person events. MDA can even set up web pages for specific events, Saunders said.

“So, if you have a bowling tournament, golf tournament or cornhole tournament, a branch can use it and they can set it up themselves, or we can. For some who maybe aren’t really tech savvy or not comfortable, they can reach out to us and we can set it up for them,” she said. “They can track RSVPs, they can take registrations, they can take payments for a foursome or a cornhole team or whatever it may be.”

MDA can help with fundraising details as well, from tax information to assisting with donation letters to offering an MDA-branded template for publicity materials. The popular shamrock summer camp and holiday pinups that donors can buy and display their names on a wall also are available.

If there is a person with a neuromuscular disease living near the branch, Saunders can sometimes arrange for them and their family to attend a large event as an ambassador to represent the people whose lives MDA affects.

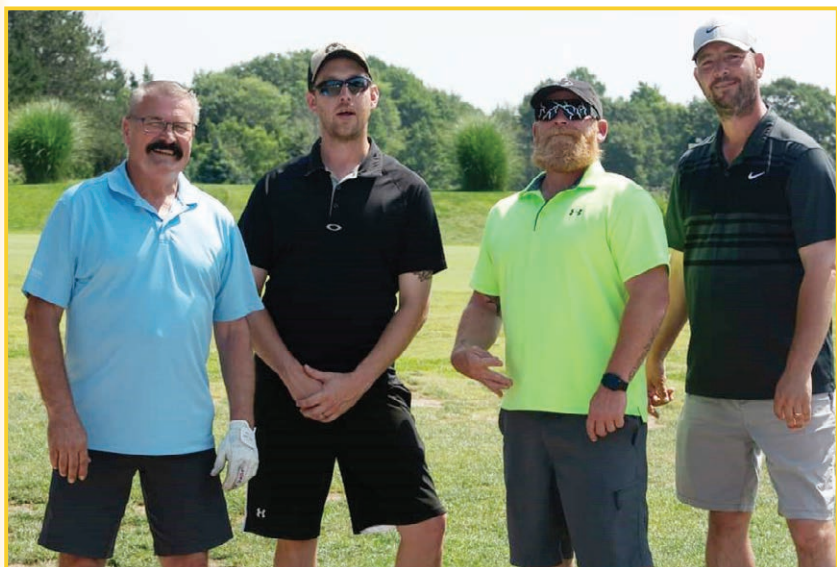
And MDA has additional exciting plans, such as an incentive program for branches that will recognize their efforts directly, and additional publicity materials that are tailored to specific kinds of events.

Saunders said that she can attend branch meetings remotely around the country to explain more, or provide videos that lay out MDA’s mission and how donations go to good use.

“I will be traveling to the NALC convention in Boston this summer,” she



MDA’s Tawny Saunders



Erie, PA Branch 284's golf tournament

“The first year, the golf tournament got \$10,000,” branch President **Mark Murphy** said. As the branch’s only big event, the tournament gets lots of attention from carriers, who spend their days off canvassing businesses to sponsor holes and to publicize the event. In 2023, the tournament helped put Erie at the top of the Honor Roll for branches of its size, with \$14,235,34 raised.

With the help of letter carrier volunteers, the golfers enjoy food and drinks right on the green. At the 18th hole, participants enjoy a steak dinner in a tent. “Everyone did something,” Murphy said. “Everyone enjoyed mixing it up and doing different things.”

The event is part of the branch’s efforts to include more carriers in MDA fundraising and to grow the efforts even more.

“We’re getting a lot of younger carriers involved,” he said. “We have to pass that torch. We always want to do more and more each year.”

As MDA coordinator for Fort Wayne, IN Branch 116, **Tim Houx** dreamed up an event that relied on a contact who handles group sales for the Indianapolis Colts of the National Football League. At each home game, the Colts display a huge American flag, nearly the size of the football field, during the singing of the national anthem. About 140 letter carriers and other supporters bought tickets for a game that included a donation to MDA, and in return, they were invited on to the field before the kickoff.

“They offered us to get down on the field and hold the flag for the national anthem, which is a really awesome experience because a lot of our members are veterans as well, so it’s a

added, “and look forward to meeting some of you in person.”

Branch MDA coordinators can reach Saunders at 312-392-1100 or nalc@mdausa.org.

Branch fundraising— New ideas and old standbys

Whatever tools they use, the top branches had varying approaches to their success last year. Some branches spread their efforts out through several events and opportunities to raise money throughout the year; others, especially small branches, went all-in with one big event.

Aside from raffles and donation appeals at its branch meetings and other events, Erie, PA Branch 284 brings in most of its proceeds for MDA from a single annual event, its golf tournament. The branch’s first tournament was in 2022, replacing a yearly bowlathon.

win-win,” Houx said. “We can represent our veterans, we can take care of MDA, and we can all get together and build some solidarity with our brothers and sisters.”

The event raised more than \$2,000 for MDA, he said. When it came to organizing the event, the team did the hard part.

“The Colts actually put a website together for us to help sell tickets, and then [a] portion of the ticket sales went to MDA, and that’s how we were able to raise the \$2,000,” Houx said. “I couldn’t have done it without the Colts’ help.” The branch sold tickets to carriers throughout Region 6 (Kentucky, Indiana and Michigan).

Houx plans to put on the flag event again next football season, and he hopes to add a social event for the participants at the game.

Sometimes all it takes is a new take on a classic idea to make things fun. Instead of just a dance, why not have a “sundresses and cigars” dance?

That’s what Birmingham, AL Branch 530 did last July. More than 200 participants showed up for the simple, yet fun, event at the union hall.

“We raised \$3,536 to send kids to MDA camp,” Branch President **Antonia Shields** said.

All for one cause

MDA uses the funds we raise to support medical research on dozens of neuromuscular diseases to develop medications and treatments that ease symptoms, some of which might extend life spans. For instance, most children with Duchenne muscular dystrophy, the most common and severe type of the disease, once died in their teens. Today, there are adults in their 40s living with Duchenne.

The charity also focuses on supporting children and adults with neuromuscular disease, and their families,

by improving their quality of life. One way it provides this support is by sponsoring summer camps for children. At these adaptive camps, children participate in traditional summer camp

Fort Wayne, IN Branch 116 teamed up with the Indianapolis Colts to raise money





Birmingham, AL Branch 530 held a “sundresses and cigars” dance



events, including swimming, arts and crafts, sports and games. Letter carriers not only help fund these camps—some carriers volunteer their time to work directly with the children.

As with many fundraising events, COVID-19 prompted MDA to move to online-only summer camps for a few years—and then to keep them when the in-person camps returned—so that as many children as possible would have access to the activities.

MDA is the nation’s largest nonprofit supporter of research on neuromuscular diseases, funding hundreds of physicians and scientists in the struggle to free children, and the families who love them, from the harm caused by muscular dystrophy and by more than 40 related muscle-debilitating diseases, including amyotrophic lateral sclerosis (ALS). MDA’s efforts have contributed to numerous major advances in muscle biology and therapy development.

MDA has been involved in research into basic muscle and nerve biology since its inception, when little was known about how muscles were formed or how they functioned. Since then, thousands of published scientific papers have explained how the tissues work and what goes wrong in neuromuscular diseases, building a knowledge base for finding treatments. MDA funding supported the research that led to the identification of the genetic causes of dozens of diseases, starting with the discovery of the dystrophin gene in 1986. This research is paying dividends as new medications and therapies are being developed.

MDA Honor Roll

To recognize the efforts of NALC branches in supporting MDA’s mission each year, *The Postal Record* publishes the MDA fundraising results of every branch from the previous year, as reported to us by MDA. The branches listed on the following pages have helped to fulfill the shared vision of support for NALC’s official charity.

The combined efforts of letter carriers who organized and participated in online and in-person events resulted in a grand total of \$1,129,806.80 raised for MDA in 2023. This the first annual total to exceed \$1 million since before the COVID-19 pandemic.

If your branch didn’t participate in the fundraising drive for MDA last year, perhaps it is time to contact your branch leadership and volunteer as an MDA coordinator or event volunteer. If your branch raised funds last year but you do not see your branch’s donations listed or if the amount is inaccurate, please contact NALC Assistant to the President for Community Services Davidson at mda@nalc.org or 202-662-2489 as soon as possible. Davidson also can provide trinkets or other assistance for fundraising events.

“There’s no limit to how letter carriers can support MDA,” President Renfroe said. “Anyone can volunteer; anyone can help to organize events; anyone can participate. There’s nothing we can’t do for MDA when we all work together. Our union is proud of what we’ve accomplished to make the lives of people affected by neuromuscular diseases better, and we’re only getting started. Let’s work hard and make 2024 another memorable year!” **PR**

2023 MDA Honor Roll

Category 1 (2,000+ members)

New Jersey Mgd. Br. 38	\$54,955.47
New York, NY Br. 36	\$22,843.00
Chicago, IL Br. 11	\$22,421.53

Category 2 (1,500-1,999)

St. Louis, MO Br. 343	\$26,250.00
Sacramento, CA Br. 133	\$14,991.03
Portland, OR Br. 82	\$14,785.00

Category 3 (1,000-1,499)

West Coast FL Br. 1477	\$16,000.00
Royal Oak, MI Br. 3126	\$15,599.83
Arizona Mgd. Br. 1902	\$14,653.23

Category 4 (700-999)

Northeastern NY Br. 358	\$18,711.00
Colorado Springs, CO Br. 204	\$13,623.00
Youngstown, OH Br. 385	\$11,925.00

Category 5 (500-699)

Stockton, CA Br. 213	\$13,253.00
Grand Rapids, MI Br. 56	\$11,700.00
Mid-Michigan Br. 256	\$10,010.00

Category 6 (350-499)

Erie, PA Br. 284	\$14,235.34
Central CA Coast Br. 52	\$9,608.59
Camden, NJ Mgd. Br. 540	\$8,844.00

Category 7 (200-349)

South Central IN Br. 828	\$20,850.00
Mansfield, OH Br. 118	\$18,107.00
Naples, FL Br. 4716	\$13,519.59

Category 8 (100-199)

Greeley, CO Br. 324	\$8,656.83
Zanesville, OH Br. 63	\$7,990.00
Westfield, NJ Br. 1492	\$5,800.00

Category 9 (50-99)

Manitowoc, WI Br. 490	\$12,130.00
Albany, OR Br. 959	\$5,401.77
Jefferson City, MO Br. 127	\$3,148.00

Category 10 (1-49)

Sheridan, WY Br. 1006	\$2,599.00
Los Alamos, NM Br. 4112	\$1,000.00
Waianae, HI Br. 5579	\$1,000.00
Roxboro, NC Br. 4122	\$500.00
Moses Lake, WA Br. 4573	\$500.00
Boone, IA Br. 611	\$500.00

Alabama

Anniston Br. 448	\$273.00
Huntsville Br. 462	\$10,846.28
Mobile Br. 469	\$1,551.25
Birmingham Br. 530	\$3,886.00
Florence Br. 892	\$1,200.00
Tuscaloosa Br. 1096	\$770.00
Dothan Br. 1630	\$2,000.00

Arizona

Phoenix Br. 576	\$1,772.35
Arizona Mgd. Br. 1902	\$14,653.23
Sun City Br. 6156	\$1,373.50

Arkansas

Fort Smith Br. 399	\$750.00
Hot Spgs. Natl. Park Br. 543	\$550.00

California

Los Angeles Br. 24	\$10,000.00
Central CA Coast Br. 52	\$9,608.59
San Diego Br. 70	\$15,581.00
Sacramento Br. 133	\$14,991.03
San Jose Br. 193	\$540.00
Stockton Br. 213	\$13,253.00
San Francisco Br. 214	\$125.00
Central CA Br. 231	\$607.50
San Bernardino Br. 411	\$479.05
Bakersfield Br. 782	\$3,000.00
Garden Grove Br. 1100	\$18,630.06
Greater East Bay Br. 1111	\$7,516.36
Santa Clara Br. 1427	\$2,530.00
Hayward Br. 1707	\$1,744.00
Burbank Br. 2086	\$1,380.00
Pasadena Br. 2200	\$1,550.00
Van Nuys Br. 2462	\$3,234.00
Escondido Br. 2525	\$1,000.00

Colorado

Denver Br. 47	\$5,223.68
Colorado Springs Br. 204	\$13,623.00
Greeley Br. 324	\$8,656.83
Fort Collins Br. 849	\$1,830.00
Arvada Br. 4405	\$690.00
Centennial Br. 5996	\$395.00

Connecticut

New Haven Br. 19	\$4,735.89
Connecticut Mgd. Br. 20	\$7,090.00
Stamford Br. 60	\$8,010.00

Hartford Br. 86	\$7,340.18
Norwalk Br. 147	\$730.00

Delaware

Wilmington Br. 191	\$502.00
Newark Br. 1977	\$1,200.00

District of Columbia

Washington Br. 142	\$6,000.00
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Florida

North FL Br. 53	\$3,940.77
South FL Br. 1071	\$12,457.00
Central FL Br. 1091	\$2,641.10
West Coast FL Br. 1477	\$16,000.00
West Palm Beach Br. 1690	\$6,852.03
Bradenton Br. 1753	\$865.00
Clearwater Br. 2008	\$7,800.00
Fort Myers Br. 2072	\$95.00
Deland Br. 2591	\$652.00
Emerald Coast Br. 4559	\$700.00
Naples Br. 4716	\$13,519.59

Georgia

Macon Br. 270	\$500.00
Columbus Br. 546	\$3,500.00
Savannah Br. 578	\$320.00
Marietta Br. 1119	\$2,050.00
Decatur Br. 2225	\$437.25
Roswell Br. 4862	\$1,000.00

Hawaii

Honolulu Br. 860	\$50.00
Aiea-Pearl City Br. 4682	\$1,250.00
Waianae Br. 5579	\$1,000.00

Idaho

Coeur d'Alene Br. 1260	\$1,193.25
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Illinois

Chicago Br. 11	\$22,421.53
Peoria Br. 31	\$1,395.00
Springfield Br. 80	\$1,640.00
Aurora Br. 219	\$3,170.00
Rockford Br. 245	\$4,727.00
Rock Island Br. 292	\$205.00
Joliet Br. 305	\$980.00
Alton Br. 309	\$20.00
Ottawa Br. 316	\$100.00
Decatur Br. 317	\$1,680.00
Bloomington Br. 522	\$424.00

De Kalb Br. 706	\$500.00
Oak Brook Br. 825	\$19,124.50
Granite City Br. 1132	\$313.00
Downers Grove Br. 1870	\$1,655.00
Des Plaines Br. 2076	\$208.00
Glenview Br. 4007	\$5.00
South Suburban Mgd. Br. 4016	\$10,007.50

Indiana

Indianapolis Br. 39	\$500.00
Fort Wayne Br. 116	\$7,166.50
Logansport Br. 323	\$150.00
South Bend Br. 330	\$1,250.00
Marion Br. 378	\$447.00
Lafayette Br. 466	\$3,000.00
Anderson Br. 489	\$3,819.00
Hammond Br. 580	\$2,052.00
Valparaiso Br. 753	\$185.00
S. Central IN Br. 828	\$20,850.00
Carmel Br. 888	\$20.00
Whiting Br. 1689	\$100.00

Iowa

Sioux City Br. 69	\$1,825.00
Council Bluffs Br. 314	\$557.00
Central IA Mgd. Br. 352	\$377.00
Davenport Br. 506	\$200.00
Boone Br. 611	\$500.00

Kansas

Topeka Br. 10	\$430.00
Lawrence Br. 104	\$2,477.95
Wichita Br. 201	\$450.00

Kentucky

Louisville Br. 14	\$9,434.02
Lexington Br. 361	\$972.97

Louisiana

Baton Rouge Br. 129	\$2,985.00
Shreveport Br. 197	\$1,630.00
Lake Charles Br. 914	\$9,000.00
Houma-Thibodaux-Lockport Br. 2464	\$1,830.00

Maine

ME Mgd. Br. 92	\$1,080.00
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Maryland

Baltimore Br. 176	\$1,630.00
Hagerstown Br. 443	\$1,000.00

2023 MDA Honor Roll

Massachusetts

Lynn Br. 7	\$1,458.00
Worcester Br. 12	\$1,424.00
Southeast MA Br. 18	\$4,936.79
Boston Br. 34	\$8,743.00
Western MA Br. 146	\$7,569.29
Fall River Br. 51	\$3,782.00
Dedham Br. 764	\$87.00

Michigan

Detroit Br. 1	\$5,420.00
Muskegon Br. 13	\$5,879.29
Grand Rapids Br. 56	\$11,700.00
Saginaw Br. 74	\$8,920.00
Lansing Br. 122	\$7,215.00
Southwest MI Br. 246	\$1,502.00
Mid-Michigan Br. 256	\$10,010.00
Battle Creek Br. 262	\$550.00
North Oakland Co. Br. 320	\$1,685.00
Ann Arbor Br. 434	\$1,109.00
Port Huron Br. 529	\$504.25
Adrian Br. 579	\$450.00
Holland Br. 601	\$130.00
Mount Clemens Br. 654	\$6,225.00
Western Wayne Co. Br. 2184	\$1,978.00
Midland Br. 2317	\$3,549.03
Royal Oak Br. 3126	\$15,599.83
South Macomb Br. 4374	\$2,702.00

Minnesota

Minneapolis Br. 9	\$4,136.00
St. Paul Br. 28	\$10.00
Rochester Br. 440	\$1,811.63
Hopkins Br. 2942	\$1,044.25

Mississippi

Hattiesburg Br. 938	\$2,875.00
Greenwood Br. 1080	\$1,500.00
Clarksdale Br. 1195	\$65.00
Gulf Coast Mgd. Br. 1374	\$1,000.00
Ocean Springs Br. 3827	\$200.00

Missouri

Kansas City Br. 30	\$100.00
Jefferson City Br. 127	\$3,148.00
St. Joseph, Missouri Br. 195	\$40.00
Springfield Br. 203	\$3,910.00
St. Louis Br. 343	\$26,250.00
Hazelwood Br. 5847	\$816.00

Nebraska

Omaha Br. 5	\$4,591.25
Lincoln Br. 8	\$4,000.00
Kearney Br. 312	\$400.00
N. Platte Br. 1258	\$100.00

Nevada

Las Vegas Br. 2502	\$2,012.00
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New Hampshire

NH Mgd. Br. 44	\$3,756.00
Nashua Br. 230	\$5,000.00

New Jersey

NJ Mgd. Br. 38	\$54,955.47
Elizabeth Br. 67	\$400.00
Montclair Br. 342	\$1,500.00
Trenton Br. 380	\$800.00
Garden State Mgd. Br. 444	\$1,345.00
Camden Mgd. Br. 540	\$8,844.00
Somerville Br. 768	\$500.00
Cherry Hill/Haddonfield Br. 769	\$4,129.00
South Jersey Br. 908	\$2,115.00
Freehold Br. 924	\$1,711.35
Westfield Br. 1492	\$5,800.00

New Mexico

Albuquerque Br. 504	\$3,604.00
Los Alamos Br. 4112	\$1,000.00

New York

Buffalo-Western NY Br. 3	\$5,443.22
Elmira Br. 21	\$1,455.00
Albany Br. 29	\$1,000.00
New York Br. 36	\$22,843.00
Brooklyn Br. 41	\$15,000.00
Syracuse Br. 134	\$8,305.00
Hudson Valley Mgd. Br. 137	\$3,050.00
Rochester Br. 210	\$8,047.00
Flushing Br. 294	\$5,098.00
Thousand Islands Br. 302	\$1,720.00
Binghamton Br. 333	\$5,185.00
Long Island City Br. 357	\$1,600.00
Northeastern NY Br. 358	\$18,711.00
Yonkers Br. 387	\$4,875.00
Westchester Mgd. Br. 693	\$1,013.00
Valley Stream Br. 2189	\$500.00
New City Br. 5229	\$385.00
Long Island Mgd. Br. 6000	\$12,630.00

North Carolina

Asheville Br. 248	\$282.00
Raleigh Br. 459	\$150.00
Winston-Salem Br. 461	\$1,125.00
Wilmington Br. 464	\$1,000.00
Charlotte Br. 545	\$1,096.00
Greensboro Br. 630	\$158.00
Hickory Br. 1250	\$1,100.00
Gastonia Br. 1512	\$522.00
Burlington Br. 2262	\$614.00
Jacksonville Br. 3984	\$1,999.00
Roxboro Br. 4122	\$500.00

North Dakota

Fargo-West Fargo Br. 205	\$333.00
Grand Forks Br. 517	\$1,500.00
Bismarck Br. 957	\$3,144.00

Ohio

Cincinnati Br. 43	\$25.00
Zanesville Br. 63	\$7,990.00
Columbus Br. 78	\$8,914.50
Toledo Br. 100	\$13,201.00
Mansfield Br. 118	\$18,107.00
Akron Br. 148	\$1,040.00
Elyria Br. 196	\$2,500.00
Youngstown Br. 385	\$11,925.00
Hamilton Br. 426	\$308.00

Oklahoma

Oklahoma City Br. 458	\$2,179.00
Enid Br. 858	\$500.00
Tulsa Br. 1358	\$1,793.00
Norman Br. 1491	\$957.00

Oregon

Portland Br. 82	\$14,785.00
Salem Br. 347	\$3,570.00
Albany Br. 959	\$5,401.77
Medford Br. 1433	\$637.00

Pennsylvania

Scranton Br. 17	\$222.00
Pittsburgh Br. 84	\$12,771.00
Wilkes-Barre Br. 115	\$2,705.14
Philadelphia Br. 157	\$5,589.71
Reading Br. 258	\$2,971.00
Lehigh Valley Br. 274	\$94.00
Erie Br. 284	\$14,235.34
Johnstown Br. 451	\$2,100.00
Allentown Br. 500	\$7,200.00
Uniontown Br. 520	\$510.00
Southeast PA Mgd. Br. 725	\$7,941.64
Bux-Mont Br. 920	\$800.00
Great Valley Mgd. Br. 4317	\$631.00

Rhode Island

Pawtucket Br. 55	\$3,910.00
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Newport Br. 57	\$1,112.02
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South Dakota

Sioux Falls Br. 491	\$4,180.75
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Tennessee

Nashville Br. 4	\$4,485.50
Memphis Br. 27	\$4,605.00
Knoxville Br. 419	\$1,800.00

Texas

Dallas Br. 132	\$2,000.00
Houston Br. 283	\$2,346.50
Waco Br. 404	\$1,678.30
San Antonio Br. 421	\$2,912.25
Wichita Falls Br. 1227	\$100.00
Pasadena Br. 3867	\$393.00
North TX Br. 4065	\$832.00

Utah

Ogden Br. 68	\$5,685.73
Salt Lake City Br. 111	\$4,249.00

Vermont

Rutland Br. 495	\$25.00
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Virginia

Petersburg Br. 326	\$15.00
Newport News Br. 609	\$371.00
Fredericksburg Br. 685	\$50.00
Virginia Beach Br. 2819	\$1,608.00
Northern VA Br. 3520	\$9,000.00
Chesapeake Br. 6066	\$46.00

Washington

Seattle Br. 79	\$8,630.10
Tacoma Br. 130	\$1,360.00
Spokane Br. 442	\$8,099.00
Snohomish Co. Br. 791	\$1,158.00
Vancouver Br. 1104	\$3,965.77
Wenatchee Br. 1350	\$884.00
Kitsap Peninsula Br. 1414	\$330.00
Kent Br. 2038	\$500.00
Moses Lake Br. 4573	\$500.00

Wisconsin

Racine Br. 436	\$479.00
Manitowoc Br. 490	\$12,130.00
Madison Br. 507	\$45.00
Appleton Br. 822	\$4,381.00

Wyoming

Sheridan Br. 1006	\$2,599.00
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State Associations

Arizona	\$630.00
California	\$2,100.00
Georgia	\$1,525.00
Illinois	\$533.00
Indiana	\$4,617.00
Maine	\$256.00
Maryland	\$2,407.50
Minnesota	\$6,920.45
Mississippi	\$500.00
Missouri	\$1,577.94
Montana	\$6,264.00
Nebraska	\$1,360.00
Nevada	\$256.00
North Dakota	\$1,525.00
Oklahoma	\$540.00
South Carolina	\$210.00
South Dakota	\$1,525.00
Texas	\$100.00
Virginia	\$1,825.00
Washington	\$3,124.00
Wisconsin	\$3,163.00

Headquarters

NALC Headquarters	\$11,058.50
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Grand total

\$1,129,806.80



Veterans Group

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

Veterans Affairs benefits and OWCP

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

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

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

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

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

Letter carrier duties may also accelerate an underlying condition. A

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

Join the NALC Veterans Group

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

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

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



USPS Director of Contract Administration Jim Lloyd (l) and Executive Vice President Paul Barner (center) lead the meeting.

Step B conferences held to decrease case backlog

On Feb. 21 and 22, NALC hosted the first of many planned joint Step B conferences to address the backlog of cases awaiting decisions at Step B of the Dispute Resolution Process.

NALC Executive Vice President Paul Barner and USPS Director of Contract Administration Jim Lloyd jointly discussed best practices in grievance

handling, opening the lines of communication, and focusing on ways the parties can ensure cases are handled timely. Participants included national business agents, NALC Step B members, and management counterparts.

These joint meetings will continue at various locations over the next few months to provide the opportunity for all Step B representatives to attend. **PR**

Final preparations underway for food drive

Letter carriers are preparing for the Letter Carriers' Stamp Out Hunger Food Drive—the largest single-day food drive in the country—on Saturday, May 11.

One in 8 Americans, including millions of children, senior citizens and veterans, are unsure where their next meal will come from. Letter carriers have helped meet the need by collecting food that postal patrons leave near their mailboxes on the second Saturday of each May since 1993.

NALC branches deliver the food to local food banks, which often face shortages in spring and summer because holiday donations have been depleted. Most school meal programs are not available during the summer months, making the timing of the letter carrier food drive crucial.

“Letter carriers are in every community and can see who in their communities are in need,” NALC President Brian L. Renfroe said. “We step up by filling the shelves of local food pantries. Our commitment to the food drive is unwavering.”

Our national partners help make the annual food drive possible. The partners are the U.S. Postal Service, the United Food and Commercial Workers International Union, the National Rural Letter Carriers' Association, Vericast, United Way Worldwide, the AFL-CIO, Valpak, Kellanova and CVS Health. These partners help through such actions as sponsoring the specially marked postcards, donating thousands of pounds of food and thousands of dollars to food pantries, donating bags that letter carriers distribute to customers to put their contributions in, gathering

volunteers, or getting out the message about the food drive. Volunteers also are key to the drive's success. NALC Headquarters and branch food drive coordinators use various means of communication to publicize the event.

The digital communications team at Headquarters already is busy spreading news and reminders on social media, including the event's official social media accounts on Facebook at facebook.com/StampOutHunger and on X (formerly known as Twitter) at [@StampOutHunger](https://twitter.com/StampOutHunger). To find or send messages about the food drive on either platform, use #StampOutHunger.

NALC also promotes news media coverage about the food drive before, the day of, and after the event by distributing news releases and through individual outreach to newspapers, television stations and radio outlets nationwide. Meanwhile, branch food drive coordinators promote the effort on the local level.

After the big day, it'll be time to measure our success. To do that, branches report the pounds of food they collected to NALC Headquarters by June 7. The official results will be submitted in the food drive database via the Members Only portal under the "Sponsors" tab. Select "Add Local Sponsor" to input money collected and/or pounds of food.

Time is running out for branches to register. Registration is simple and requires only a few minutes.

Branch presidents can simply visit the NALC website at nalc.org, log into the Members Only portal, select the Stamp Out Hunger Food Drive icon, enter the requested information listed under each tab, and click "Complete Registration." Branch presidents have the option to designate a local food



drive coordinator, who will then gain access to the food drive database via their Members Only portal and will be able to register the branch.

To designate a local coordinator, branch presidents should select the "Coordinators" tab, click "Add Coordinator" and once the dialog box appears, 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 the Members Only portal.

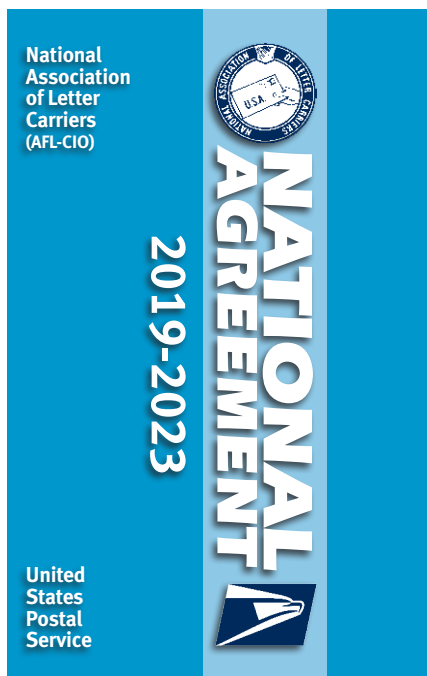
Branch registration will remain open without postcard guarantee until April 22.

If a branch has questions, please visit nalc.org/toolkit to find contact information for your regional or state coordinator, who will be able to provide assistance. More information about the Stamp Out Hunger Food Drive can be found online at nalc.org/food. **PR**

Correction

In the Ramadan article in the March issue, Abraham Askar was identified as belonging to the Kenner, LA branch. He is a member of Marrero, LA Branch 4323.

CCA relative standing and conversion to career



What is relative standing and how does it apply to conversion to career status? These are commonly asked questions from city carrier assistants (CCAs). As a new employee, you might have heard other employees talking about seniority and relative standing on the workroom floor, but don't exactly understand what it means or how it applies to you.

The term "seniority" is common in labor contracts. Seniority is the length of time that career city carriers work within an installation compared to the other city carriers employed at that installation. Seniority is used for various rights and benefits such as bidding assignments and selecting leave. CCAs, as non-career employees, do not have seniority but do have something similar called relative standing. While relative standing is important for CCAs for a variety of reasons, it is probably most important in the relationship between relative standing and your conversion to career.

When the CCA employee classification was created in 2013, with it came the need to determine who has more ranking when it comes to such things as promotions, opportunities to work on full-time routes with no regular carrier, and, in some offices, who gets to pick time periods for vacation first. So, the term "relative standing" was adopted as the reference to CCA ranking. In short, it is "your place in line" amongst the other CCAs.

Relative standing is a date. It starts on the day you are hired into an installation. The longer you are employed in that office, the more relative standing you have. For example, if you were hired on Jan. 1 in the installation and another CCA is hired on Jan. 15, you have the earliest date and would have

more relative standing. However, for CCAs who at any time after Sept. 29, 2007, worked for USPS as a transitional employee (TE), the time served as a TE is added to their relative standing. So, in this situation there might be instances where CCAs with previous TE time have more relative standing than a CCA who started in the installation first.

What happens if you choose to move to another installation? When a CCA resigns in one installation and is then rehired in another installation, the relative standing starts over on the date they begin working in their new installation. This means that you would more than likely start over again at the bottom of the relative standing list, unless you have certain TE time as described above. You should give careful consideration before you choose to do this, because it could affect your conversion to career status down the road.

What happens if two or more CCAs are hired on the same day and have the same relative standing date (a tie)? In the case of a tie, first, the relative standing on the hiring list (appointment register) will be used to determine the CCA with higher relative standing. CCAs are ranked on the appointment register by their postal exam score combined with their applicable veteran's preference points. Second, to resolve any ties in ranking, USPS then goes by the last three or more numbers (using enough numbers to break the tie, but not fewer than three numbers) of the employee's Social Security number, from the lowest to highest.

So, why is relative standing important when it comes to converting to career?

In the 2019-2023 National Agreement, NALC and the Postal Service agreed to a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) Re: City Carrier Assistants – Conversion to Career Status. This agreement specifies that CCAs who reach 24 months of relative standing will be converted to part-time flexible (PTF) career status within their installation. The PTF classification is part of the career workforce with flexible hours rather than a fixed schedule. The PTF classification also provides additional benefits and protections beyond those you receive as CCA. Under this MOU, CCAs are given one opportunity for conversion to PTF. If, as a CCA, you decline this opportunity for conversion, you become ineligible for conversion to PTF under this agreement in the future. Keep in mind, this MOU requires 24 months of relative standing within the installation. Again, if you are considering moving to a new installation, you might want to weigh as a fac-

tor in your decision how much relative standing you already have accumulated in your current installation. For more information related to PTF rights and benefits, read the “Part-time flexible questions and answers” Contract Talk article in the September/October 2022 edition of *The Postal Record*.

In addition to the agreement to convert CCAs to PTFs, another path to career exists. NALC and the Postal Service also have agreed to a process through which full-time regular opportunities within the city letter carrier craft will be filled. This process includes opportunities for CCAs to be converted to full-time regular positions within their installations. This agreement, Full-time Regular Opportunities – City Letter Carrier Craft, is found beginning on page 161 of the current National Agreement.

When a full-time opportunity exists within the installation, and the

position cannot be filled by qualified full-time or part-time carriers, then the opportunity exists for a CCA to be converted. The CCA with the highest relative standing within the installation will be converted to full-time. A CCA who declined conversion to PTF under the agreement to convert upon 24 months of relative standing might still have the opportunity to be converted to full time in this circumstance.

For more information on relative standing and other items concerning CCAs who are new to the NALC and the Postal Service, read the *Letter Carrier Resource Guide*, available under the “Quicklinks” section on nalc.org. The agreements for conversion at 24 months and full-time regular opportunities can be found in the 2019-2023 National Agreement, which also is available as a quicklink on the NALC home page. **PR**

Deadlines approaching for national convention

Deadlines for the 73rd Biennial National Convention Aug. 5-9 in Boston are approaching.

Delegate eligibility lists for the convention have been mailed to all branches. The lists must be completed and returned to the office of Secretary-Treasurer Nicole Rhine at NALC Headquarters no later than June 5 for branch representatives to be registered as delegates to the convention.

All proposed amendments to the *NALC Constitution* to be submitted for consideration at the convention must be received by Rhine’s office by June 5 as well. That date is 60 days in advance of the convention, as prescribed by the *NALC Constitution*. Proposed

amendments will appear in July’s *Postal Record* for the membership to review.

Resolutions to be considered by delegates also must be received by the June 5 deadline to be printed in the *Resolutions and Amendments* book provided to delegates. Resolutions received after June 5 still may be considered at the convention.

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



Boston Convention and Exhibition Center

completed forms must be returned to Headquarters by June 5 as well.

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



A Honey-making enterprise

The buzz started for Corey Grotte about seven years ago, when he happened upon a honeybee exhibit at a local hardware store put on by a local beekeeping club. He was with his younger daughter, Keea, who was a high school senior at the time and was studying the importance of pollination in biology.

“And that’s when my daughter suggested that we start keeping honeybees,” he said. “That’s what kicked it all off.”

The father-daughter duo soon attended 24 hours of beekeeping classes put on by the club. “We started off with two hives right in our back yard,” Grotte said.

While his teenage daughter eventually lost interest, he became even more intrigued. His two hives in 2016 doubled to four in 2018, and then grew further.

“I have six in my back yard,” he said of his home in Eau Claire, WI. “That’s the most that they allow for the city permit.” His eight others are divided between a small campsite near a lake where Grotte and his family like to spend weekends and a community apiary—a place where bees and their hives are kept—that he helped initiate with the beekeeping club, where he now serves as vice president.

Because of his busy postal schedule, the 25-year letter carrier, who serves as Eau Claire Branch 728 president and Wisconsin State Association vice president/director of education, spends only about an hour or so a week on general upkeep of his hives.

“I look in the little honeycomb cells to make sure the queen is still laying eggs,” he said, and added, “And then twice a year, I check and see if there’s any type of diseases or anything going on in the hive to see if I need to do any type of treatments.”

While many people have gotten into beekeeping, it doesn’t work if the hives are neglected.

“It’s raising *healthy* bees and knowing how to care for them. They’re just like any other animal. You can’t just buy a horse and leave it and not do anything with it,” he said. “You have to care for them. You have to look for diseases and



A jar of Grotte's honey

treat the diseases. They are considered livestock that need attention.”

To tend to his bees, Grotte will wear a bee jacket to protect him from being stung, a veil over his face, and thin latex gloves. “Blue jeans are plenty fine,” he explains. “Their stingers aren’t long enough to go through, but you do want to protect your face just in case anything goes wrong.”

He uses a few beekeeping tools while in the hives, including an extractor for honey, and a smoker, which will keep the bees calm by masking any threatening scents. Keea, who lives nearby, sometimes will help Grotte extract honey or she’ll just visit with the bees.

They harvest honey only once a year, normally in late August or early September, so they can measure “how much honey you need to leave for the bees to survive through the winter,” Grotte said, adding that during the cold season, “there’s no flowers blooming up here in Wisconsin. Everything’s frozen. So, the bees have to stay within their hive, and they need enough food to eat through those winter months.”

Initially, Grotte just collected the honey, but after he discussed with his wife what to do with the beeswax byproduct from the chemical-free hives so it wouldn’t be wasted, the enterprise soon expanded.

“We started making all-natural lip balm with only organic products—with the beeswax that comes directly from the hive,” he said. “I do it all by hand. I get all-organic cocoa butter, shea butter and coconut oil, and I mix that with the beeswax and vitamin E. All these little lip balm tubes are filled by hand, and then they’re sealed.”

That went well, so they began making lotion bars as well, which he says are a bit easier to produce. The mixture is poured into molds, sits until they’re

Grotte tends to his hives.



hardened, and then they’re put into containers.

“A lotion bar is hard like a bar of soap, and you have to rub it into your skin so it gets deep into the cracks and keeps your skin moist, and the beeswax will seal that,” Grotte said. “So, you wash your hands throughout the day, but all the nutrients stay in your skin.”

The carrier, who produces both products out of his home, initially named the business “Sticky Smiles—Eau Claire’s Urban Beekeeper,” but after the birth of his older daughter’s child, Myles, the company name got an upgrade to “Sticky sMyles” to honor their grandson.

Grotte sells the honey, lip balm and lotion bars at some local stores as well as at craft fairs during the summers and on stickysmiles.com. He shares updates at “Sticky Smiles Apiary” on Facebook, too.

Grotte also supports NALC’s official charity, the Muscular Dystrophy Association, donating around \$700 a year through the business. Sometimes it’s through specific products at events, and he always donates 50 percent of proceeds from letter carriers’ orders.

Many co-workers are loyal customers, including one with a spouse who works for UPS, where she talked up the lotion bars to her own colleagues about how it kept her hands smooth during the winter. “And my wife is a nurse,” he added, “so a lot of people



Grotte in his beekeeping suit

A Honey-

making enterprise



Above: Grotte with daughter Keea
Below: Grandson Myles



from the hospital order also. It's a lot of word of mouth."

"I'm just a hobby guy, you know," Grotte said. "But [it makes] enough to pay for the licensing and insurance. It's nothing I'm going to retire off of."

In his spare time, Grotte teaches beekeeping through the club in two-year mentorships for youth aged 12 to 17. Grotte says that the youngsters do all of the work. "I just tell them what we're looking out for," he said. "I think that's probably one of the funnest things—getting the youth involved so this hobby doesn't die out."

After completing the mentorship, if the kids want to continue keeping bees, they're given supplies.

Grotte, a Navy veteran, also proposed to his beekeeping club the idea of mentoring military veterans through a national nonprofit organization called Hives for Heroes that provides connection and purpose. Through the collaboration, they offer veterans assistance with equipment and guidance with managing an apiary. "We're here for them," Grotte said of the ongoing partnership.

The carrier has begun thinking about his future in beekeeping. "I think I would like to, as I'm getting closer to retirement, have about 25 hives at no more than two locations and just continue this hobby to keep busy," Grotte said, adding that he wants to continue mentoring. He loves watching the kids' eyes in amazement "when they see a product go from nothing to something."



Capturing a swarm

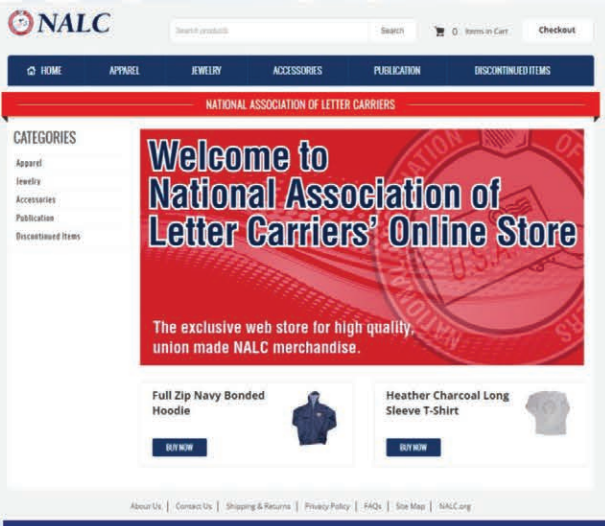
Indeed, Grotte's excitement for honeybees is evident. "Did you know that 90 percent of the hive is all females?" he asked. "The women do all the work. They clean the queen, they feed the queen, they build the wax. They're the ones that do the foraging for pollen and nectar, bringing it back. They're the ones that are converting the nectar to honey. And the male bees just really have no job at all—their only wish in life is to mate with a queen.

"And some of them will never see that, because a queen only mates once in her lifetime, which is about five years if we can keep them. So, when it comes fall time, all the males get their eviction notice and they kick all the males out of the hive," he said. "Just a fun fact."

He loves watching the bees work: "I think they're fascinating, the way they engineer different products." He can relate, industriously making products from what the bees produce, but also using beekeeping to teach youngsters and help veterans.

"It's all rewarding," Grotte said of beekeeping. "And, of course, who doesn't love that golden stickiness that we call honey? The sweet reward." **PR**

NALCSTORE.ORG



Placing an order online is very simple!

- Register by clicking on **Login/Register** on the top right corner. Fill in the necessary fields.
- Once you're registered, you can start adding items to your basket.
- When you're finished, click **Checkout** on the top right. Proceed by filling in the necessary fields. All orders ship via USPS.
- The store accepts Visa, MasterCard and American Express.
- Once you've completed your order, you will receive an order confirmation email.

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.

Dogs are man's best friend... well, this mailman's best friend

Every day at approximately 10:30 a.m., **Dan Larsen**, an Oak Brook, IL Branch 825 carrier, pulls up in front of Frannie Joy the chihuahua's house in nearby Barlett. When she sees Larsen out of the glass front door of the house, she barks at her owner, Lisa Laskey, to let her out. As soon as the door swings open, the chihuahua runs down the driveway to the carrier's truck for kisses and belly rubs.



Dan Larsen and Frannie Joy

Larsen said he started visiting Frannie when she was only 8 weeks old, and since, he has visited her every time he delivers his route during the past two years.

Although Larsen doesn't have any social media accounts, he agreed to have Laskey film these interactions and post them on her TikTok account, [@lisaandfrannie](#), and on her Instagram account, [@frannielifedog](#). Frannie Joy's TikTok page has more than 259,600 followers and received 11 million likes, and her Instagram has more than 11,500 followers.



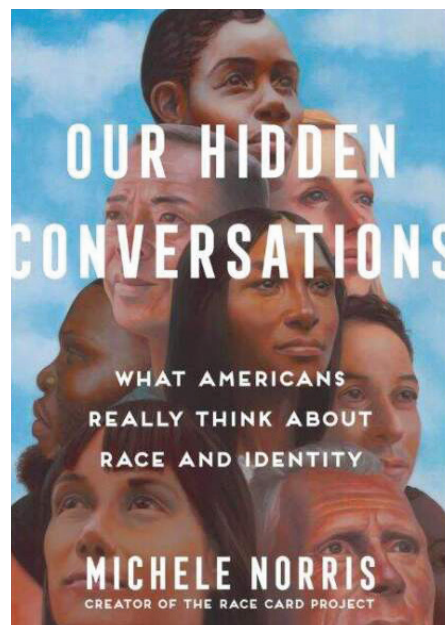
Michele Norris

The letter carrier knows that a lot of people see the videos, but because of his lack of social media accounts, he never really felt the impact. Laskey wanted Larsen to understand that he was making a difference in his viewer's lives, so she asked their followers to send Laskey holiday cards last holiday season.

Larsen said that he received 1,500-plus cards, many of which told stories about how the videos brought them joy. He said that some of his viewers struggled with addiction and some were going through chemotherapy, and that they indicated that seeing those videos every day got them through the day.

"There're really some heartbreaking letters that I got," Larsen said. "They just say that it's helping them get by day-to-day. Somebody who's lost their spouse, they say, 'I've been so depressed, and I watched these videos and I'm telling you, it just makes my day.'"

Larsen said that Laskey has a sign outside her house that says, "change the world," and he says that she is



really trying to make a difference with these videos, so he wants to be a part of that mission.

"I'm just trying to send a message that it's not all doom and gloom," Larsen said.

Journalist uses postcards as source for book on race

As the daughter of postal employees, Michele Norris wanted to hear about people's experiences with race, and instead of phone calls and emails, the former *Washington Post* opinion columnist and former National Public Radio host printed postcards with the words "Race. Your thoughts. 6 words. Please send."

She left them in places people would pick them up as she went on a 36-city tour for her memoir, *The Grace of Silence*. Norris tucked them in airplane seat pockets and placed them on chairs in bookstores and at Starbucks sugar and milk stations. It didn't take



Steven Vannarath

long for her to receive more than 500,000 messages, which she posted on a website she created, The Race Card Project. Postcard correspondents could then share the story that led them to writing their chosen six words. Using their responses and interviews she conducted, Norris wrote the best-selling book, *Our Hidden Conversations*, which was published in January.

“There’s something so human about looking at someone’s handwriting,” Norris said in an interview with *The New York Times*. “And knowing these little moments of vulnerability were floating through the U.S. Postal Service, unadorned. It’s not in an envelope. It’s just out there for the world to see.”

Maybe UPS and FedEx couldn’t, but USPS could...dance

In the beginning of February, letter carrier **Steven Vannarath**, a Branch 1784 member in Klamath Falls, OR, dueted a video of Terry Turner, an Amazon delivery person, energetically dancing in front of his Amazon delivery truck on TikTok. Duetting is when a creator posts their video side-by-side with a video from another creator. Vannarath’s video received more than 4.3 million views and almost 500,000 likes. Turner’s original video had the caption, “UPS and FedEx could never.”

Vannarath said that he had received a message from @ThatPostalDad on TikTok issuing him a 24-hour challenge to duet Turner. Vannarath said he was working at the time, so he didn’t have time to learn the choreography to Turner’s dance. However, when he was done with his route, he remembered his break-dancing days from high school and did his “signature move.”

In the video, Vannarath danced while taking off his satchel, coat and hat, and

then he did a one-handed handstand while putting his hat back on.

He was happy when the video went viral, saying, “It made me feel good...like I was representing something positive.”

First Massachusetts post office named after an AAPI person

Rep. Ayanna Pressley, (D-MA), introduced a bill during Asian American and Pacific Islander (AAPI) Heritage Month in May 2023 to rename a post office in Boston after Caroline Chang. In early February, it finally passed.

Chang, who died in 2018, was born and raised in Boston’s Chinatown and was a highly involved member in her community as well as an activist for Asian American rights in Massachusetts. In the 1970s, she served as the manager of Chinatown’s Little City Hall, where her care and passion for her community flourished as an advocate for its residents.

Chang was an active participant in many organizations in and around Chinatown. She made a lasting impact through her work as a member of the Chinese History Society of New England, the Asian American Civic Association and the Asian Community Development Corporation.

Boston.com quoted Pressley, from a speech on the House floor, as saying, “I was proud to introduce and pass this bill in the House to pay tribute to Caroline’s legacy with the first post office in Massachusetts to be named after an AAPI individual.”

Lifelong civil rights activist featured on stamp

In February, the New Haven, CT, branch of the NAACP revealed the design for the 47th Black



Rep. Ayanna Pressley (D-MA) with a photo of Caroline Chang

Heritage stamp, which featured Constance Baker Motley.

Baker Motley was born and raised in New Haven before attending Fisk University and Columbia Law School. After graduating, she served as a law clerk for Supreme Court Justice Thurgood Marshall and contributed to landmark cases such as *Brown v. Board of Education*.

Later in her career, in 1964, she became the first Black woman to be elected to the New York State Senate. The following year she was elected Manhattan borough president. In 1966, Baker Motley became a federal judge, the first Black woman to do so.

The unveiling of the stamp was praised by New Haven Mayor Justin Elicker, according to the *Yale Daily News*.

“It’s amazing to kick off Black History Month this way, and to reflect on the past,” he said. “And I think more importantly [to] reflect on the work that we have ahead of us.” **PR**



The unveiling of the Constance Baker Motley stamp

Your assignment— Your workload estimation



**Paul
Barner**

On a daily basis, nearly every letter carrier must go through the process of evaluating the workload of their assigned duties and estimate the time associated with completing those duties. When a letter carrier believes that the route they were assigned to carry has more work than they can complete within eight hours, or they believe they cannot complete all of the work assigned to them for the day within their scheduled time, the letter carrier is responsible for notifying management. Likewise, management is required to inform the letter carrier of what to do. Many times, the resulting evaluations culminate in disagreements.

Contractually enforceable provisions addressed in Handbook M-39, *Management of Delivery Services*; Handbook M-41, *City Carriers Duties and Responsibilities*; and several national-level settlements have defined a process that both letter carriers and managers are required to follow when a letter carrier determines that they will be unable to complete their daily assignment within their normally scheduled time frame. Additionally, specific information on the Delivery Operations Information System (DOIS); PS Form 3996, Carrier-Auxiliary Control; and PS Form 1571, Undelivered Mail Report can be found beginning on page 81 of the 2023 *NALC Letter Carrier Resource Guide* also available in the “Resources” section of the NALC website under “Workplace Issues.” Here is some advice on how to handle these situations:

1. Orally inform management: Section 131.41 of Handbook M-41 requires the letter carrier to orally inform management when they are of the opinion that they will be unable to case all mail distributed to the route, perform other required duties, and leave on schedule, or when they will be unable to complete delivery of all mail.

2. Request PS Form 3996: Section 122.33 of Handbook M-39 requires management to provide, upon request by the employee, a PS Form 3996 after the supervisor has been orally informed as to the reason for the request. The employee shall not be denied the form, and upon request, a duplicate of the completed form will be provided to the employee.

Remember, you must request the PS Form 3996 and orally inform the supervisor of the reason for the request. If management refuses to provide a PS Form 3996, immediately request to see your steward.

3. Fill out the PS Form 3996 completely: Instructions for completing the form can be found on the back of the PS Form 3996. In the “Reason For Use of Auxiliary” section of the form, identify why you believe you cannot complete your assignment in eight hours. Fully explain the reasons for your request. Provide as much specificity as possible in lieu of using more general comments such as “heavy volume” or “route overburdened.” Supervisors may deny your request using DOIS projections as their justification. Multiple national-level settlements (e.g., M-01664 and M-01769) have held that these time projections cannot be used as the sole determinant of daily workload. Keep in mind, you are the professional letter carrier tasked with performing the duties of the assignment, and nothing can replace your estimate of how long that will take.

4. Keep your cool: While being challenged can be frustrating and demeaning, there is no benefit to getting angry. The best course of action is to remain calm and professional while following the process outlined. If your manager denies the request, advise them that you will do the best you can. In a professional manner, ask the manager for instructions as to what to do in the event you are unable to complete the assignment in the approved allotted time frame.

5. Don’t argue: There is no reason to argue with your manager at this point. Request a copy of the PS Form 3996 and continue with your assigned duties. Always work professionally and safely. You should never skip breaks or lunch to complete your assignment.

6. Don’t make decisions: Management is obligated to make decisions in accordance with contractual provisions. Once you realize that you will not be able to complete your assigned duties within the time frame approved by management, you should place the decision-making burden back on them by notifying management and requesting further instructions in accordance with any local directives. If no local directives exist, try contacting management two hours prior to the expiration of the approved time, or as soon as reasonably possible after confirming your inability to complete the assignment within the allotted time. Notify management of your location and the estimated time to complete the assignment. Again, ask management for further instructions and follow the instructions management gives you.

If management refuses to tell you what to do, or if you can’t finish your assigned duties in the amount of time initially specified by management, you should return to the office in the allotted time and ask for further instructions. Once again, you should follow whatever instructions management gives you.

Steel sharpens steel



James D. Henry

The age-old maxim “steel sharpens steel” or “iron sharpens iron” embodies the simple premise that we grow stronger when we surround ourselves with others who are strong. As we go about our daily activities at work, we encounter events and situations that sharpen our mental blade. These experiences help achieve our potential to be at our best and brightest.

The union—in our case, the NALC members—is one such example of surrounding ourselves with others who are strong. As such, we all benefit from the affiliation with one another. Whether

you are a rank-and-file member or in the leadership structure, we pride ourselves on being strong individuals and a strong union.

The education of the NALC membership and the superior training of NALC representatives at every level make them tremendous assets for the union, but also vital tools to help the rest of us sharpen our knowledge and skills and prepare us for success. The NALC offers continuing education to the members through information that is provided by, but not limited to, *Bulletins*, training sessions and the NALC website. The national and regional training sessions allow for the shop stewards and branch officers to assemble with one another and sharpen their tools, as well as to draw inspiration, determination, strength from experience, level up on their knowledge, and potentially gain a mentor and/or the opportunity to mentor and simply pay it forward.

When our leaders are able to surround themselves with strong individuals, it makes them stronger and the NALC membership benefits tenfold. When I speak of being stronger, I’m not referring to the physical body, rather, the enduring strength that is developed by surrounding yourself with those who possess the following traits:

- Integrity—Demonstrating honesty, ethics and moral principles in actions and decisions, fostering trust and credibility
- Resilience—Showing mental toughness and the adaptability to bounce back from setbacks and lead during challenging times

- Empathy—Understanding and acknowledging the feelings and perspectives of others, promoting a supportive and empathetic environment
- Decisiveness—Making well-informed and timely decisions, even in the face of ambiguity or uncertainty
- Effective communication—Articulating ideas clearly and actively listening to others, ensuring seamless information flow within the organization
- Adaptability—Embracing change and remaining flexible in dynamic environments and fostering growth
- Accountability—Taking responsibility for actions and results, fostering a culture of responsibility and ownership
- Confidence—Demonstrating self-assurance and belief in one’s abilities, inspiring confidence in each other
- Humility—Being open to learning and valuing others’ contributions, fostering a collaborative and humble leadership style
- Strategic thinking—Possessing the ability to analyze situations and make long-term plans to achieve organizational objectives
- Inspiring and motivating—Encouraging and energizing team members to perform at their best and teach their potential.
- Courageousness—Displaying bravery and boldness in making difficult decisions and taking calculated risks
- Continuous learning—Valuing personal and professional growth, continuously seeking knowledge and improvement
- Building and nurturing relationships—Cultivating strong connections and networks, fostering a collaborative supportive work environment
- Transparency—Being open and honest in communication, promoting trust and authenticity within the team and organization

As I endeavor to impart and partake of these traits, I know it’s a work in progress. However, for the NALC to be, grow and remain strong, at minimum we all must participate, be involved in activism, training, attending our branch meetings and we’ll be engaging in “steel sharpening steel!”

Branch audits: A guide for trustees



**Nicole
Rhine**

Article 6, Section 9 of the *Constitution for the Government of Subordinate and Federal Branches* states, in part, that: “The Trustees shall examine and report to the Branch the condition of the books of the officers at least once every six months, compare the vouchers and records and see that they correspond with the collections and disbursements.”

To assist trustees of small local unions, the Office of Labor-Management Standards prepared a guide called *Conducting Audits in Small Unions – A Guide for Trustees to a 10-Step Audit*. This guide is available on the Department of Labor’s (DOL) website at dol.gov and on the

NALC website at nalc.org on the secretary-treasurer’s page.

I recommend that all trustees, as well as other branch officers, review and consult the DOL’s guide for assistance before, during and after an audit to ensure that the branch’s funds and other assets are safe-guarded and expended appropriately for the benefit of the branch and its members.

The planning phase of the audit involves meeting with the other trustees to discuss responsibilities and to assign duties. A letter or other communication should be sent to the president and secretary/treasurer of the branch to advise them of when the audit will be held and which items (e.g., checkbooks, canceled checks, vouchers/warrants, journals, minutes, etc.) the trustees will need in order to complete the audit. Trustees should review financial forms such as 990s and LM reports, as well as the *NALC Constitution*, the branch’s bylaws and the branch’s most recent audit report before starting.

The following is an abbreviated checklist of the 10 steps to be performed during the audit as listed in the DOL’s guide:

Step 1: Trace canceled checks to the bank statements and disbursements journal.

Step 2: Scan the disbursements journal and record unusual entries.

Step 3: Trace the branch roster’s total dues deposited by NALC Headquarters on behalf of the branch to the receipts journal and bank statements.

Step 4: Confirm that receipts from all other sources (interest, rent, raffles, etc.) have been properly recorded

and deposited. Trustees may need to refer to the branch’s minutes to determine if raffle money was deposited.

Step 5: Identify all bank accounts, verify their ending balances, and review withdrawals and transfers. Verify that all withdrawals during the audit period from savings, money market accounts, or certificates of deposit were used for legitimate union purposes, as approved by the membership. Trustees may need to refer back to the branch’s minutes to confirm expenditures and transfers.

Step 6: Inventory fixed assets such as computers, photocopiers, filing cabinets, etc. If a list does not exist, create one—either indicating their original cost, estimated current value, or value as carried in the branch’s books (if a list exists); and the asset’s location.

Step 7: Confirm that the annual LM report for the latest completed fiscal year was filed on time.

Step 8: Determine whether financial records were properly maintained. (For length of retaining records, see Chapter 6 of the *NALC Branch Officer’s Guide to Finance and Administration* for more information. This guide can also be found on the NALC website on the secretary-treasurer’s page under “Resources.”)

Step 9: Ensure that all officers and employees who handle funds are adequately bonded. (Fiduciary officers may consult Chapter 5 of the *NALC Branch Officers Guide to Finance and Administration* for more information.)

Step 10: Confirm that no officers or employees were loaned more than \$2,000 by the branch. Loans exceeding \$2,000 are prohibited by the Labor Management Reporting and Disclosure Act of 1959.

After the audit has been completed, the trustees should review their findings, resolve any loose ends, document their work and report their findings. This will include determining whether any changes are needed to comply with DOL requirements and making a list of any internal financial-control weaknesses or problem areas. Unless the trustees have found significant discrepancies in the branch’s records and need outside assistance, they should meet with the principal financial officers of the branch to discuss their findings and resolve any concerns. The audit findings should then be reported to the branch.

Please review the entire guide for conducting audits to gain a better understanding of every aspect concerning a branch audit. The guide includes sample letters, checklists, common problems and indicators of possible misuse of funds.

Thanks to all branch trustees who are diligent and thorough in performing their duties.

Bylaws and branch policies



**Mack I.
Julion**

The *NALC Constitution* not only provides the principles on which our organization was founded, and the rules it operates on, but it also stipulates the guidelines for the bylaws, which are created by our state associations and subordinate branches. I think this is important to note, because some of the submissions we receive for amendments tend to far exceed what is required, or do not take into consideration the parameters set by the *Constitution*. The fact that some may go over and beyond what is required is not necessarily a problem, if it does not conflict in any way with the *Constitution*. However, it

is problematic when the *Constitution* is not used as a standard and submissions are in stark contrast to the appropriate specifications in the relevant *Constitution*. Remember: The *Constitution*, by definition, is the basis by which the bylaws are created. In other words, you can't properly create bylaws without following the intent of the *Constitution*.

As I have written before, it is much easier for branches to use the *Constitution* for the *Government of Subordinate and Federal Branches (CGSFB)* as a guideline for creating bylaws and/or making amendments. Most often bylaws, which are easily reviewed and approved, follow the order as provided in the *CGSFB* or they simply make direct reference to the national *Constitution*. Likewise for state associations and provisions provided in the *Constitution* for the *Government of State Associations (CGSA)*. I have offered sample bylaws for branches that needed assistance, and I am always willing to offer insight on proposals that are being considered for submission. For a copy of sample bylaws, simply email me at julion@nalc.org.

That which I referred to as “over and beyond” may not be in conflict with the *Constitution*, but it could be something that is more aptly addressed in the branch’s “policies and procedures.”

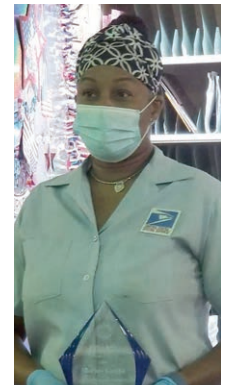
We understand that when you create or amend bylaws, you want to write them so that they are clearly understood and unambiguous. The meaning or intent should be so clear that years later it is understood, even if the author isn't there to interpret. Details that explain how certain bylaws are carried out could be in-

cluded in the policies and procedures that would make potential changes less cumbersome.

Take, for example, if your bylaws list the financial institution where your general funds are deposited. We have seen specific banks or credit unions identified (with address) included with the bylaw submissions. If for whatever reason there is a change to the financial institution, the bylaws will have to be changed as well. There could also be a provision as simple as the day and time of committee meetings, or the manner in which they are held. Do you really want this bound by your bylaws? It could be easier to change your “policies and procedures” than to propose, notify members and vote on bylaw changes. And of course, those changes would still have to be approved by the Committee of Laws before implementation.

For those who will attend the Branch Officers Training in Washington, DC, this month, we can discuss this topic in more detail.

April 28 is Workers Memorial Day. In February, I was asked by Director of Safety and Health Manuel L. Peralta Jr. if I would go to Chicago and present the memorial plaque to the family of a member who is memorialized on the wall in our Headquarters building. Without hesitation, I told him I would be honored to do so. Not only was Shirley Knight a member of Branch 11 in our Riverdale office, she was one of my stewards. Sister Knight was a staunch advocate for her co-workers, especially during the pandemic. The Riverdale office was “ground zero,” as the first wave of cases among postal workers in Chicago happened in that station. In 2021, as the pandemic was phasing out, I presented her with the “Steward of the Year” award. We lost our sister on the workroom floor in May of 2022. I write this in her honor and that of all the brothers and sisters who are no longer with us on this Workers Memorial Day 2024.



Above: NALC Secretary-Treasurer Mack Julion (above, far r) presents a memorial plaque to the family of Chicago, IL Branch 11 steward Shirley Knight (shown at right), who died in 2022.

The image shows a grid-based form titled "Arrow Key - Daily Accountable Log". It includes fields for "Office Name", "SF Code", and "Today's Date". The main body of the form is a table with columns for "Carrier", "Checklist/Signature", "Carrier Signature", "Carrier Signature", and "Checklist/Signature". The table has 24 rows, numbered 1 through 24. At the bottom right, there are fields for "Certification Manager Signature" and "Certification Manager Name".

City Delivery updates



Christopher Jackson

From peak season to a cold and snowy winter, letter carriers once again showed their resilience and dedication to our customers by delivering their mail day in and day out. I want to thank every one of you for your hard work and commitment through these times. In this month's article, I will discuss a few notifications my office recently received from the Postal Service.

Universal distribution case

In October 2023 and January 2024, the Postal Service sent notification detailing its intent to test and use a universal distribution case in select post offices. Testing of the case took place at the Dumfries Post Office in Dumfries, VA, Nov. 6-17, and now the distribution case is being used at the Pompano Beach Post Office in Pompano Beach, FL, as of Jan. 23. USPS explained that the universal distribution case has been designed to address space constraints that might occur in post offices by combining the sortation of letters and flats in the same distribution case.

PS Form 1106

In December 2023, NALC received notification from the Postal Service that PS Form 1106, Arrow Key-Daily Accountable Log had been created. USPS says the form will be used when electronic means are not available to memorialize the current process of daily Arrow Key assignment and accountability.

In my article from the November 2023 edition of *The Postal Record*, I addressed the ongoing use of PS Form 1106 for this purpose. At the time, the PS Form 1106 had been rescinded by the Postal Service; therefore, the practice of using the form should have been discontinued. This recent notification formally introduces the PS Form 1106 and makes it an appropriate option for memorializing daily Arrow Key assignment and ac-

countability. However, relying on the form as a secondary option to the current electronic means as directed by USPS is improper.

The recently implemented process of using the Mobile Delivery Device-Technical Refresh (MDD-TR) as an electronic means to memorialize daily Arrow Key assignment and accountability is in conflict with postal handbooks and manuals. The letter carrier's responsibility when handling Arrow Keys as outlined in Sections 261 and 431 of *Handbook M-41* has not changed. A carrier should exchange either a key check or signature when transferring Arrow Key accountability between themselves and a clearing clerk or management official. I encourage any member who receives instructions that violate postal handbooks and manuals to inform your local union representative and *file a grievance*. For more of my discussion on this process, read my columns in the October and November 2023 editions of *The Postal Record*.

Informed Facility

In February, USPS sent an official notification that it would be displaying various information on monitors in the work area of post offices through an initiative called Informed Facility (IF). The Postal Service states that it can display real-time carrier data and sorting machine throughput numbers using these monitors. The data updates periodically and the information streams constantly.

Even though the Postal Service sent notification informing NALC of this initiative in February, the membership had already informed me that monitors displaying carrier performances were being installed and used in several facilities across the country months earlier. Since becoming aware, I have held meetings with the Postal Service and expressed my concerns, and the concerns of the membership, with the information being displayed. Ultimately, we could not reach common ground on the initiative and the Postal Service decided to move forward with its implementation.

If management is displaying your work performance information on monitors in your delivery unit, I strongly advise that you request to see your steward and *ask that*

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April is EAP Awareness Month



Manuel L. Peralta Jr.

Through the years, we have encouraged our members to use the EAP services that were bargained into our national agreement.

To read about EAP services, begin by going to nalc.org, hover over “Workplace Issues,” then go to the “Safety and Health” tab. While holding there, you will see three options to the right, click on “Employee Assistance Program” and you will land on our EAP information page.

The first tabbed section explains that the Employee Assistance Program is governed by Article 35 of the National Agreement. EAP is jointly administered by the NALC,

the American Postal Workers Union, the National Postal Mail Handlers Union and the USPS. It provides confidential education, referral and counseling to help employees through personal challenges of all types, including alcoholism and drug-abuse. This first section also contains a link (eap4you.com), which will take you to the national service provider of EAP services, currently New Directions Behavioral Health (NDBH). Please see below for information once we land there.

The next section of our web page contains copies of *PUB 518 - EAP Supervisor's Guide*, explaining the EAP program for all employees and *PUB 519*, which addresses counseling as follows:

The voluntary and confidential counseling services of the EAP provide an excellent opportunity to help employees address personal and family problems. EAP counseling helps employees with relationship concerns, depression, anxiety, divorce, death of a loved one, financial concerns, stress, substance abuse and other personal issues. Services are available to Postal Service employees and their immediate family members.

These publications also emphasize your right to confidentiality as follows:

Your privacy is protected by strict federal and state laws and regulations and by counselors’ professional ethical standards. Information you share with the EAP may not be released to anyone without your prior written consent, except in these situations: As required by law (for example, when a person’s emotional condition is a threat to himself, herself or others; or if child or elder abuse is suspected) or when a court order is issued upon a showing of good cause. Promotion of EAP services to all our employees is the duty and responsibility of the District Advisory Committee (DAC)

or the Joint Committee on Employee Assistance Program (JCEAP), whose composition is from the three national postal unions and management. If these advisory committees are not meeting, they are unable to promote EAP services to the employees in that district. The recent restructuring of the USPS has decimated the functionality of these committees and while the national unions work towards getting our committees to properly function, we need your help to share your knowledge of this program with your co-workers.

Now, as mentioned above, eap4you.com takes you to the NDBH landing page. When you land there, explore the menu items at the top. Services connects you to counseling, coaching, EAP benefits, health assessments and information on child care, elder care and crisis resources. You will also find a number of resources under “Suicide Prevention,” “Veterans & Military” and “Substance Abuse.”

As you scroll down the page, explore the section titled “Tools to Build a Better You.” Keep scrolling and explore each section as you learn all that is available. When you get to the bottom of the page, click the button in the “Search and Connect to Support” section. You will be asked for your ZIP Code and it will provide you with a listing of other help resources available.

Now, one element of the EAP that rarely gets enough attention outside the walls of the Post Office is the fact that EAP services are available at no cost to employees and their families living under the same roof.

Once you are familiar with the services available, you can explore connecting your family members with that information, such as by helping your children cope with pressures that we may not understand.

We hope you find what you are looking for and that you connect with the resources you need. Be well.

Make the Call!

USPS Employee Assistance Program

1-800-327-4968

(1-800-EAP-4-YOU) TTY: 1-877-492-7341

www.EAP4YOU.com

Frequently asked questions



**Dan
Toth**

The NALC Retirement Department has dedicated phone lines for members to call with questions or concerns about planning and applying for retirement as well as post-retirement issues that may arise. As a result, we receive a variety of questions from across the country. This article will cover some recent frequently asked questions.

When is the Special Enrollment Period for Medicare Part B under the Postal Service Health Benefits Program? The Special Enrollment Period (SEP) allows retirees not enrolled in Medicare Part B an

opportunity to enroll without being subject to the late enrollment penalty. The SEP began April 1 and will continue for six months. Eligible retirees will receive enrollment instructions through the mail.

How far in advance should I apply for retirement?

The Office of Personnel Management (OPM) recommends submitting your application to the Postal Service at least 60 days prior to separation. After you have separated from the Postal Service, it will forward the completed application to OPM for processing.

What happens to my annual leave if it is more than 440 hours? Generally, separating employees receive a lump-sum terminal payment for a balance of annual leave up to 440 hours. Leave in excess of 440 hours would typically be forfeited. However, MOU Re: Annual Leave Carryover for Leave Year 2024 (M-01993) provides that for leave year 2024, regular workforce career employees may carry over 520 hours of accumulated annual leave from leave year 2023 to leave year 2024. Because this memorandum temporarily expands the carryover limit, the maximum terminal leave in accordance with *Employee and Labor Relations Manual* Section 512.732 is also increased to 520 during the life of the memorandum, which is set to expire Dec. 31, 2024, at which time the carryover maximum would return to 440 hours.

Can I get retirement counseling? The Postal Service is obligated to provide individual retirement counseling when requested. Typically, counseling sessions will have multiple participants. It might be a benefit to hear others' questions, but if one needs or wants a one-on-

one session, they should be sure to specify that. The counseling sessions are on the clock if the retirement specialist is available to provide the session during the same tour as the employee. After you've requested and received your retirement application, you should call the Human Resource Shared Service Center to schedule your counseling session. Shop stewards should review M-01708 in NALC's Materials Reference System if counseling issues arise.

What if the form Certified Summary of Federal Service (SF 3107-1) in my retirement application is blank? A vital part of the retirement application is the service history. When completing the form Certified Summary of Federal Service (SF 3107-1), the employing agency (the Postal Service in our case) is supposed to fill out the form with the employee's service history. Then the employee will review the service history and certify whether or not the service history is complete. Of course, if the Postal Service fails to complete this form, the employee is not able to review or certify whether the service history is correct and complete. Employees can submit the form without their signature, and it should not delay the application. To read more about this issue, see the December 2023 Contract Talk titled "Retirement processing issues."

How long will OPM take to process my retirement?

Currently, OPM is taking 10 to 15 days to set up retirees in the system and establish interim payments. Then it takes an additional 50 to 90 days to review the application and calculate the benefits. OPM now provides a resource online to provide estimated time frames, which can be found at opm.gov/retirement-center/quick-guide (or use the QR code on this page). Retiring employees should take advantage of this guide.

If you have unanswered questions, be sure to head to the NALC website to access the *Federal Employees Retirement System* or the *Civil Service Retirement System Questions & Answers* booklet or reach out to your branch to see if they have hard copies available. Members are always welcome to call the NALC Retirement Department at 800-424-5186 (toll free) Monday, Wednesday or Thursday, 10 a.m. to noon or 2 p.m. to 4 p.m. Eastern time, or by calling the NALC Headquarters switchboard at 202-393-4695 Monday through Friday, 9 a.m. to 4 p.m. Eastern time and asking for the Retirement Department.



Insurance solicitations



**James W.
“Jim” Yates**

bring about a violation

We continue to receive calls and questions concerning outside insurance companies being given the opportunity to address NALC members to sell their products at branch meetings or in branch publications. Branches should not allow this to happen, as they would be in violation of the *Constitution and General Laws of the United States Letter Carriers Mutual Benefit Association (MBA)*.

Article 8 of the *MBA Constitution* states:

No State Association or Branch of the NALC, or officer or member of the NALC, shall take any action or make any statement whose purpose is to undermine the MBA, encourage a rival to it, or

of its legal or contractual obligations.

The MBA sells a variety of products to NALC members and their families including term and whole life insurance, hospital confinement insurance and annuities. Additionally, MBA offers short-term disability insurance to active carriers who are members of the NALC.

While there are insurance products sold by other companies that MBA does not offer, these companies most likely also sell the same or similar products as the MBA. This would make them a rival of the MBA. Even if the salesperson limits the scope of their pitch to only products that are not offered by the MBA, the branch allowing access to their membership is an endorsement of that company. Once insurance companies gain access to potential clients, they can offer all types of insurance products, even those that are offered by the MBA.

We also often hear of insurance companies being allowed on Postal Service premises to solicit employees regarding their products. It is the obligation of local Postal Service management to prohibit solicitations on postal premises.

Solicitations of this type on Postal Service property are prohibited by *Postal Operations Manual (POM)*, Section 124.54 a., which states:

a. Soliciting alms and contributions, campaigning for election to any public office, collecting private debts, commercial and nonprofit soliciting and vending (including, but not limited to, the vending of newspapers and other publications), the display or distribution of commercial advertising and soliciting of signatures on petitions, polls, or surveys on postal premises (except as authorized by

39 CFR part 259) or impeding the access to or egress from Post Offices are prohibited. This prohibition does not apply to the following:

(1) Commercial or nonprofit activities performed under contract with the Postal Service or pursuant to the provisions of the Randolph-Sheppard Act.

(2) Posting notices on bulletin boards as authorized by 39 CFR 243.2(a).

(3) The solicitation of Postal Service and other federal military and civilian personnel for contributions by recognized agencies as authorized by the Manual on Fund Raising Within the Federal Service, issued by the Chairman of the United States Civil Service Commission under Executive Order 10927, March 13, 1961.

The three exclusions regarding solicitations are not applicable to these outside insurance companies. The first exclusion cites the Randolph-Sheppard Act, which allows licensed blind persons to operate vending facilities on any federal property. The second exclusion is covered by Article 22 (Bulletin Boards) of the National Agreement. The third exclusion allows for fundraising through the Combined Federal Campaign (CFC).

The prohibition against solicitations conducted on postal property is also referenced in the U.S. Code of Federal Regulations specifically at 39 CFR 232.1 (h)(1) and can also be found on USPS Poster 7, Rules and Regulations Governing Conduct on Postal Service Property, which must be posted on postal property for all those entering to view. Poster 7 is a mandatory posting required by *POM*, Section 125.342.

More often, letter carriers are solicited by mail at their employing office. This type of solicitation is also prohibited and should not be allowed by local management. *POM* 124.54 c. states:

c. Solicitations and other actions that are prohibited by 124.54a when conducted on Postal Service property should not be directed by mail or telephone to postal employees on Postal Service property. The Postal Service will not accept or distribute mail or accept telephone calls directed to its employees when such contacts are believed to be contrary to 124.54a.

Again, this prohibition comes directly from federal law, at 39 CFR 232.1 (h)(2).

If these solicitations are happening in your location, please notify your national business agent’s office.

The MBA has been providing quality benefits to letter carriers and their families since 1892. These benefits are specifically designed for letter carriers, by letter carriers.

For more information about any of the MBA products, call the MBA toll-free at 800-424-5184, Tuesdays and Thursdays from 8 a.m. to 3:30 p.m.; or call 202-638-4318 Monday through Friday, 8 a.m. to 3:30 p.m., all Eastern time.

Health Benefit Plan app



**Stephanie
Stewart**

Over the years, the NALC Health Benefit Plan has changed and marked many milestones. To name just a few,

- **1950**—The Plan began with two employees in a single room. Membership was at 4,116
- **1960**—The Plan became part of the Federal Employees Health Benefits program. Membership was at 101,503
- **1980**—The computer age hit, and all analysts were equipped with computer terminals that processed claims through a computerized system

Since the Plan was first created, we have evolved to ensure we remain competitive. In a world of ever-changing technology, rising costs and new requirements of the health care industry, keeping up can be a challenge. However, it's essential that we ensure that our health plan remains competitive and up to date to best serve our members and provide access to information and resources they may need.

One of the major innovations that we have seen over the last decade, and more prevalently since the COVID-19 pandemic, is the rise of online or digital communication to include telehealth, video conferencing, shopping, education and more. In the blink of an eye, the digital trend became a standard practice.

While the Plan began offering telehealth services in January 2020, we also knew our members needed an online platform or exclusive private hub to access their NALC Health Plan information. Today, our members want and should be able to have as much information as possible at their fingertips.

In October of 2021 we launched our first version of the NALC Health Benefit Plan portal and mobile app. By November of 2022, a little more than a year later, 18,790 members were enrolled, and to say we were excited would be an understatement. Now more than 2.5 years later, we continue growing with 32,000-plus members registered to use our portal and app.

If you have not already registered to use our portal or downloaded the NALC Health Benefit Plan mobile app, I encourage you to do so and check it out. Our digital member experience is under constant review and im-

provement. Many new features and updates have been added since the first launch in 2021, and we continue to develop and add more features and functionality for our members. So, if you registered but haven't looked in a while, please revisit us and see what's new.

To create a portal account, you will need to either download the app from the Apple or Google Play store or go to the Plan's website homepage and click on the "Member Login/Register" tab located at the top of the page. Steps included within the process include registry, verification, and creating a profile and password. Once registration is completed, members can access their account information through the desktop login or app that has been downloaded on their tablet or smartphone device, from ordering new member identification cards, reviewing wellness incentives and checking claim status, to downloading an Explanation of Benefits.

You have the ability to view your up-to-date health information at every provider visit, including your out-of-pocket accumulations and real-time calendar-year deductible. We also have a personal health notes tab, where you can create and organize records, which may include medications, allergies, emergency contacts, physicians/pharmacies, immunizations and medical conditions.

Another great resource available with our portal and mobile app is the single sign-on feature. This allows our users to connect directly to our partners at CVS Caremark®, Cigna®, Optum®, American Well®, Hello Heart, Hinge Health and Health Equity without the need for a separate username and password.

When using the portal or app, be assured your personal health information is stored in a single, safe, password-protected place accessible only by you or your designated representative. Should you need assistance with online or mobile access, our digital team is available at 888-636-NALC.

As your Health Benefit Plan director, I know all members may not want to use this type of feature, and I understand that major shifts may cause fear or discomfort. Although we feel this is a great tool for our members, you can access the same information by using more traditional methods. If you feel more comfortable speaking with a Plan customer service representative, please give us a call.

The Plan is committed to helping our members and providing each of you with the tools and resources you might need to be actively engaged in your health. Every health journey is unique just like our members—and the offerings we provide should be, too.

Contract Administration Unit

Paul Barner, Executive Vice President
James D. Henry, Vice President
Christopher Jackson, Director of City Delivery
Manuel L. Peralta Jr., Director of Safety and Health
Dan Toth, Director of Retired Members
Jim Yates, Director of Life Insurance

Continuation of Pay

A benefit for letter carriers who suffer traumatic on-the-job injuries

Postal supervisors often do not have the knowledge or proper training to assist injured letter carriers in filing workers' compensation claims correctly. Additionally, their lack of knowledge often leads to pay interruptions for letter carriers who have suffered a traumatic injury.

Continuation of Pay (COP) is a benefit for letter carriers who suffer a traumatic injury and become disabled in the immediate days following the injury. COP is the continuance of an employee's regular pay for a period not to exceed 45 calendar days of disability. The intent of COP is to avoid interruption of pay while the claim is adjudicated by the Office of Workers' Compensation Programs (OWCP). COP can be paid for lost time related to a total or partial disability. Lost time for medical appointments also might be covered by COP. COP includes holiday pay and any night differential, if appropriate, for a letter carrier's normal work tour.

COP also is payable in cases where the Postal Service fails to provide limited-duty work to an injured worker who is partially disabled due to an injury and has physician-prescribed work restrictions.

To be eligible for COP, a letter carrier must: 1.) have a "traumatic injury" that is job-related and is the cause of the disability, and/or is the cause of lost time due to the need for medical examination and treatment; 2.) file Form CA-1¹ within 30 days of the date of the injury; and 3.) begin losing time from work due to the traumatic injury within 45 days of the injury.

The initial use of the 45-day period of entitlement for COP must begin within 45 days of the employee's date of injury and will be payable for 45 calendar days beginning with the first day of disability. Lost time for a medical appointment, while covered by COP, is not counted when establishing the beginning of the 45-day COP period.

The Postal Service routinely fails to properly pay COP to entitled employees and shop stewards should be proactive, ensuring that letter carriers are properly paid COP when injured. Managers who fail to provide COP are

in violation of the *Employee and Labor Relations Manual (ELM)*, Section 543.41, which states in part:

Continuation of Regular Pay

For most employees who sustain a traumatic injury, FECA provides that the employer must continue the employee's regular pay during any periods of resulting disability up to a maximum of 45 calendar days.

Shop stewards should familiarize themselves with the handbook and manual provisions that are enforceable via Article 19 of the National Agreement when it comes to ensuring proper payment of COP to injured letter carriers.

Postal regulations governing COP are found in *ELM*, Sections 545.7, 545.73 and 545.74.

Additionally, federal regulations of the Federal Employees' Compensation Act (FECA) are enforceable through the grievance procedure via Article 21.4 of the National Agreement:

Section 4. Injury Compensation

Employees covered by this Agreement shall be covered by Subchapter I of Chapter 81 of Title 5, and any amendments thereto, relating to compensation for work injuries. The Employer will promulgate appropriate regulations which comply with applicable regulations of the Office of Workers' Compensation Programs and any amendments thereto.

Federal regulations related to COP can be found in the Code of Federal Regulations (CFR) at 20 CFR 10.200-224 and in United States Code (USC) at 5 USC 8118.

To file a claim for a traumatic injury, employees must fill out and submit a Form CA-1, Federal Employee's Notice of Traumatic Injury and Claim for Continuation of Pay/Compensation. The best way to file a claim is to register and file the claim using the Employees' Compensation Operations & Management Portal (ECOMP), the OWCP's electronic claim filing portal. Filing electronically saves time and makes it easier to manage claims and communicate with OWCP. Employees can access ECOMP on their smartphone, tablet or computer. If they do not have a device to file a claim, the Postal Service must allow them to file their claim on a postal computer.

If employees cannot register in ECOMP, they should request a CA-1 from their supervisor. The Postal Service is required to provide them with the form upon request, which is available on their supervisor's computer. Employees who are refused a form should contact their shop steward immediately.

Injured letter carriers should complete the employee por-

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¹ While NALC strongly recommends that letter carriers always use Form CA-1, the *FECA Procedure Manual*, Chapter 2-0807.5,b provides that "The injured employee, or someone acting on his or her behalf, must provide a written report on Form CA-1 (Federal Employee's Notice of Traumatic Injury and Claim for Continuation of Pay/Compensation) to the employing agency within 30 days of the injury. See 20 C.F.R. §10.210(a). Another OWCP-approved form, such as Form CA-2 (Notice of Occupational Disease and Claim for Compensation), CA-2a (Notice of Recurrence), or CA-7 (Claim for Compensation on Account of Traumatic Injury or Occupational Disease), which contains words of claim, can be used to satisfy timely filing requirements."

COP (continued)

(continued from page 43)

tion of the CA-1 and be thorough in describing the cause and nature of the injury. Question No. 15 of the CA-1 allows them to choose between COP, sick leave and/or annual leave. Employees who wish to receive COP should check box “a.”

It’s important to note that Postal Service employees are not entitled to COP for the first three calendar days of temporary disability and may use annual leave, sick leave or leave without pay during that period. If the disability exceeds 14 calendar days or is followed by permanent disability, the employee may have that leave restored upon request.

Postal managers often refuse to pay COP under the false pretense of controversion (to dispute, challenge or deny the validity of the claim). However, during any attempt to controvert COP, the Postal Service must continue to compensate the employee at their regular rate of pay until a decision is rendered by OWCP. Only OWCP can make the official decision to controvert COP, and that decision will be shared with both the Postal Service and the injured employee. Any attempt to controvert COP by the Postal Service must also be shared with the injured employee.

Injured employees should be aware that they are required to submit medical documentation that supports any disability within 10 days of filing the claim. COP must be paid during this period; however, if the employee fails to submit medical documentation by the 10th day, COP

can be terminated. If the employee later submits medical documentation to support their disability, COP must be retroactively reinstated.

If an employee mistakenly chooses to use annual or sick leave when filing their CA-1, they may subsequently request COP instead of previously requested sick and/or annual leave. However, such a request must be made within one year of the date that leave is used, or within one year of the date OWCP approves the claim, whichever is later. The employee’s sick and annual leave used for the period covering the absences for the injury will be restored to the employee’s leave balance. This provision is found in Exhibit 3.5a of the *Handbook EL-505, Injury Compensation*.

Shop stewards should meticulously document any violation of the COP provisions by filing grievances. In many districts around the country, these violations are repetitive in nature and arbitrators have begun to take notice.

NALC has developed and produced much guidance on OWCP-related issues. An OWCP grievance guide, titled *Grieving Management’s OWCP Violations*, as well as several grievance starters, are available in the Members Only portal of the NALC website, nalc.org. Once in the Members Only portal, navigate to “Member Documents” and then refer to the drop-down menu under “OWCP.” For further guidance, branch officers should contact their NALC national business agent.

Director of City Delivery

Updates (continued)

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a grievance be filed. A grievance starter has been created to assist representatives in developing cases at the local level. Shop stewards in need of assistance should reach out to their regional office for further guidance and a copy of grievance starter. For more details regarding the Informed Facility initiative, read my column in the November 2023 edition of *The Postal Record*.

Canoo model Lifestyle Delivery Vehicle (LDV) 190

Also in February, the Postal Service detailed its plans to test the Canoo model Lifestyle Delivery Vehicle (LDV) 190. The Canoo LDV 190 is a battery electric commercial



off-the-shelf vehicle with almost 172 cubic feet of cargo space. USPS states that the purpose of this test is to determine how the vehicle performs on carrier routes currently serviced by Long Life Vehicles (LLV), Flexible Fuel Vehicles (FFV) and Mercedes Metris vehicles.

Testing of the vehicle will be conducted April 3 through October at the South Atlanta Sorting and Delivery Center (S&DC) in Atlanta, GA. Driver training for the Canoo LDV 190 is scheduled to begin April 1.

I will monitor these initiatives and update the membership on any effects these actions may have on city carriers. Be sure to read my article each month and visit nalc.org for the latest information.

Medical evidence and OWCP, Part 7

What the attending physician should understand in responding to medical reports from OWCP-directed exams



Regional Workers' Compensation Assistant Coby Jones

Many decisions from the Employees' Compensation Appeals Board (ECAB) contain this written observation: "It is well established that proceedings under the Act are not adversarial in nature, nor is the Office a disinterested arbiter. While appellant has the burden to establish entitlement to compensation, the Office shares responsibility in the development of evidence to see that justice is done."

There are times, however, in many Office of Workers' Compensation Programs (OWCP) claims where the process seems anything but non-adversarial to the injured worker. Nowhere is this truer than when a claimant has to deal with a second opinion examination (SECOP).¹ While SECOPs may be valuable in developing the medical evidence to support or expand a claim, they can also be a prelude to the termination of medical benefits or compensation.

The Federal Employees' Compensation Act (FECA) at 5 USC 8123a grants OWCP the authority to order an examination of an injured employee as frequently and at the times and places as may be reasonably required. SECOPs may occur whenever OWCP determines that the case record contains insufficient medical evidence to answer questions that arise during the life of the claim.

In the early stages of the claim, there may be questions concerning the causal relationship of the employee's work environment to the diagnosed condition. After the claim is approved, OWCP may require a SECOP to resolve an issue regarding the course of treatment, such as should physical therapy, gym membership or surgery be approved? OWCP may also use a SECOP to clarify work restrictions or to determine the extent of an injured worker's permanent impairment for a schedule award.

An injured employee cannot opt out of a SECOP. A refusal to participate in the SECOP could result in suspension of compensation unless the employee establishes good cause for their failure to attend.²

OWCP has great flexibility in selecting physicians to conduct SECOPs. Per the *FECA Procedure Manual*³, SECOPs are generally conducted by a physician selected by a medical referral group that has contracted with OWCP to provide second opinion medical referrals.

While NALC has seen positive results come from SECOPs, the medical reports from SECOPs often challenge not only the findings and opinion of the attending physician, but also the injured worker's perception of the nature and extent of their injuries. It's an unfortunate fact that most medical referral groups such as those used by OWCP have a business model that relies on supplying physicians to corporations, insurance companies and attorney groups for the purpose of providing evidence for litigation and challenging claims. And the physicians they employ have experience in writing reports that will survive legal challenges.

Problems may arise for claimants when a SECOP disagrees with or supplants an attending physician's opinion. For example, the fact that degenerative disc disease can be permanently aggravated or accelerated by factors at work may seem obvious both to letter carriers who suffer from it and to their attending physicians. There are, however, physicians who see degenerative disc disease as part of growing older and view any exacerbation of the condition as temporary at best.

How OWCP weighs the SECOP's opinion against the attending physician's opinion depends on several factors. OWCP might grant greater weight to the opinion of the SECOP physician if they are a board-certified specialist in the appropriate field and the attending physician is a general practitioner. OWCP will also give greater weight to a medical report that contains a more complete medical history over one that does not (even if the medical history in the SECOP report was generated by the attending physician).

Other factors that OWCP may consider in weighing medical reports include the presence or absence of equivocal language in the report and the level of detail in any rationalized opinion that explains the physiological mechanism or process by which work factors caused or contributed to the injury.

While most SECOP physicians have training and experience in writing medical reports to withstand both legal and administrative scrutiny, attending physicians treating injured letter carriers rarely have such experience or training. Over the next few months, this column will examine how OWCP claims examiners read and weigh medical evidence with the goal of evening out the playing field by providing guidance to the attending physician on how to effectively respond to adverse SECOP reports.

Surely, it is in the interest of all parties that the medical development of a case, if possible, be left in the hands of the attending physician who has a deeper understanding of the injured worker's medical history, diagnosed conditions and work environment than the SECOP physician.

¹ For a full discussion on challenging SECOPs and referee exams (or impartial medical exams/IMEs) in the appeals process, see this column January through May 2012.

² 5 USC 8123d

³ *FECA Procedure Manual* Part 3-0500.3.b.2

Monthly CSRS annuity payments for letter carriers who retire on June 1, 2024

The table below provides monthly basic annuity, survivor reduction and reduced annuity amount estimates for letter carriers covered by the Civil Service Retirement System (CSRS) who plan to take optional retirement on June 1, 2024. 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 : \$72,910			CC Grade 2 / High-3 Average ¹ : \$74,441		
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	\$2,202	\$198	\$2,005	\$2,249	\$202	\$2,046
21	2,324	210	2,114	2,373	215	2,158
22	2,446	222	2,223	2,497	227	2,270
23	2,567	234	2,333	2,621	240	2,381
24	2,689	246	2,442	2,745	252	2,493
25	2,810	259	2,552	2,869	264	2,605
26	2,932	271	2,661	2,993	277	2,716
27	3,053	283	2,770	3,117	289	2,828
28	3,175	295	2,880	3,241	302	2,940
29	3,296	307	2,989	3,365	314	3,051
30	3,418	319	3,098	3,489	326	3,163
31	3,539	331	3,208	3,613	339	3,275
32	3,661	344	3,317	3,738	351	3,386
33	3,782	356	3,426	3,862	364	3,498
34	3,904	368	3,536	3,986	376	3,610
35	4,025	380	3,645	4,110	388	3,721
36	4,147	392	3,755	4,234	401	3,833
37	4,268	404	3,864	4,358	413	3,945
38	4,390	416	3,973	4,482	426	4,056
39	4,511	429	4,083	4,606	438	4,168
40	4,633	441	4,192	4,730	451	4,280
41	4,754	453	4,301	4,854	463	4,391
41+11 months & over ⁵	4,861	464	4,397	4,963	474	4,489

1. High-3 averages for both grades (formerly levels) are for carriers who have worked full time on a continuous basis between June 1, 2021, and May 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 \$554.36 per month if for self plus one (code 323), \$480.54 if for self and family (code 322), or \$237.05 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.

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

Monthly FERS annuity payments for letter carriers who retire on June 1, 2024

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

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

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

The table below provides monthly basic annuity, survivor deduction and net annuity amount estimates for letter carriers who plan to take optional retirement on June 1, 2024. 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 : \$72,910			CC Grade 2 / High-3 Average ¹ : \$74,441		
	Basic Annuity	Max. Survivor Deduction ³	Max. Survivor Reduced Annuity ⁴	Basic Annuity	Max. Survivor Deduction ³	Max. Survivor Reduced Annuity ⁴
20	\$1,215	\$122	\$1,094	\$1,241	\$124	\$1,117
21	1,276	128	1,148	1,303	130	1,172
22	1,337	134	1,203	1,365	136	1,228
23	1,397	140	1,258	1,427	143	1,284
24	1,458	146	1,312	1,489	149	1,340
25	1,519	152	1,367	1,551	155	1,396
26	1,580	158	1,422	1,613	161	1,452
27	1,640	164	1,476	1,675	167	1,507
28	1,701	170	1,531	1,737	174	1,563
29	1,762	176	1,586	1,799	180	1,619
30	1,823	182	1,640	1,861	186	1,675
31	1,883	188	1,695	1,923	192	1,731
32	1,944	194	1,750	1,985	199	1,787
33	2,005	201	1,805	2,047	205	1,842
34	2,066	207	1,859	2,109	211	1,898
35	2,127	213	1,914	2,171	217	1,954
36	2,187	219	1,969	2,233	223	2,010
37	2,248	225	2,023	2,295	230	2,066
38	2,309	231	2,078	2,357	236	2,122
39	2,370	237	2,133	2,419	242	2,177
40	2,430	243	2,187	2,481	248	2,233
Each additional year ⁵	60.76	6.08	54.68	62.03	6.20	55.83

1. High-3 averages for both grades (formerly levels) are for carriers who have worked full time on a continuous basis between June 1, 2021, and May 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 \$554.36 per month if for self plus one (code 323), \$480.54 if for self and family (code 322), or \$237.05 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.

State Summaries

California

Do you want to do something productive later this year, say in early November? Something that, if your like-minded friends and family members catch on and follow your lead, could lead to a more prosperous future for you and your loved ones? A hint: In some states, you don't even have to leave your house to do it.

If you guessed taking the time to fill out a ballot, putting it in a pre-addressed envelope, and mailing it in, step to the head of the class! Some states, like California, mail ballots to each registered voter. It took me maybe two minutes to fill out my ballot, put it in the envelope, and sign it in a most elegant fashion. And of course, I voted for candidates or incumbents who support our right to collective bargaining and who have co-sponsored our bills and resolutions.

Yet, despite the ease of voting as I just described it, roughly 25 percent of eligible voters in my home county, Fresno, voted in the March primary. Twenty-five percent! Well, I hope the 75 percent of voters in my neck of the woods who didn't take a minimal amount of spare time to cast a ballot are satisfied with the government they get!

This year, the House, Senate and presidency are up for grabs, and so, too, is your future. By and large, the voters who oppose unions turn out to vote. It is only because of the apathy of voters in key swing states who decided not to vote that Donald Trump became president. And if things had transpired differently, perhaps we could have had postal reform passed and signed into law at an earlier date.

People fought and died for your right to vote. Exercise it. And vote by mail, if possible.

Eric Ellis

Colorado

Colorado letter carriers are only a few weeks away from attending the 2024 Colorado state convention in Greenwood Village. We are excited for the convention this year and appreciate Centennial Branch 5996 hosting all of the delegates from across Colorado. Your letter carrier congressional liaisons have been busy staying connected with their representatives in their congressional districts. We need to *take action* when called upon to hold our legislators responsible for properly representing letter carriers. Reach out to your local representative and ask them to support H.R. 5995. Be sure to visit nalc.org and click on the "Government Affairs" tab and continue to the Legislative Action Center. All of us need to be active and help protect and fight for the rights of letter carriers. Keep up the fight!

Richard Byrne

Indiana

There was a time when people knew they would be charged with a federal crime if any action was taken against letter carriers while on duty. National organized rallies are being held in common areas with violence against letter carriers. Expect a rally in Indiana soon.

Within just a few years, more than six violent acts have been reported against letter carriers. Keyword: "reported." Report situations to management and your branch president.

Letter carriers throughout Indiana are being physically assaulted. The worst attack on a letter carrier in the history of Indiana happened to our fallen sister, Angela Summers. The U.S. Attorney's office, in collaboration with the Indianapolis Metropolitan Police Department and the U.S. Postal Inspectors, caught and charged the 23-year-old man who attacked and killed her. He was sentenced to 30 years in federal prison after pleading guilty to murder and discharging a firearm during a crime. In addition, after his release from prison, he is to serve three years of supervised federal probation. U.S. Attorney Zackary Myers of the Southern District of Indiana thanked Assistant U.S. Attorneys Jayson McGrath and Peter Blackett for successfully prosecuting the case. Remember those names, because they might eventually become politicians who continue to help letter carriers.

In early March, a task force of letter carriers was trained to support letter carriers from workplace trauma. These carriers will be sent out at a moment's notice on behalf of NALC. Meanwhile, branches can demand safety through contractual actions, staying up to date with violence toward our brothers and sisters, then sharing it with the regional office to communicate with Postal Service headquarters. Retirees, do not forget about the Special Enrollment Period through Medicare, April 1 through Sept. 30. Thank you for your attention.

Kieaunta Roberson

Kentucky

The months of planning, hard work and communication by Ashland Branch 745 resulted in a valuable and highly informative KYSALC spring district meeting in late February. Attendance for a meeting like this was higher than any of our records. Thanks to President Haywood, his officers and the NALC union members.

We appreciated Stephanie M. Stewart, director of our NALC Health Benefit Plan, for her valuable information that was so timely at our meeting. She will guide us during Open Season in this pivotal year. Positive changes will be manifested from the postal reform law, which will include integration with Medicare. Talk to your NALC Health Benefit Plan rep if you are in our plan. Other Plan members should direct questions to their reps. Stephanie assured us that we would receive clarification from NALC and OPM prior to Open Season. Postal workers, including NALC, will be in a classification different than other federal workers.

Remember that all facets of our work lives are affected by legislation and politics. This is just one reason why we should contribute to LCPF, the NALC PAC, and participate outside of our workplaces. NALC members still have Hatch Act limitations. You must be out of uniform and off the clock, as well as off U.S. postal property. None of our benefits were ever just given to us. Branch presidents, remember to

give legislative updates and stress the importance of LCPF at your monthly meetings. Form plans to ask individuals of our branches, out of uniform and off the clock, to give to LCPF.

Bob McNulty

Michigan

Greetings from Michigan. As I write this, the nominees appear set in place for November's presidential election. In one corner stands a man who has fought with working people for 50 years, wants corporations to pay their fair share, who's walked picket lines and rightfully gives unions the credit for building the middle class. We have never had a better friend in the White House. In the other corner is a man who sneers at labor, calls veterans "suckers" for serving their country and has pledged to act like a dictator on Day 1. There has never in history been a fight more worth making than the one in which we in the labor movement are currently engaged.

Here in Michigan the race for Senate has taken another turn as former Rep. Justin Amash has thrown his hat into the ring for the open Senate seat. Four candidates, including former Detroit Police Chief James Craig, have exited the race. This will bring the total number of Republicans on the August primary ballot to 12, with Amash, Meijer and Rogers arguably the front-runners to face off against one of three Democrats seeking their party's nomination.

By the time this update reaches you, the state association executive board will have met, and we are planning an ambitious agenda for the duration of the election year. We are in the process of discussing a number of potential events to help increase participation throughout the year. Check back next month for more on what's sure to be a great year.

John Serwach

Tennessee

Hello, brothers and sisters. Another election is upon us! And since postal employees are considered federal employees, we come under the provisions of the

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.

Hatch Act. It can be found at: osc.gov/Services/Pages/HatchAct.aspx. OSC stands for U.S. Office of Special Counsel. In a nutshell, here is what you cannot or can do while in uniform:

- You can express your personal views on public issues via social media platforms.
- You cannot email, blog, tweet or post media while at work.
- If you engage in political activity, you cannot wear your uniform or badge.
- You cannot wear T-shirts, hats or buttons, display posters, or use coffee mugs that support or oppose partisan parties at work.
- Employees may not work at a phone bank, host a fundraiser, or share fundraising posts on social media.
- Employees can include their official title or position and where you work in your social media profile, even if you also include your political affiliation or otherwise use your account to engage in political activity.
- Employees can continue to follow, be friends with, or “like” the official social media accounts of government officials after they become candidates for reelection.

The above listing is not comprehensive. For complete guidance, see the Hatch Act guidance on social media.

If a carrier observes a possible violation on the workroom floor, one should report it to their steward, who can bring it to the attention of the floor supervisor. The steward

should run it up the branch flagpole for further guidance.

Tony Rodriguez

Texas

“Enough is enough” we chanted, over and over at a rally in Dallas. A reporter interviewed me for Univision. I shared our needs and felt motivated by having so many members joining us.

I want all of us to help share the message with your members of Congress. They can help with this and much more. We look forward to legislation addressing our members’ safety. NALC is working with lawmakers to craft this much-needed legislation. The violence plaguing our members has been seen by many people across this country. The community is coming together in support of letter carriers.

Educating the public is very important about these attacks; however, it’s not the only thing we need to do. We also need to get support for other letter carrier issues. The Social Security Fairness Act, H.R. 82, has 309 co-sponsors, and the companion Senate bill, Social Security Fairness Act, S. 597, has 52 co-sponsors. The Federal Retirement Fairness Act has 86 co-sponsors and is still climbing.

Tell your representatives to support these bills, as they help past and present members for a better future.

National is working with our state associa-

tions and friends in Congress to get legislation passed and signed into law. Let’s do our part and share this message at branch functions and with each other.

Be safe out there.

Carlos Rodriguez Jr.

Election Notices

Norman, Oklahoma

This is to notify all members of Branch 1491 that we will be holding elections for officers and delegates beginning in May. Officers will take office in September. We appreciate all participation.

Barbara Semke, Sec., Br. 1491

Norwalk, Connecticut

This is to serve as official notice to the members of Vincent J. Santagate Branch 147 that nominations for delegates to the 2025 convention of the Connecticut State Association of Letter Carriers will be accepted at the regular branch meeting on May 15. All members in good standing of the NALC and Branch 147 may accept nomination.

Election will be by secret ballot at the June 18 meeting. Meetings are held at the Ferris Hill Club on Ferris Avenue in Norwalk and begin promptly at 6:30 p.m.

Pete Bardos, Rec. Sec., Br. 147

Honor Roll

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

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



Additionally, the national secretary-treasurer’s office handles

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



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

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

80-year pins

Aaron D. Hamilton	San Angelo, TX	Br. 1203
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75-year pins

Frank W. Gaca	Detroit, MI	Br. 1
Jesse T. Brookshier	Kansas City, MO	Br. 30
Karl H. Wheeler	Flushing, NY	Br. 294
Herbert Casen	Philadelphia, PA	Br. 157

70-year pins

Raymond J. Decker	Hartford, CT	Br. 86
Anthony J. Denicola	Hartford, CT	Br. 86

John J. Fortin Jr.	Hartford, CT	Br. 86
James S. Hunt	Tampa, FL	Br. 599
Ronald J. Kiss	Oak Park, IL	Br. 608
Ernest J. Dinatale	Detroit, MI	Br. 1
John L. Dobracki	Detroit, MI	Br. 1
Lynn D. Weismiller	Lansing, MI	Br. 122
Robert N. Crandall	WesternWayneCo.,MI	Br. 2184
Charles J. Durfee	WesternWayneCo.,MI	Br. 2184
Ronald E. Feria	WesternWayneCo.,MI	Br. 2184
Lawrence L. Marshall	WesternWayneCo.,MI	Br. 2184
Albert C. Carter	Kansas City, MO	Br. 30
Karl H. Wheeler	Flushing, NY	Br. 294
William R. Spargo	Gastonia, NC	Br. 1512

65-year pins

Clifford R. Nelson	Denver, CO	Br. 47
Donald M. Nusbaume	Denver, CO	Br. 47
Roger A. Cogburn	Fort Collins, CO	Br. 849
John H. Winters Jr.	Hartford, CT	Br. 86
Ronald B. Roache	Washington, DC	Br. 142
Charles R. Everidge	Tampa, FL	Br. 599
Donald N. Stephens	Tampa, FL	Br. 599
William L. Edelston	Sarasota, FL	Br. 2148
Richard R. Buczek	S. Suburban Mgd., IL	Br. 4016
Richard F. Cataldo	Elkhart, IN	Br. 547
James G. Pringle	Elkhart, IN	Br. 547
John L. Schultz	Elkhart, IN	Br. 547
Robert M. Stutsman	Elkhart, IN	Br. 547

Honor Roll

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

Roger D. Stutsman	Elkhart, IN	Br. 547
Floyd E. Nall	Louisville, KY	Br. 14
James T. Reed	Louisville, KY	Br. 14
Charles A. Wick Jr.	Louisville, KY	Br. 14
George B. Wolz	Louisville, KY	Br. 14
John J. Green	Detroit, MI	Br. 1
Alvin W. Angove Jr.	WesternWayneCo.,MI	Br. 2184
Joseph S. Brozovich	WesternWayneCo.,MI	Br. 2184
Charles E. Finley	WesternWayneCo.,MI	Br. 2184
James C. White	WesternWayneCo.,MI	Br. 2184
Clarence C. Gervais Jr.	Minneapolis, MN	Br. 9
David L. Hempel	Minneapolis, MN	Br. 9
Harold L. Tilbury	Minneapolis, MN	Br. 9
Garland R. Vacinek	St. Paul, MN	Br. 28
Marshall E. Butler	Kansas City, MO	Br. 30
Melvin W. Mathes	Kansas City, MO	Br. 30
Alvin R. Watters	Kansas City, MO	Br. 30
James R. Brady	NJ Mgd.	Br. 38
Anthony J. Castiglione	NJ Mgd.	Br. 38
Emil A. Magliaro	NJ Mgd.	Br. 38
Salvatore J. Mangano	NJ Mgd.	Br. 38
Anthony A. Memoli	NJ Mgd.	Br. 38
Stanley R. Szumel	NJ Mgd.	Br. 38
Richard J. Burke	Flushing, NY	Br. 294
Frank W. Gallo	Flushing, NY	Br. 294
Ralph J. Grottalio	Flushing, NY	Br. 294
P. E. Kane	Flushing, NY	Br. 294
Anthony Berry	Akron, OH	Br. 148
William Messaros Jr.	Elyria, OH	Br. 196
James A. Rowlett	Medford, OR	Br. 1433
Paul L. Steverson	Memphis, TN	Br. 27
James W. Tinkle	Memphis, TN	Br. 27
Dennis E. Wilson	San Angelo, TX	Br. 1203
Jesse L. Broadnax	Norfolk, VA	Br. 456
Nathaniel Brooks	Norfolk, VA	Br. 456
Cornelius V. Eason Jr.	Norfolk, VA	Br. 456
Clifton W. Johnson Jr.	Norfolk, VA	Br. 456
Ernest E. Graves	Northern VA	Br. 3520
Ronald E. Grimm	Northern VA	Br. 3520
Gene E. Kelley	Northern VA	Br. 3520
Darold D. Smith	Northern VA	Br. 3520
John W. Smith	Northern VA	Br. 3520
Gene R. Stewart	Northern VA	Br. 3520

60-year pins

Edward B. Egloff	Denver, CO	Br. 47
George A. Heron	Denver, CO	Br. 47
Richard E. Hoard	Denver, CO	Br. 47
Kenneth A. Jerome	Denver, CO	Br. 47
Richard A. Pottenger	Denver, CO	Br. 47
Raymond V. Cormier	Hartford, CT	Br. 86
Ronald F. Kuhnly	Hartford, CT	Br. 86
Joseph Leo	Hartford, CT	Br. 86
James F. Sheehan	Hartford, CT	Br. 86
Kenneth F. Bingle	Sarasota, FL	Br. 2148
Richard F. Delgrosso	Sarasota, FL	Br. 2148
William L. Edelston	Sarasota, FL	Br. 2148
Reginald P. Mattei	Sarasota, FL	Br. 2148
Milton F. Kitts	Columbus, GA	Br. 546
Thomas R. Sanders	Columbus, GA	Br. 546
John R. O'Brien	Oak Park, IL	Br. 608
John W. Stich	Oak Park, IL	Br. 608
James L. Allen	Quincy, IL	Br. 216
Jerry L. Clements	Louisville, KY	Br. 14
James E. Fey	Louisville, KY	Br. 14
John W. Hartlage Jr.	Louisville, KY	Br. 14
Louis J. Hellmueller	Louisville, KY	Br. 14
Lawrence M. Miller	Louisville, KY	Br. 14
James D. Olges	Louisville, KY	Br. 14
William T. Roberts	Louisville, KY	Br. 14
Dallas R. Stayton	Louisville, KY	Br. 14

Richard M. Sulzer	Louisville, KY	Br. 14
Francis E. Fitzgerald	Western MA	Br. 46
Robert L. Lamere	Minneapolis, MN	Br. 9
Wesley C. Meade	Minneapolis, MN	Br. 9
Daniel R. Vanyo	Minneapolis, MN	Br. 9
Marshall E. Butler	Kansas City, MO	Br. 30
Bobbie L. Thompson	Kansas City, MO	Br. 30
Alvin R. Watters	Kansas City, MO	Br. 30
Barry Bernstein	Bergen Co. Mgd., NJ	Br. 425
Hilel B. Welner	Bergen Co. Mgd., NJ	Br. 425
Robert A. Bird	NJ Mgd.	Br. 38
George J. Crede Jr.	NJ Mgd.	Br. 38
Dominic E. Dalton	NJ Mgd.	Br. 38
John C. Gaynor	NJ Mgd.	Br. 38
Donald G. Girovasi	NJ Mgd.	Br. 38
Howard Little	NJ Mgd.	Br. 38
David K. Lobdell	NJ Mgd.	Br. 38
Frank Mazzeo	NJ Mgd.	Br. 38
Vincent J. Romano	NJ Mgd.	Br. 38
Howard P. Saltzman	NJ Mgd.	Br. 38
James M. Smith	NJ Mgd.	Br. 38
Morris H. Turner Jr.	NJ Mgd.	Br. 38
John M. Vaccaro	NJ Mgd.	Br. 38
Paul J. Wagner	NJ Mgd.	Br. 38
Henrie A. Werte	NJ Mgd.	Br. 38
Edward J. Zakolski	NJ Mgd.	Br. 38
Joseph J. Covino	Flushing, NY	Br. 294
J. J. Fitzgerald	Flushing, NY	Br. 294
Thomas A. Frank	Flushing, NY	Br. 294
J. E. Gregory Jr.	Flushing, NY	Br. 294
Kenneth R. Griffiths	Flushing, NY	Br. 294
Joseph L. Grisafi	Flushing, NY	Br. 294
William J. Grossi	Flushing, NY	Br. 294
Ralph J. Grottalio	Flushing, NY	Br. 294
H. O. Henkel	Flushing, NY	Br. 294
K E. Herel	Flushing, NY	Br. 294
P. E. Kane	Flushing, NY	Br. 294
James E. Lies	Flushing, NY	Br. 294
Joe Macchia	Flushing, NY	Br. 294
Donald E. Oderwald	Flushing, NY	Br. 294
Walter A. Oppermann	Flushing, NY	Br. 294
Biagio Ragusa	Flushing, NY	Br. 294
William J. Sannuto	Flushing, NY	Br. 294
George R. Schmidt	Flushing, NY	Br. 294
Norman A. Selzer	Flushing, NY	Br. 294
A. A. Siggilino	Flushing, NY	Br. 294
Richard B. Cherry	Gastonia, NC	Br. 1512
Donald R. Costner	Gastonia, NC	Br. 1512
James B. Joye	Gastonia, NC	Br. 1512
Billy G. Tolbert	Gastonia, NC	Br. 1512
E. V. Williams Jr.	Gastonia, NC	Br. 1512
George A. Alberts	Elyria, OH	Br. 196
Joyce M. Miller	Elyria, OH	Br. 196
Stephen N. Simmons	Newport, RI	Br. 57
Harold V. Bryant	Memphis, TN	Br. 27
Louis V. Moysin	Memphis, TN	Br. 27
Andrew M. Simmons	Memphis, TN	Br. 27
Alvin Winbush	Memphis, TN	Br. 27
Dennis W. Lovelace	Lynchburg, VA	Br. 325
James B. Tuggle	Lynchburg, VA	Br. 325
Ronald T. Wooldridge	Norfolk, VA	Br. 456
Kenneth B. Ford	Northern VA	Br. 3520
Edward Gankiewicz	Northern VA	Br. 3520
William Humphrey Jr.	Northern VA	Br. 3520
Gregory Kott	Northern VA	Br. 3520
John R. McGreevy	Northern VA	Br. 3520
Lawrence R. Moore	Northern VA	Br. 3520
James P. Pumphrey	Northern VA	Br. 3520
Ronald M. Swain	Northern VA	Br. 3520
Ted W. West	Northern VA	Br. 3520

55-year pins

Willard G. Tapscott	Decatur, AL	Br. 1314
Herman M. Tyus	Decatur, AL	Br. 1314
Rickey L. Bonds	Greater E. Bay, CA	Br. 1111
Pauline C. Bonilla	Greater E. Bay, CA	Br. 1111
Thomas R. Carlson	Greater E. Bay, CA	Br. 1111
Warren D. Sedgwick	Greater E. Bay, CA	Br. 1111
Joseph M. Apodaca	Denver, CO	Br. 47
Cristobal Cordova	Denver, CO	Br. 47
Christine E. Cwalina	Denver, CO	Br. 47
Richard D. Domina	Denver, CO	Br. 47
Arvon A. Eberhardt	Denver, CO	Br. 47
Gilbert S. Egan	Denver, CO	Br. 47
Emmett J. Gibbons	Denver, CO	Br. 47
Gayle A. Hector	Denver, CO	Br. 47
Jackie D. Jackson	Denver, CO	Br. 47
Rand S. Kleckler	Denver, CO	Br. 47
Michael F. Kozak	Denver, CO	Br. 47
Benjamin D. Lopez	Denver, CO	Br. 47
Merle H. Lydick	Denver, CO	Br. 47
Jose U. Medina	Denver, CO	Br. 47
Young M. Moon	Denver, CO	Br. 47
Emilio Nicolas Jr.	Denver, CO	Br. 47
Lewis W. Potisk	Denver, CO	Br. 47
Cary J. Rady	Denver, CO	Br. 47
Robert J. Salazar	Denver, CO	Br. 47
Edward J. Spritzer	Denver, CO	Br. 47
Clinton D. Townsend	Denver, CO	Br. 47
Norman M. Wood	Denver, CO	Br. 47
John D. Edwards	Fort Collins, CO	Br. 849
John F. Gallegos	Fort Collins, CO	Br. 849
Melvin G. Hartung	Fort Collins, CO	Br. 849
William J. Hergenreter	Fort Collins, CO	Br. 849
Grover C. Hill	Fort Collins, CO	Br. 849
Bobby L. Kimberling	Fort Collins, CO	Br. 849
William Mares	Fort Collins, CO	Br. 849
Thomas H. Meek	Fort Collins, CO	Br. 849
Jerome Nycz	Fort Collins, CO	Br. 849
Donald E. Schelly	Fort Collins, CO	Br. 849
Vincent G. Cmuchowski	Hartford, CT	Br. 86
Clifton M. Cooley III	Hartford, CT	Br. 86
Raymond T. McCormack	Hartford, CT	Br. 86
Howard T. Nelson	Hartford, CT	Br. 86
Jesse H. Rogers	Hartford, CT	Br. 86
Orlando C. Barnes	Washington, DC	Br. 142
Marshall L. Boykins	Washington, DC	Br. 142
Michael J. Douglas	Washington, DC	Br. 142
Mersheila C. Garrett-Acorns	Washington, DC	Br. 142
Walter A. Herring	Washington, DC	Br. 142
Alfred Acosta	Tampa, FL	Br. 599
Louis A. Carmon	Tampa, FL	Br. 599
Robert L. Carter	Tampa, FL	Br. 599
Harley L. Fowlkes	Tampa, FL	Br. 599
Richard Gomez	Tampa, FL	Br. 599
Norman I. Nomura	Wahiawa, HI	Br. 4837
Richard Y. Uchima	Wahiawa, HI	Br. 4837
Miguel T. Gutierrez	E. St. Louis, IL	Br. 319
George C. Poston	E. St. Louis, IL	Br. 319
Gary L. Schroeder	E. St. Louis, IL	Br. 319
John V. D. Alexander	Oak Park, IL	Br. 608
Juanita Dowdy	Oak Park, IL	Br. 608
Norma J. Imroth	Oak Park, IL	Br. 608
Scott R. Ralson	Oak Lawn, IL	Br. 4016
Scott P. Simone	Oak Lawn, IL	Br. 4016
Rodney D. Johnson	Rock Island, IL	Br. 292
Richard R. Stout	Rock Island, IL	Br. 292
Stephen W. Akers	Elkhart, IN	Br. 547
Ronald G. Birr	Elkhart, IN	Br. 547
Charles F. Breden	Elkhart, IN	Br. 547
Steven J. Burrell	Elkhart, IN	Br. 547
Robert L. Grimm	Elkhart, IN	Br. 547

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

Henry A. Harris	Elkhart, IN	Br. 547	Richard L. Simonson	Minneapolis, MN	Br. 9	Stanley N. Jones	Gastonia, NC	Br. 1512
Danny J. Shaw	Elkhart, IN	Br. 547	James R. Stanley	Minneapolis, MN	Br. 9	Joseph S. Messer	Gastonia, NC	Br. 1512
Vernon E. Stack	Elkhart, IN	Br. 547	Raymond O. Tranby	Minneapolis, MN	Br. 9	Howard O. Neely	Gastonia, NC	Br. 1512
Neil J. Troup	Elkhart, IN	Br. 547	Bohn L. Wanamaker	Minneapolis, MN	Br. 9	Jimmy F. Palmer	Gastonia, NC	Br. 1512
Barry A. Barnes	Louisville, KY	Br. 14	Donna J. Wiecks	Minneapolis, MN	Br. 9	Charles E. Pressley	Gastonia, NC	Br. 1512
Robert D. Barton	Louisville, KY	Br. 14	Stephen L. Williams	Minneapolis, MN	Br. 9	David E. Spargo	Gastonia, NC	Br. 1512
Richard L. Darnell	Louisville, KY	Br. 14	Donald W. Abney	Kansas City, MO	Br. 30	David E. Kringlie	Fargo-W. Fargo, ND	Br. 205
Larry E. Embry	Louisville, KY	Br. 14	Robert W. Aubuchon	Kansas City, MO	Br. 30	Richard R. Gates	Akron, OH	Br. 148
Lawrence A. Haag	Louisville, KY	Br. 14	James M. Drescher	Kansas City, MO	Br. 30	James O. Keck	Akron, OH	Br. 148
Richard E. Haines	Louisville, KY	Br. 14	Randall L. Henderson	Kansas City, MO	Br. 30	William P. Kinion	Akron, OH	Br. 148
Elbirda J. Haley	Louisville, KY	Br. 14	Robert C. McKinney	Kansas City, MO	Br. 30	David Ogrizek	Akron, OH	Br. 148
William D. Meier	Louisville, KY	Br. 14	John D. Risner	Kansas City, MO	Br. 30	Raymond D. Phillips	Akron, OH	Br. 148
Otto F. Miller Jr.	Louisville, KY	Br. 14	Jerald L. Scott	Kansas City, MO	Br. 30	Paul E. Roan	Akron, OH	Br. 148
Ronald L. Nix	Louisville, KY	Br. 14	Stephen C. Solsberg	Kansas City, MO	Br. 30	David J. Ullrich	Akron, OH	Br. 148
Bobbie G. Pierce	Louisville, KY	Br. 14	James H. Talbert Jr.	Kansas City, MO	Br. 30	Louis L. Zuzak	Akron, OH	Br. 148
James H. Potter Jr.	Louisville, KY	Br. 14	Bobbie L. Thompson	Kansas City, MO	Br. 30	Louis G. Ignatz	Elyria, OH	Br. 196
John A. Sims Jr.	Louisville, KY	Br. 14	Billy J. Williams	Kansas City, MO	Br. 30	Thomas J. Filipone	Philadelphia, PA	Br. 157
Charles H. Stallard	Louisville, KY	Br. 14	Herman R. Collins	St. Joseph, MO	Br. 195	Cornelius P. Hart Jr.	Philadelphia, PA	Br. 157
Joseph M. Stone	Louisville, KY	Br. 14	Ronnie E. Hamilton	St. Joseph, MO	Br. 195	Joseph J. Wolicki	Philadelphia, PA	Br. 157
Charles J. Strawser	Louisville, KY	Br. 14	Clarence R. Pohlmann	St. Joseph, MO	Br. 195	Thomas R. Frank	State College, PA	Br. 1495
Lawrence W. Terry Jr.	Louisville, KY	Br. 14	Ronald A. Masse	NH Mgd.	Br. 44	S. Bracero	Ponce, PR	Br. 826
Joe F. Discepolo	Dedham, MA	Br. 764	Humberto L. Arroyo	NJ Mgd.	Br. 38	Antonio Ramos	Ponce, PR	Br. 826
Robert P. Emery	Dedham, MA	Br. 764	James L. Davis	NJ Mgd.	Br. 38	Larry B. Black Sr.	Cayce-W. Columbia, SC	Br. 4616
Edward F. Martin	Dedham, MA	Br. 764	Philip A. Diliberto	NJ Mgd.	Br. 38	Kennith V. Clark	Cayce-W. Columbia, SC	Br. 4616
Paul D. McCarty	Dedham, MA	Br. 764	James F. Dunlap Jr.	NJ Mgd.	Br. 38	William D. Coates	Cayce-W. Columbia, SC	Br. 4616
Raymond E. Goulding	MA Northeast Mgd.	Br. 25	Robert Francisco Jr.	NJ Mgd.	Br. 38	Alvin B. Davis	Cayce-W. Columbia, SC	Br. 4616
Kevin P. Sullivan	MA Northeast Mgd.	Br. 25	William L. Galka	NJ Mgd.	Br. 38	Charles L. Stockman	Cayce-W. Columbia, SC	Br. 4616
Roy S. Edwards Jr.	Detroit, MI	Br. 1	Richard G. Galvanek	NJ Mgd.	Br. 38	Marion R. Avent	Memphis, TN	Br. 27
Susan M. Garcia	Detroit, MI	Br. 1	James M. Ganley	NJ Mgd.	Br. 38	James L. Bates	Memphis, TN	Br. 27
Gloria L. Gladney Heard	Detroit, MI	Br. 1	Donald A. Gatto	NJ Mgd.	Br. 38	William O. Bell	Memphis, TN	Br. 27
Roland F. Barth	Midland, MI	Br. 2317	Richard K. Graham	NJ Mgd.	Br. 38	Herbert Black Jr.	Memphis, TN	Br. 27
Michael P. Bojcun	Midland, MI	Br. 2317	John A. Hartonchik	NJ Mgd.	Br. 38	Robert D. Brooks	Memphis, TN	Br. 27
Roland G. Chisnell	Midland, MI	Br. 2317	Henry L. Hawkins	NJ Mgd.	Br. 38	Jerry F. Byrd	Memphis, TN	Br. 27
Thomas A. Cooper	Midland, MI	Br. 2317	F. Hoeffner Jr.	NJ Mgd.	Br. 38	Bruce M. Carlson	Memphis, TN	Br. 27
Raymond J. Freeze	Midland, MI	Br. 2317	Frederick V. Iannone	NJ Mgd.	Br. 38	J. L. Cowan	Memphis, TN	Br. 27
Ronald G. Gray	Midland, MI	Br. 2317	Edward C. Johnson	NJ Mgd.	Br. 38	William E. Crutchfield	Memphis, TN	Br. 27
James L. Harner	Midland, MI	Br. 2317	William F. Kelly	NJ Mgd.	Br. 38	Lois A. Davis	Memphis, TN	Br. 27
James T. Holka	Midland, MI	Br. 2317	Donald R. Kuenseler	NJ Mgd.	Br. 38	James M. Dixon	Memphis, TN	Br. 27
Ronald G. Onstott	Midland, MI	Br. 2317	Stewart L. Massaro	NJ Mgd.	Br. 38	Donald B. Dotson	Memphis, TN	Br. 27
Douglas D. Paulson	Midland, MI	Br. 2317	Francis R. Miceli	NJ Mgd.	Br. 38	Charles N. Eubanks	Memphis, TN	Br. 27
Edward R. Recker	Midland, MI	Br. 2317	Leonard P. Neering	NJ Mgd.	Br. 38	Eugene R. Franklin	Memphis, TN	Br. 27
Larry E. Straus	Midland, MI	Br. 2317	James P. Neff	NJ Mgd.	Br. 38	Larry G. Futral	Memphis, TN	Br. 27
Danny D. Wood	Midland, MI	Br. 2317	Ishmael Perez	NJ Mgd.	Br. 38	Kenneth D. Gill	Memphis, TN	Br. 27
Thomas A. Bajkiewicz	Western Wayne Co., MI	Br. 2184	Dennis P. Reilly	NJ Mgd.	Br. 38	J. B. Haynes	Memphis, TN	Br. 27
Marion J. Burbo	Western Wayne Co., MI	Br. 2184	Joseph A. Siano	NJ Mgd.	Br. 38	Charles D. Heglar	Memphis, TN	Br. 27
James A. Burt	Western Wayne Co., MI	Br. 2184	Luciano J. Trujillo	NJ Mgd.	Br. 38	Michael A. Hensley	Memphis, TN	Br. 27
Mary M. Byrnes	Western Wayne Co., MI	Br. 2184	Roger L. Vance	NJ Mgd.	Br. 38	Jerry M. Holyfield	Memphis, TN	Br. 27
Rita G. Constantakis	Western Wayne Co., MI	Br. 2184	Richard E. Vine	NJ Mgd.	Br. 38	Robert L. Hutchinson	Memphis, TN	Br. 27
Virginia K. Detvay	Western Wayne Co., MI	Br. 2184	John H. Will	NJ Mgd.	Br. 38	Harold R. Jenkins	Memphis, TN	Br. 27
Ilene E. Dussia	Western Wayne Co., MI	Br. 2184	R. E. Winter	NJ Mgd.	Br. 38	Ellis Jones Jr.	Memphis, TN	Br. 27
Florence E. Fedulchak	Western Wayne Co., MI	Br. 2184	Melvin Winters	NJ Mgd.	Br. 38	James D. Leadford	Memphis, TN	Br. 27
Rebecca J. Harris	Western Wayne Co., MI	Br. 2184	Jerome E. Miga	Dunkirk, NY	Br. 150	Norris F. Neal	Memphis, TN	Br. 27
Wesley D. Lawrence Jr.	Western Wayne Co., MI	Br. 2184	Joseph J. Covino	Flushing, NY	Br. 294	Tommie L. Nix	Memphis, TN	Br. 27
James S. Wozniak	Western Wayne Co., MI	Br. 2184	J. J. Fitzgerald	Flushing, NY	Br. 294	Larry D. Oneil	Memphis, TN	Br. 27
Gary E. Baker	Minneapolis, MN	Br. 9	S. L. Fogelson	Flushing, NY	Br. 294	Joe L. Prince	Memphis, TN	Br. 27
Carolyn M. Bren	Minneapolis, MN	Br. 9	J. E. Gregory Jr.	Flushing, NY	Br. 294	Terry W. Pruett	Memphis, TN	Br. 27
John G. Burmis	Minneapolis, MN	Br. 9	William J. Grossi	Flushing, NY	Br. 294	James L. Roberts Jr.	Memphis, TN	Br. 27
John S. Dombrowski	Minneapolis, MN	Br. 9	P. E. Kane	Flushing, NY	Br. 294	William F. Rowan	Memphis, TN	Br. 27
Mary P. Johnson	Minneapolis, MN	Br. 9	J. Pizzurro	Flushing, NY	Br. 294	James F. Scallions	Memphis, TN	Br. 27
James R. Kane	Minneapolis, MN	Br. 9	Joseph Gugliata	Flushing, NY	Br. 294	Richard H. Thomas	Memphis, TN	Br. 27
Cara L. Linehan	Minneapolis, MN	Br. 9	Biagio Ragusa	Flushing, NY	Br. 294	James R. Willard	Memphis, TN	Br. 27
Gerald W. Marinelli	Minneapolis, MN	Br. 9	Kent P. Smith	Flushing, NY	Br. 294	Andrew L. Williams	Galveston, TX	Br. 23
Roland G. Matt	Minneapolis, MN	Br. 9	Arthur V. Teurfs	Flushing, NY	Br. 294	Roland S. Beasley	Norfolk, VA	Br. 456
Dwayne W. Nienaber	Minneapolis, MN	Br. 9	Vincent R. Vendetti	Flushing, NY	Br. 294	Lionel Bullock	Norfolk, VA	Br. 456
John R. Obrestad	Minneapolis, MN	Br. 9	Neil J. Wasserman	Flushing, NY	Br. 294	Walter C. Chalfant	Norfolk, VA	Br. 456
Robert H. Perschmann Jr.	Minneapolis, MN	Br. 9	Horace D. Williams	Flushing, NY	Br. 294	Andrew Cornelius	Northern VA	Br. 3520
David L. Peterson	Minneapolis, MN	Br. 9	Nicholas W. Younghese	Flushing, NY	Br. 294	Eddie W. Cote	Northern VA	Br. 3520
Roger E. Preiss	Minneapolis, MN	Br. 9	Walter E. Cammenga	Long Island Mgd., NY	Br. 6000	T. E. Couples	Northern VA	Br. 3520
Harley R. Ring	Minneapolis, MN	Br. 9	Juan Lugo	Westchester Mgd., NY	Br. 693	Leroy C. Day	Northern VA	Br. 3520
Robert D. Schmitz	Minneapolis, MN	Br. 9	Joseph B. Boyles Jr.	Gastonia, NC	Br. 1512	J. A. Dworschak	Northern VA	Br. 3520
Victor L. Schwich	Minneapolis, MN	Br. 9	Eugene R. Bumgardner	Gastonia, NC	Br. 1512	K. A. Embrey	Northern VA	Br. 3520
Ronald P. Sholl	Minneapolis, MN	Br. 9	C. L. Davis	Gastonia, NC	Br. 1512	Paul A. Faxio Jr.	Northern VA	Br. 3520

Honor Roll

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

Thomas G. Fisher	Northern VA	Br. 3520	Fred Martinez	Denver, CO	Br. 47	Joseph L. Lencki	NH Mgd.	Br. 44
Michael A. Garcia	Northern VA	Br. 3520	Martin E. Mata	Denver, CO	Br. 47	Gerald N. DiGiulio	Bergen Co. Mgd., NJ	Br. 425
William H. Grau	Northern VA	Br. 3520	Joseph D. Reed	Denver, CO	Br. 47	Paul E. Brockel	NJ Mgd.	Br. 38
Kenneth E. Grier	Northern VA	Br. 3520	David G. Ricks	Denver, CO	Br. 47	George R. Dobrenic Jr.	NJ Mgd.	Br. 38
Milton L. Gunn	Northern VA	Br. 3520	Howard W. Sautter	Denver, CO	Br. 47	James F. Dunlap Jr.	NJ Mgd.	Br. 38
John H. Hagstrom III	Northern VA	Br. 3520	James L. Simoni	Denver, CO	Br. 47	Gilbert T. Garofalo	NJ Mgd.	Br. 38
E. W. Hansborough	Northern VA	Br. 3520	Joseph B. Suppes	Denver, CO	Br. 47	Richard K. Graham	NJ Mgd.	Br. 38
Ernest E. Hatfield	Northern VA	Br. 3520	Richard B. Barry	Bridgeport, CT	Br. 32	Joseph P. Guerriero	NJ Mgd.	Br. 38
Clinton L. Hawkins Jr.	Northern VA	Br. 3520	Gregory T. Barbato	Bridgeport, CT	Br. 32	John A. Hartonchik	NJ Mgd.	Br. 38
Dallas A. Holcomb Jr.	Northern VA	Br. 3520	Paul R. Bartram	Hartford, CT	Br. 86	Tino F. Iannacone	NJ Mgd.	Br. 38
Stanley E. Jackson	Northern VA	Br. 3520	William G. Brayne	Hartford, CT	Br. 86	Frederick V. Iannone	NJ Mgd.	Br. 38
J. W. James	Northern VA	Br. 3520	Robert M. Garavel	Hartford, CT	Br. 86	Edward C. Johnson	NJ Mgd.	Br. 38
Mark W. Jenkins	Northern VA	Br. 3520	Ronald J. Lemay	Hartford, CT	Br. 86	William F. Kelly	NJ Mgd.	Br. 38
Robert C. Jones	Northern VA	Br. 3520	Charles B. Pallo	Hartford, CT	Br. 86	Gregory P. Lacroce	NJ Mgd.	Br. 38
Larry J. Keeling	Northern VA	Br. 3520	Michael E. Ragion	Hartford, CT	Br. 86	Stewart L. Massaro	NJ Mgd.	Br. 38
Luther O. Keys	Northern VA	Br. 3520	Wayne F. Randall	Hartford, CT	Br. 86	Henry B. Payne	NJ Mgd.	Br. 38
Richard F. Kidd Jr.	Northern VA	Br. 3520	Peter B. Riley	Hartford, CT	Br. 86	Ishmael Perez	NJ Mgd.	Br. 38
Robert S. Kopach	Northern VA	Br. 3520	Jesse H. Rogers	Hartford, CT	Br. 86	Joseph A. Phillips	NJ Mgd.	Br. 38
Robert P. Lerch Jr.	Northern VA	Br. 3520	Robert Such	Hartford, CT	Br. 86	William H. Pritchard IV	NJ Mgd.	Br. 38
Herbert C. Love Jr.	Northern VA	Br. 3520	Joseph A. Vasquez Jr.	Hartford, CT	Br. 86	Dennis P. Reilly	NJ Mgd.	Br. 38
Michael A. Madigan	Northern VA	Br. 3520	Thomas K. Ryan	Oak Park, IL	Br. 608	Eugene T. Stringer	NJ Mgd.	Br. 38
J. L. Marr	Northern VA	Br. 3520	John D. Mazza	Palatine, IL	Br. 4268	David A. Vazquez	NJ Mgd.	Br. 38
Michael J. McKinley	Northern VA	Br. 3520	Jerry G. Harris	Rock Island, IL	Br. 292	Donald Velardi	NJ Mgd.	Br. 38
Kenneth W. McQuinn	Northern VA	Br. 3520	Harold E. Cox	Elkhart, IN	Br. 547	Walter Wachol	NJ Mgd.	Br. 38
Edward W. Mills	Northern VA	Br. 3520	David P. Galloway	Elkhart, IN	Br. 547	Thomas P. Walsh	South Jersey, NJ	Br. 908
Leon S. Mitchell	Northern VA	Br. 3520	David W. Kershner	Elkhart, IN	Br. 547	S. L. Fogelson	Flushing, NY	Br. 294
Carson A. Morris	Northern VA	Br. 3520	James F. May	Lafayette, IN	Br. 466	Danny M. Mulhern	Flushing, NY	Br. 294
Douglas R. Mulhollem	Northern VA	Br. 3520	Donald D. Moore	Mishawaka, IN	Br. 820	J. Pizzurro	Flushing, NY	Br. 294
G. L. Mumma	Northern VA	Br. 3520	Robert A. Favreau	Louisville, KY	Br. 14	Joseph Quagliata	Flushing, NY	Br. 294
Otis C. Oliver	Northern VA	Br. 3520	Robert M. James Jr.	Louisville, KY	Br. 14	W. J. Reilly	Flushing, NY	Br. 294
Marion W. Park	Northern VA	Br. 3520	Robert D. Leach	Louisville, KY	Br. 14	Charles J. Reinfurt	Flushing, NY	Br. 294
W. R. Peyton	Northern VA	Br. 3520	George W. Reeves	Louisville, KY	Br. 14	Kent P. Smith	Flushing, NY	Br. 294
E. W. Pinkett	Northern VA	Br. 3520	Kerry R. Slahta	Louisville, KY	Br. 14	James C. Spearman	Flushing, NY	Br. 294
A. O. Polston Jr.	Northern VA	Br. 3520	Steve E. Thomas	Louisville, KY	Br. 14	Arthur V. Teurfs	Flushing, NY	Br. 294
G. A. Reese Jr.	Northern VA	Br. 3520	James L. Warner	Louisville, KY	Br. 14	Vincent R. Vendetti	Flushing, NY	Br. 294
Jeff L. Robinson	Northern VA	Br. 3520	Gary W. Barnard	Northern KY	Br. 374	Neil J. Wasserman	Flushing, NY	Br. 294
J. A. Rogers	Northern VA	Br. 3520	William E. Burt	Northern KY	Br. 374	Horace D. Williams	Flushing, NY	Br. 294
Ronald L. Rollins	Northern VA	Br. 3520	Edward A. Mason	Northern KY	Br. 374	Nicholas W. Younghese	Flushing, NY	Br. 294
John A. Rowles	Northern VA	Br. 3520	Daniel E. Murray	Northern KY	Br. 374	Steven W. Santoro	Long Island Mgd., NY	Br. 6000
Donald C. Schulz	Northern VA	Br. 3520	Jay B. Walton	Northern KY	Br. 374	Edwin P. Lewis Jr.	Gastonia, NC	Br. 1512
Dick T. Seltmann	Northern VA	Br. 3520	Joe F. Discepolo	Dedham, MA	Br. 764	Robert L. Lutz	Gastonia, NC	Br. 1512
Gary M. Simmons	Northern VA	Br. 3520	Robert P. Emery	Dedham, MA	Br. 764	Robert S. Morris	Gastonia, NC	Br. 1512
Donald L. Smith	Northern VA	Br. 3520	Edward F. Martin	Dedham, MA	Br. 764	Michael A. Patterson	Gastonia, NC	Br. 1512
C. L. Sonner	Northern VA	Br. 3520	Paul D. Mccarty	Dedham, MA	Br. 764	Nicholas G. Ducar Jr.	Akron, OH	Br. 148
Billy L. Terry	Northern VA	Br. 3520	Leslie L. Demeyere	Detroit, MI	Br. 1	Anthony T. Heitic	Akron, OH	Br. 148
F. K. Tomlinson	Northern VA	Br. 3520	Michael T. Cien	Western Wayne Co., MI	Br. 2184	David E. Turner	Akron, OH	Br. 148
Lawrence L. Turner	Northern VA	Br. 3520	Paul H. Diebolt	Western Wayne Co., MI	Br. 2184	Teddy L. Anderson	Cleveland, OH	Br. 40
Eugene Vines	Northern VA	Br. 3520	Robert A. Folsom	Western Wayne Co., MI	Br. 2184	Brian D. Nikiforow	Cleveland, OH	Br. 40
Franklyn D. Void	Northern VA	Br. 3520	Pauleann Johnson	Western Wayne Co., MI	Br. 2184	Ronald G. Olinek	Cleveland, OH	Br. 40
Vernon L. Wade	Northern VA	Br. 3520	John V. Martin	Western Wayne Co., MI	Br. 2184	Richard D. Prybylek	Cleveland, OH	Br. 40
Gary E. Wamsley	Northern VA	Br. 3520	Deborah E. Peterson	Western Wayne Co., MI	Br. 2184	Gregory P. Rusyniak	Cleveland, OH	Br. 40
Robert L. Weber Jr.	Northern VA	Br. 3520	James B. Scodellaro	Western Wayne Co., MI	Br. 2184	Eugene J. Ryan	Cleveland, OH	Br. 40
Harold D. Whitley	Northern VA	Br. 3520	Herbert M. Seidler	Western Wayne Co., MI	Br. 2184	Peter J. Siciliano	Cleveland, OH	Br. 40
Richard R. Williams	Northern VA	Br. 3520	Lawrence J. Skillman	Western Wayne Co., MI	Br. 2184	Brian V. Marconi	Cuyahoga Falls, OH	Br. 1629
Allen F. Woodward	Northern VA	Br. 3520	Timothy P. Sullivan	Western Wayne Co., MI	Br. 2184	Keith A. Medved	Pittsburgh, PA	Br. 84
Robert D. Warder	Oak Harbor, WA	Br. 5194	John A. Varasdi	Western Wayne Co., MI	Br. 2184	Antonio Ramos	Ponce, PR	Br. 826
Richard K. Feudner	Sheboygan, WI	Br. 102	Thomas R. Zurcher	Western Wayne Co., MI	Br. 2184	James L. Boxlley Jr.	Memphis, TN	Br. 27
Russell F. Boheim	Superior, WI	Br. 337	Neal G. Bacon	Minneapolis, MN	Br. 9	Willie F. Fields	Memphis, TN	Br. 27
			Timothy A. Bodin	Minneapolis, MN	Br. 9	Raul G. Valencia	Galveston, TX	Br. 23
			William T. Eason	Minneapolis, MN	Br. 9	Walter C. Chalfant	Norfolk, VA	Br. 456
			Scott M. Fischer	Minneapolis, MN	Br. 9	Roger Lee	Norfolk, VA	Br. 456
			Peter W. Geschwind	Minneapolis, MN	Br. 9	Paul A. Davis	Northern VA	Br. 3520
			Allen M. Reddy	Minneapolis, MN	Br. 9	John J. Heifner	Superior, WI	Br. 337
			Charles A. Stauffer	Minneapolis, MN	Br. 9	Arthur J. Leino	Superior, WI	Br. 337
			John F. Urness	Minneapolis, MN	Br. 9			
			James H. Day	St. Paul, MN	Br. 28			
			Brian L. Morris	St. Paul, MN	Br. 28			
			James S. Rehberger	St. Paul, MN	Br. 28			
			Ernest L. Jones	Kansas City, MO	Br. 30			
			Dennis P. Marten	Kansas City, MO	Br. 30			
			Peter F. Golabiewski	NH Mgd.	Br. 44			

50-year pins and gold cards

Herman M. Tyus	Decatur, AL	Br. 1314
Chester L. Sutton Jr.	Bakersfield, CA	Br. 782
Murphy Burton	Denver, CO	Br. 47
Billy W. Carmichael	Denver, CO	Br. 47
Gary D. Chenworth	Denver, CO	Br. 47
William W. Davis	Denver, CO	Br. 47
Leroy Duran	Denver, CO	Br. 47
Lynette L. Ford	Denver, CO	Br. 47
Lee E. Givner	Denver, CO	Br. 47
Randall W. Kuch	Denver, CO	Br. 47
Damian H. Marintzer	Denver, CO	Br. 47

Anchorage, Alaska

As many of us get older, there comes the risk of Alzheimer's. About 1 in 13 people aged 65 to 84 and 1 in three people aged 85 and older are living with Alzheimer's. Many work their whole life and save with plans to travel and do the things they've always wanted to do. A diagnosis of Alzheimer's will affect your plans in retirement. The costs of care come from life savings. Most don't have Long Term Care Insurance offered by OPM (the program was suspended in December of 2022).

Most federal retirees won't qualify for Medicaid to pay for nursing care, in-home care or an assisted-living facility. States have an income threshold to qualify for Medicaid. For 2024, the amount is \$12,490 (in Alaska, it's \$15,600). Most retirees' pensions exceed the amount to qualify. And for married couples, the threshold is higher. In some instances, attorneys advise couples to divorce so the finances of the spouse not needing care does not get diminished. Can you imagine the heartbreak of this decision while also dealing with the diagnosis of Alzheimer's?

So, what happens to an individual who is in an assisted-living facility, nursing home or memory care unit who runs out of funds to pay the monthly cost, yet still has income that exceeds the threshold to receive Medicaid? Many are put out on the street or are left to the family to care for. So now, not only has the individual with Alzheimer's incurred another life change, but a family has their lifestyle disrupted to learn and care for an elderly Alzheimer's patient.

There is so much more information to discuss, but my space is limited. A serious discussion should happen if your family's medical history suggests you or your loved one may be in this situation one day.

Jim Raymond, Branch 4319

Bergen Co. Mgd., New Jersey

I found out how to deal with vicious dogs on your route—call in sick! OK, so you really can't do that all the time, so the next best thing is for you to understand that when they bark at you, they are just protecting their home and everyone in it. If your customer lets their dog out when you are delivering and tell you he/she is friendly, don't believe them.

They are very friendly to everyone in their household—you, not so much! When I did a delivery to a home that had a gated front yard and a loose dog in between me and the mailbox, I just kept on walking right to the next delivery. And then I wrote on their mail "loose dog," along with the date and my initials and the words "unsafe to deliver."

Dog owners are responsible for controlling their dogs, and I don't think that any one of us want to be part of their next meal.

Stay informed; attend your union meetings.

Dennis Spoto, Branch 425

Centennial, Colorado

History can be a fascinating subject—especially when you've lived part of it. At a recent union meeting, one of our members presented a research paper she completed at her first week of Leadership Academy. Looking at the roots of unions, she showed the economic implications of organized labor. Watching a new group of activists/stewards take in this knowledge means our union is heading in the right direction. Minimum wages, overtime pay, safety issues, collective bargaining, workers' compensation, pensions and a myriad of other topics have been innovated by the labor movement. Well done, Annie Ibson!

Some of the progresses I have seen in my 25 years in the NALC is a continuation of the COLA, the phasing out of a two-tier workforce,

growth of our own Health Benefit Plan, and the continuation of the annual food drive, which is coming up in May. It is our chance to help our neighbors who are struggling to put food on their tables. With the aid of our compassionate customers, willing food banks, and the hard work of collecting and sorting cans and boxes, we are able to advance goodwill in our own communities.

Finally, although the state convention will be over by the time you read this, I know that between a passionate organization of national, state and local leaders, more information about how to stay organized and move forward in our craft will be accomplished. Letter carriers are a hardy group of individuals, and the Leadership Academy is producing some of the best.

In unity—

Barb Larson, Branch 5996

Paterson, New Jersey

Although the month of January appears to be slow in nature, Branch 120 steps up its efforts to solidify this union. On Jan. 10, the installation of offices took place at our union meeting with our special guest and good friend, National Business Agent Bruce Didrikson. In addition, on Saturday, Jan. 14, our holiday/Christmas party took place at the Carriage Barnyard Tavern in Totowa Boro.

Although the month of January for most people is a quiet month, the union tries its best to keep everyone together. It is within these efforts that Branch 120 helps to keep this union unified.

Joseph Murone, Branch 120

From the Trustees

To say the weeklong Nalcrest 60-year anniversary celebration honoring William Doherty's NALC dream community was a huge success would be very accurate. As the newest trustee, this was my first experience with a celebration of this magnitude at Nalcrest, having not attended the 50-year celebration.

We arrived on Sunday, Jan. 28, and returned home either Friday, Feb. 2, or Saturday, Feb. 3. The entire NALC Executive Council was invited for the week. The Executive Council consists of 28 total members: our national officers, the national business agents (NBAs) and the national trustees. None of the business agents had ever visited Nalcrest and all seemed delighted and to enjoy their experience.

There were meetings and activities throughout the week, a mixture of business and pleasure. The Doherty family was invited and attended, and they had a wonderful time. Many family members remember visiting in the summer when they were kids. They were impressed

at how well the community is kept and how beautiful it looks.

The Nalcrest residents attended all events in big numbers, from the catered dinner to the lake side barbecue to all of the planned sporting activities—such as softball, pickleball, cornhole, horseshoes, a putting contest and "closest to the pin." All activities were packed with players.

Special guests included Retired Director of Retirees and retired Nalcrest Trustee Don Southern, Retired Director of Health Benefits and retired Nalcrest Trustee Tom Young, retired National Trustee and Nalcrest Trustee Mike Gill, retired Director of Retirees Ernie Kirkland, retired Region 9 NBA Lynne Pendleton, Florida State Association of Letter Carriers President Al Friedman, and several retired and active members from neighboring branches.

Nalcrest remains the only union-sponsored retirement community in the country. It is as popular as ever, with 362 on the waiting list. It was an honor to help host all of our guests and mingle with the residents. A special thanks

Nalcrest Update

goes to the Nalcrest employees—they were extremely busy throughout the week organizing and hosting. Nalcrest is a special place in paradise; it's a must-see.

Tony Diaz

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

Branch Items

Albany, New York

Recently, the Northeast Step B teams were called to Washington, DC, for a joint Step B training. Apparently, the plan is to call in all 62 Step B teams in groups from across the country to convey best practices and the joint understanding of the Step B process by the national parties. Our training was held at NALC Headquarters and we heard mainly from NALC EVP Paul Barner and USPS representative Jim Lloyd. The NBAs and their USPS counterparts were there, and each of the Step B teams from our area were also in attendance.

To our surprise, we found out there are currently more than 13,000 grievances at Step B waiting to be decisioned across the country. To put that number in perspective, I guess last year was a record-breaking year when we had almost 4,500 grievances at Step B waiting to be decisioned. Now there is almost three times that amount.

On one hand, it is inspiring to see how our shop stewards across the country are enforcing the National Agreement vigorously. On the other hand, I'd hate to be waiting on grievance No. 13,001 for a decision on the merits of my case. I encourage every shop steward and Formal A representative to make absolutely sure that they have fully developed their grievance before appealing it to Step B, because it sounds to me like cases will be distributed across the country to try to clean up this tremendous backlog.

Each and every Step B team wants to get it right when we are deciding a case, and when looking at a grievance from another geographical area, we often run into what appears to be an ongoing issue but there is no history of it in the file. Help us help you.

Norris Beswick, Branch 29

Alliance, Ohio

This is to serve as notice to all members of Branch 297 that consideration of a resolution calling for a merger will take place at the regular meeting to be held at 7 p.m. on Tuesday, April 2. The meeting will be held at its normal meeting place, Aeonian Brewing Company, 120 W. Chestnut St., Alliance.

Joshua Lilly, Branch 297

Camden, New Jersey Merged

Many of my members ask if there's been any updates about contract negotiations. I can only tell them what is available from the NALC updates. They seem to think I have some kind of an inside track on the negotiations. I wish I did. I wish I could tell them precisely where the roadblocks are and what is being done by our leadership. I hear some people saying there should be more transparency from the national officers regarding contract talks. I'm not sure I agree with that.

While I would love to be a fly on the wall during the negotiation sessions, in my opinion, there is a lot of information that should not be made public. I believe it would be unwise to let the public know about our negotiating strategies and tactics. Once the rank and file know,

everyone will know; that includes management's negotiating team. A successful football team is not going to show its playbook to the



Carmel, IN Br. 888 President Josh Armacost (l) and Region 6 NBA David Mudd (r) presented Br. 888 member Bob Spear with a 50-year gold card.

opposing team. You don't want the opposition to know what you're going to do.

Who knows, by the time you read this article, we could have a tentative agreement already going out for ratification. The neutral arbitrator, Dennis Nolan, has already been named, and we are well on our way to binding arbitration. He was the neutral chair for our last contract. We were in almost the same position last time as we are now. We were ready to go to arbitration while we were still engaged in active talks with management. Next thing we knew, we had a deal. That same thing could happen again. Here's hoping for a contract that maintains and builds on the strides we've already made, a contract that continues to allow us to live our golden years with dignity.

Chuck Goushian, Branch 540

Carmel, Indiana

President Emeritus Bob Spear was awarded his 50-year gold card at our March meeting. Congratulations to him, especially after just celebrating his 90th birthday at our January meeting. Thank you to NBA David Mudd, RAAs Ronnie Roush and Kyle Inosencio, Robert Gardiner, Branch 39 President Paul Toms, Financial Secretary Ollie Brown and Branch 377 President Al Griffin for all attending as special guests to honor Bob Spear. It was a special evening; we are very lucky to have his knowledge and experience in Branch 888, with him still attending every meeting and always being available after all these years.

Reminder of upcoming events: May 11 is the food drive. Please contact food drive coordinator Greg Gormong (day or night) with any questions or comments. We will be having another summer pool party in July, exact date to be determined. Elections are this November, with nominations at our October branch meeting. As always, please try to attend our branch meetings the first Thursday of the month to make your voice heard. We meet at 7 p.m. at

the American Legion, 852 W. Main St. If you ever have questions or issues, never take your supervisor's word for it. Please reach out to me anytime at 317-508-6657.

Josh Armacost, Branch 888

Charlotte, North Carolina

Branch 545 would like to thank all of our brothers and sisters who were able to attend the North Carolina spring training in Greensboro in March. We hope everyone was able to learn from the classes. We look forward to each and every one of you bringing that knowledge back to branch and sharing with the rest of our members to make us a stronger branch. Also, we are continuing to gear up for the NALC food drive in May; if anyone is interested in participating, please contact our union office or speak with the union steward in your office.

We would like to congratulate our fellow members on their recent retirements. Joe Hill was a city carrier assigned to our Downtown station with 28 years of service, and Edwin H. Medford was a city carrier assigned to our Mount Holly station. We all want to wish you both the best in the next chapter of your lives.

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 attending, and we are continuing to work within the parameters established by our local government leaders in regard to COVID-19. 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.

Justin Fraley, Branch 545

Cincinnati, Ohio

April is here, and if March was any indication, this year is going to be very interesting in the Tri-State.

There were several days lately where the weather changed within an instant. You can go from wearing shorts, to pants, to full-fledged winter gear with rain and snow hours apart the same day, and that's no exaggeration. For the new carriers, please pay attention to the weather report. There is nothing worse than literally getting caught with your pants off because you weren't prepared.

It seems that there are several carriers in my station who have not learned their lesson; of course, it doesn't hurt when I mess with them and say the weather will be perfect today, knowing what really lies ahead for the day. It also doesn't help when your yearly clothing allowance only gets you possibly one shirt, one pair of pants, a pair of shoes and, maybe if you are lucky, a pair of shorts.

The route evaluations are complete in my office, and out goes a route plus a three-hour aux. Hopefully the carriers have learned to slow down, because—trust me—some of these routes have been overburdened, and it will be our job over the next 120 days to prove this. Remember, every morning has time set aside for

your vehicle check, restroom visit, and gathering everything you need to perform your job on the street professionally and safely. So, when they push you out within an hour, which leaves little time for casing, make sure everything that is at your case gets sent out that day. Don't leave mail. As they have said in the past: Every piece, every day. Or get that grievance filed.

Have a great month. Remember, meetings every second Thursday of the month.

Chris Rought, Branch 43

Cumberland, Maryland

Happy spring! Branch 638 will be having our installation of officers along with our retiree dinner on April 17 at 6:30 p.m. at the Ridgeley, WV, American Legion. Sign-up sheets will be available at your local offices.

A reminder that the branch meetings are held the third Wednesday of each month at the Ridgeley American Legion. Please feel free to bring your questions and/or concerns to the meetings.

Paul Kirby, Branch 638

Eugene, Oregon

During Jan. 13-17, Oregon was hit by an ice storm. The lower elevations of western Oregon don't see a lot of snow. However, this wasn't snow—it was ice. It was so bad it turned my parking lot into an ice rink. Carriers across the state, and across our branch, tried their hardest to make it into work and deliver the mail, despite perilous conditions, downed power lines and car crashes galore. There were days that it just couldn't be done, and management knew it.

Branch 916 encompasses five installations, and at each one there was an issue with management trying to use annual leave instead of administrative leave in accordance with the Act of God memo and the appropriate sections of the *ELM*. Stewards set out at each installation to right this wrong, and in almost every case, the local level resolved the dispute amicably.

Except Sweet Home! Sweet Home management decided that, despite ODOT asking drivers to avoid the roads and Gov. Kotek declaring a state of emergency, not only could the carriers make it in, but there was plenty of work to be done. Except by their own admission, their trucks were late, or never showed up. After disputing it at the local level and not finding resolution, it had to be sent to Step B.

The two things that baffle me the most is how management claim they're doing the right thing for their carriers, and how vigorously they are fighting for the 40 hours of admin leave for the five carriers in question. Larger stations are settling for way more. I'm left to wonder about the Kool-Aid management drinks. Still, I have faith that when the decision comes back from the DRT, those carriers will be justly compensated.

Jason Frost Cook, Branch 916

Fresno, California

As expected, the stage is set for our presidential election, along with many congressional races. For postal employees, all gov-



NALC President Brian L. Renfro leads a rally to bring awareness about crimes against letter carriers in Jacksonville, FL.

ernment employees, it's an obvious choice. A proven champion of working families, union members, the environment and our democracy. Our right to choose.

Or, we can vote for a proven traitor-like former president who is the choice of Russia, China and North Korea. He is clearly not a friend of our Postal Service. He handpicked PMG DeJoy for his position. The goal of privatizing the Postal Service has been around since George W. Bush in 2001. In 2001, a then-Republican congressman firmly told this to five NALC activists in his Washington, DC, office. I was one of the five.

"Screw them," they said, referring to postal patrons and those in Congress who support them. He went on to say, if our patrons want to keep in touch, "They can use the telephone." Now imagine him in the White House. That is what you would get if the Republican nominee gets elected as president. I suspect it would be much worse.

We must be united as one in securing the future of our Postal Service for years to come. Do not forget it was our current president who signed into law to end our annual \$5 billion pre-funding obligation. The same obligation put onto the Postal Service by then-President George W. Bush. Our votes can be red, white and blue by voting to reelect President Joe Biden instead of voting communist red. They want to destroy our democracy, just like Russia, China and North Korea. Protecting our Postal Service is vital to our democracy, worker rights, voting rights, women's rights and our futures.

Jesse Dominguez, Branch 231

Greensboro, North Carolina

To my brothers and sisters: As we come toward the end of the first quarter of 2024, we have seen that manage-

ment is trying to cut overtime by using auxiliary help, which is their right to as long as it is in the confines of our National Agreement. This is where, as letter carriers, we make sure we are doing our job properly and safe.

Our *M-41 handbook, City Delivery Carriers Duties and Responsibilities*, breaks down how to accomplish those two factors. When we do what we are supposed to do, it creates more time in the office and on the street. This is very important, especially since the new route evaluation process is in effect, the Technology Integrated Alternate Route Evaluation and Adjustment Process (TIAREAP). Do *not* let management sway you from your duties because they want to cut time and routes. We determine what we

need, not management. This is a point that I cannot stress enough. It could be your route that can be taken away, so treat this matter as such. And remember, *fill out a 3996*. If anyone is unsure of what a 3996 is or unsure how to fill one out, ask your fellow carrier.

In solidarity—

Anthony Kennedy, Branch 630

Hagerstown, Maryland

To start, I would like to send a belated congratulations to John McDermott on his retirement. On behalf of Branch 443, I wish you the very best in the next chapter of your life and hope that your retirement is incredibly satisfying and rewarding.

Moving forward, in February all the routes in the Downtown office have had a 3999 performed on them. The 3999 does not constitute the creation of a street standard. Even if you were able to finish on time during your 3999, this does not mean that every day in the future you will be able to do the same. It is our job to report to management if we believe we will require more than eight hours to complete our assignment. Management may question your request for overtime, but they do not have the right to intimidate or harass. If you feel that management's questioning ventures into harassment, please notify a steward immediately so that the situation can be resolved.

Lastly, in May there will be the annual NALC Stamp Out Hunger Food Drive. With our investment in magnetic signs for many of the postal vehicles, as well as additional community advertising, it is my distinct hope we will have a much bigger turnout of food donations. May 11 will be Food Drive Day this year, and while I hope we have a huge turnout of donations, it would be greatly appreciated for anybody to stay after work for a little bit to help sort the donations. While it certainly isn't a require-

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ment, if we all work together, the work entailed with the food drive is able to be completed faster and allows everybody the opportunity to get home to their families a little quicker.

In solidarity—

Jeremy Kessel, Branch 443

Kansas City, Missouri

The National Association of Letter Carriers (NALC), all 277,000 of us, are virtually one big, happy (err), big family. So much so that we commonly refer to one another as brother/sister. This also implies that the NALC family mimics our real-life families. We experience births with the new hires and transfers; some members are smart, responsible, accountable, and there are one too many who are rebellious, despise authority and require constant watching; we undergo the anxiety of those off to military service and relief upon their return; we too often share moments of pain and anguish at the loss of loved ones, yet joyfully celebrate when someone leaves to pursue other goals.

The retirement of Paul Van Dyke closes another chapter in what served as an example of commitment, perseverance and professionalism. Paul began his career in 1979, in what was then Independence, MO Branch 827. There was no DPS/FSS, everything was cased in, including Red Plums and Midweeks. There were Pintos, Vegas, then Jeeps, while LLVs were the wave of the future. Paul Van Dyke served as a steward, health benefits representative and Branch 827 president. Branch 30 President Melvin Moore presented Paul with his retirement watch and 25-, 30-, 35-, 40- and 45-year longevity pins. Former Branch 827 President and current LPO Anthony Mitchell received a 25-year pin, Calvin Davis received a 25- and 30-year pin. Paul's brother, Dale, received his 25-, 30-, 35-, 40- and 45-year pins. Surprised.

With only one Van Dyke remaining, their sister, Becky, dropped the satchel after 30 years, three families continue the postal and familial lineage: Brothers Harvey and Ammon Siebel; Sharon Hudgens and sons David Jr., Andre and Isaiah; and Tonya Bradley and daughter Shelby.

Unity, the key ingredient to having great families and a strong, powerful NALC.

Calvin Davis, Branch 30

Knoxville, Tennessee

Hello, couriers of information!

Grievances are won with documentation and lost with a lack of it. There was a recent and favorable regular arbitration (Case #4B-19N-4B-C 22485918) decision concerning a 400 percent pay remedy for 11.5-hour maximum violations in Portland, ME. The award cited Articles 8, 15 and 19, as well as previous Step B decisions by continually working part-time employees past the 11.5-hour maximum during the pay period at issue. As the remedy,

management shall cease and desist from continually working part-time employees past the 11.5-hour maximum and shall continue to pay a 400 percent remedy for any violations. The same issue applies to carriers who have been violated with 12/60-hour workweek issues.

How does it stop? The first thing is to submit a Request for Information asking for the Overtime Alert Report. Management is required to post this report on a bulletin board for all employees to review on a weekly basis. If discrepancies are noted, submit an 8190 grievance form with a copy of the attached Overtime Alert report. Recently, there was a Step B decision that stated that employees cannot volunteer or be required to exceed the 12/60-hour limit and may end their tours without concern of discipline when reaching the 11.5/12 hours daily limit or the 60-hour weekly limit. Juicy stuff!



Hagerstown, MD Br. 443 presents branch member John Myers with a 50-year gold card. Pictured (l to r) are Ronda Sisk, Larry Wellborn, Branch President Jeremy Kessel, Myers, Julie Mitchell and Region 13 RAA Tonya Detrick.

If your steward is not reviewing this report or is not aware of it, then speak to him/her and remind him/her of their responsibilities to enforce the contract.

Tony Rodriguez, Branch 419

Lima, Ohio

Hello, Lima.

In January we held the installation of officers for Branch 105; they will represent you for the next two years. The ceremony was conducted by past President Jeff Steegman. Your newly elected and reelected officers are as follows: President Matt Hager, Vice President Brian Sharp, Secretary and Mutual Benefits Officer Todd Friemoth, Treasurer Amber Wolf, Sergeant-at-Arms Tom McNamara, Trustees Gary Rockhold, Ned Delong and Pam Shaw, union steward Ellen Franklin, and Health Benefits Officer Fred Brinkman. Congratulations to all of your elected officers! Please support these people.

Nationally, in the December 2023 issue, our national president, Brian Renfroe, wrote about the progress on the next contract. He said that both parties have made progress toward reaching an agreement on the economic terms. He also went on to mention the rise of robberies and assaults on letter carriers. Be aware of your surroundings! Earbuds and cell phones

can be a distraction. Stay focused and keep your Arrow Key in a safe place at all times.

Locally we are preparing for the annual food drive on May 11. Once again, the union will hold a morning cookout on the dock, with hamburgers, hot dogs, chips and cold water. So, get your helpers now!

Finally, I've heard that the chaos in Lima still continues, but I believe with your new union leadership it will be a big improvement. Help support them and they will be successful. United we stand!

P.S. Congratulations to Tom McNamara being named grand marshal for Lima's annual Irish parade!

In solidarity—

Jeffery Steegman, Branch 105

New Orleans, Louisiana

Greetings, my fellow letter carriers.

It has been a very interesting first quarter of the new year. This Leap Year 2024 has its ups and downs. First and foremost, it has come to the attention of many people how letter carriers are being robbed of their Arrow Keys. The perpetrators have access to many blue boxes that hold mail for pickup and delivery, as well as to cluster boxes for people to get their mail. It is a felony to tamper with the mail! Those felons are depriving people from very important pieces of mail. We have to get control of this drastic situation! I'm counting on the Postal Inspection Service to get a handle on it.

On the other hand, we have made some significant and tremendous strides and improvements to our infrastructure and many facilities, and postal vehicles. We take great pride in our jobs. Remember, we move the mail, and the mail moves the country! I salute you all in what you do. As I stated before, it is dangerous now, but take precautions and safety first. Remember, you want to get home safely to your loved ones who await you. You are America's heroes! Do what you do every day. The American people are depending and relying on you to deliver for America.

The state of our union is strong, union strong! We have made great strides toward our economy, jobs, infrastructure and organizing union workers. These last three years have seen many accomplishments and achievements in our industry. Now we patiently await a new contract. As we ponder over these things, let us not forget how we attained the benefits that were achieved by our great union! Continue being in attendance for your union meetings and supporting your union leadership! Give to LCPF!

Yours in unionism—

Marshall Wayne Smith, Branch 124

Norristown, Pennsylvania

Yo, what's goin' on? Talked with Car-I, he's a retired carrier, and we talked about how things have changed at the Post Office. How some people who were hired seem not to care about how the job is done. Even one 30-year carrier doesn't know how to do the job correct-

ly. I'm not saying all the new hires aren't good, but you know.

Take your breaks and lunch, and use the bathroom when you have to go. Don't combine them with your break. These are simply easy things to do. We will be goin' through a new inspection that only uses the data from your scanner (every carrier should go through having an inspector behind them and follow them on the street to show this is what the scanner is doin'.) And remember that you want to keep that scanner moving—when you move things in your truck or use the bathroom. The one thing that the scanner doesn't have is eyes, so if it's sitting still, management will say you are doin' nothing and you have to try to explain what you were doin'.

When running a route, you are not helping management, you are taking a job away from another carrier. Because if they abolish your route or change it by 50 percent, the route from you down goes up for bid, and the one at the end will be without a route till something opens. All I'm asking is for you to do your route like your job depended on it... 'cause somebody's does.

And I want to give a shout-out to our president and vice president, Brian and Cate—you guys are doin' a fantastic job against somebody who seems to be scared of you.

Spring is gettin' ready to spring! Enjoy.

Joel Stimmler, Branch 542

North Florida

Branch 53 hosted the Committee of Presidents March 3-4 in Jacksonville. More than 200 branch and state presidents or their designees attended. NALC President Renfro updated the attendees about the contract and other items that affect the letter carriers, and he addressed questions from the floor. NBA Eddie Davidson addressed the COP, as did Christina Davidson about MDA, disaster relief and the upcoming food drive. Many issues were discussed and those in attendance will share it with their members.

On Sunday, March 3, after the business session, everyone donned NALC T-shirts and marched from the hotel over the Main Street Bridge and on to city hall for an "Enough is enough" rally. We were joined by other members of Branch 53 and members of the Northeast Florida Central Labor Council of the AFL-CIO. More than 300 supported the event and the branch, along with assistance from Philip Dine at Headquarters, ensured there was plenty of media coverage to address violence against letter carriers.

Terry Metz, along with his staff from Galls Uniforms, provided the hospitality room and donated more than \$7,000 to MDA and disaster relief through their raffles and corporate donation. Galls has been a COP sponsor for many years, and we should support them.

Branch 53 donated more than \$4,000 to both MDA and disaster relief with its raffles. Many thanks go to Branch President Thigpen and his staff of volunteers and to the commit-



North Florida Br. 53 members marching in a Martin Luther King Jr. Day parade in Jacksonville.

tee itself for making it a successful meeting. It was great to see many familiar faces from years past.

Let us work hard to make this year a successful food drive.

Bob Henning, Branch 53

Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania

Management has rung in the new year by escalating attendance discipline in Branch 84. This also includes tardiness. This type of corrective action is often the most difficult to combat because there's no gray area—you're simply either at work or you're not. Luckily, management hasn't been the smartest at what incidents they're including in the disciplinary charge, so branch officers have (for the most part) done very well against them. If you cannot be present as scheduled, consider this a primer on your rights and responsibilities.

The Family and Medical Leave Act (FMLA) of 1993 ensures that your sick leave will be protected for serious illness/conditions for you or loved ones as defined in the *Employee and Labor Relations Manual*, Section 515. You must request FMLA coverage when calling off and forms will be mailed to you that must be completed by your doctor and returned to USPS.

Each employee is also entitled to 80 hours of Sick Leave for Dependent Care. This is *completely separate from FMLA*. ELM, Section 513.12 states that this is to be used to "give care or otherwise attend to a family member with an illness, injury, or other condition that, if an employee had such a condition, would justify using sick leave." In most cases, supplying documentation for SLDC is wise.

Another option would be medical restrictions. If various on-the-job conditions are adversely affecting your health, then your doctor may need to become involved. For the sake of brevity here, I urge you to contact the branch hall for more information.

As stated previously, attendance discipline is hard to combat. Knowing your rights and responsibilities are as important here as any-

where. If you do your best to protect and limit your absences (and management continues to botch discipline), it gives your union the best chance to fight.

John Conger II, Branch 84

Portland, Oregon

I like to take a walk whenever I can get a break in the office. Often, I see the letter carrier who delivers mail next to the Branch 82 hall. His name is Mark Ashmore, and his route and the neighborhood are special because his grandfather, Eldon Ashmore, delivered and retired from the same spot and the same station, Piedmont, after he came back from World War II. Eldon was recently recognized for 70 years of membership in the NALC at Branch 82's retiree banquet. Last Friday, when I waved to Mark as I walked by, I realized it may be the last time I see him on my walk.

Mark is one of many to bid out of his station because of what has happened due to route adjustments. His route, which was an eight-hour route before, was added to, and he just can't keep working 12 hours every day. Piedmont has become one of the worst stations in Portland after its adjustment under TIAREAP. With 32 routes, 20 carriers have either bid out or quit working at the Postal Service altogether from that station. We are anticipating a review, and everyone is hoping for some sort of stability, normalcy, and a realistic take on delivery there.

Meanwhile, we are losing carriers who made Piedmont the station it previously was, like Mark, who spent the last 20 years working in a neighborhood at a station where his grandfather did, with a family history of delivery, service, and a legacy that spans generations. Here's hoping that it's not too late to get it right and restore Piedmont and all the stations like it to what they were before.

David Norton, Branch 82

Providence, Rhode Island

Firstly, Branch 15 sends our thoughts and prayers to the friends and family of Jonte Davis of Warren, OH, who was tragically shot and killed while delivering his route on Saturday, March 2.

One issue of late here in the Providence area that has been recently resolved has been the issue of PS 3999 walks being done without giving the carrier a follow-up consultation. There were more than 25 total grievances in Providence. It's that time of year when PS 3999 walks are ramping back up again. As a reminder, per the TIAREAP memorandum, a consultation should be given within three business days of a 3999 walk being done. If this consultation is not done correctly, a grievance should be filed.

Also, on-the-job injuries, whether yours or someone you know, are to be reported as soon as possible. There's been a concerning trend of people not reporting injuries on the spot or within a reasonable amount of time. Some are waiting multiple days before reporting an injury. If you get hurt, even if you don't think

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it's overly serious, you should still report it. Once you go home without reporting the injury, that then allows management to cast doubt on whether you got hurt at work. If you work a few days after getting hurt before reporting it, it further worsens the situation. Also, with the number of new supervisors, it seems that none know how to properly handle OWCP claims. Make sure to let somebody know.

Until next time.

Anthony Turcotte, Branch 15

Racine, Wisconsin

It's easy to overlook the incredible team at NALC Headquarters who effortlessly publish *The Postal Record* every month and make it look easy. Particularly coming on the heels of numerous awards won by the NALC PR staff. Pre-apologies to Mr. Renfroe; however, the first article I read in the PR is Mr. Philip Dine's.

The bylaws say 300 words for Branch Items. A first draft is easily 400 to 500 words before the arduous journey of whittling it down begins. Mr. Dine has good tips, suggestions and word placement ideas to make your point come sooner in one or two sentences rather than needlessly filling the page with unneeded words, phrases or longer sentences. That way you have more room for important issues, like why doesn't buttermilk contain any butter?

Politics are toxic. That's my disclaimer. Here goes nothing. Wisconsin recently signed into law newly redrawn legislative maps. Wisconsin is a purple state, and so ends years of being the most Republican-gerrymandered state in the nation. As Republicans now cry foul, this *bipartisan* bill is gerrymandered in the opposite direction, leaving it up to the recently more liberal state Supreme Court to redraw maps, which was the lesser of the two evils. Gerrymandering is undemocratic and an assault on democracy.

A suggestion for our DPS, aside from the obvious: How about each zone have their own dedicated APCs that travels back and forth with the truck? Each labeled with the route number so the plant can tray it up as soon as it's off the machines. It hits our local P.O. all racked up ready to go. Carriers hit the street quicker with one less thing for clerks to do. I know—not part of the 10-year plan.

Chris Paige, Branch 436

Rockville, Maryland

We just received an arbitration decision for an Article 8, Section 5G/Letter Carrier Paragraph violation in the city of Rockville. The award paid the non-ODL an additional 250 percent of his base rate. The ODL was paid at the overtime or penalty rate as applicable. To my knowledge, this is the highest remedy paid to a non-ODL for a Letter Carrier Paragraph violation in the history of our union! There might be higher awards at Step B or Informal/Formal A, but this was an arbitration decision. The arbitrator was Mark Sims, and the award date was Feb. 26.

The non-ODL has about 30 years of service and makes \$36.20 per hour. This meant that the cost to the company for the non-ODL was \$90.50 per hour for this Article 8 violation. The ODL was paid at the overtime rate, or \$54.30 per hour. The total cost to the USPS amounts to \$144.80 per hour. Hopefully, we have now forced management to comply with Article 8 and the Letter Carrier Paragraph. I want to thank our advocate, Charles Clark, and all of the stewards involved in this grievance. A copy of this award is on our website at nalc3825.com.

The Committee of Presidents meeting took place March 3-4 in Jacksonville, FL. I want to thank Branch President Jim Thiggenn, past President Bob Henning, and all of the other good union people from Branch 53 out of North Florida for their hard work in making this a very fine COP meeting. Some super-important agenda items were discussed, such as management refusing to provide back pay when removals or emergency suspensions are grieved and won by the union. This item was discussed for more than an hour. I will discuss the other great agenda items in upcoming scribe articles.

In the struggle—

Kenneth Lerch, Branch 3825

Saginaw, Michigan

Saginaw Branch 74 has moved our local office to 3262 Caberet Trail S. #210 above the COPOCO Credit Union. Now we have more room for more grievance files! An ongoing investigation has our steward team looking into multiple cases for disallowance of overtime after receiving instructions to work overtime from another supervisor.

Our annual February fundraiser for MDA was well attended, raised more than \$3,000. Several specialty items of Booze Wagon, Blackstone Grill and a Lions jersey raised \$800 themselves. Event coordinator Crystal Ranville and volunteers went all in to make a great family fun day. MDA ambassador Natalie came out to support and thank all who participated.

Back in October, retiree Forrest Robison received his NALC gold card for 50 years as a member. Retired members meet every third Wednesday of the month at a local restaurant to share stories and catch up. In February, we met at Sullivan's on M-46 with 15 retired carriers in attendance.

For those who know carrier Warren Wedding, he just turned 90 and is still working!

Forrest Robison, Branch 74

St. Louis, Missouri

Over the past several months, the U.S. Postal Service in the St. Louis and surrounding area have been getting their fair share of local television publicity, but not in good way.

Story after story involves customer complaints of non-delivery of mail. Many involve customers not getting mail for days at a time to delays in the delivery of bills resulting in customers receiving late fees from credit card

or utility payments because their bills failed to reach their destination on time.

I have yet to see or hear a statement from anyone in the Postal Service regarding service deficiencies other than the classic boilerplate response that the Postal Service is experiencing staffing issues.

Staffing is an excuse that has been ongoing for nearly two years. Our own monthly union branch publication has been running a total of the deficiency in the proper compliment of PTFs for nearly a year, ranging from 250 to 300 carrier vacancies.

After badgering the last three postmasters about getting the St. Louis Installation added to the memo compelling the service to abandon the hiring of CCAs to hiring PTFs late last year, the retention rate of new hires has stabilized, but the lack of proper training has resulted in abysmal service.

A flood of new carriers was hired at the beginning of December with the caveat that they forgo carrier training and be used strictly for delivering parcels during the holiday season. Once peak season passed, the Service was then going to train the new hires to properly deliver the mail. However, the sheer number of new hires has placed an undue burden on the Carrier Academy to get them properly trained, resulting in poor service and customer complaints.

The time for excuses is over. Our patrons deserve a better Postal Service.

Tom Schulte, Branch 343

St. Paul, Minnesota

April is here, and along with it comes one of my personal favorite union events: the retirees banquet. The retirees banquet is a great way to honor those who have spent their time and energy building up the union, from which we all benefit. The food and drinks are always awesome, but the stories are even better. After listening to a couple, you'll be struck by how no matter how much the Post Office changes, management always stays the same. These folks have been fighting the good fight for more years than many of us have been alive,

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.

and it's up to all active carriers to continue it! So, if you're free April 21, come say thank you to all those to whom we owe so much.

In March, regional training happened for our branch's stewards. Regional training isn't just learning about the contract for four days. It includes classes on many of the other important things our union does for our members outside contract administration. There are classes on how the workers' compensation system works. Anyone who's needed to interact with that system knows it's a confusing mess that seems designed to be hard to navigate. Luckily, our reps know the ins and outs of the system thanks to these classes. There are also classes about the Letter Carrier Political Fund (LCPF) and all the hard work they've done furthering the political causes for the betterment of our members. LCPF is just one more example of what great heights we can achieve when individual efforts are pooled together to move mountains.

Solidarity forever!

Kaylee Valerius, Branch 28

Seattle, Washington

“Mattering” is the general sense of being significant, valued and important in our relationships, work and life. Mattering is what management does to the workers to make sure they feel “less than.” What good is it being on the top if there's no one on the bottom? Less than helps them identify the letter carrier's work as mere monkey tricks, while their all-important number crunching is the calling of a higher purpose.

Management is doing the important work, right? Wrong! When some supervisor is using an algorithm to crunch numbers—no one's crunching anything—it's all plug-and-play pabulum. It's like assisted living, pre-chewed food. The algorithm grinds everything up and spits out whatever answer the supervisor wants. So, depending on what answer they want, and who they may want to harass on any particular day—presto change-o, abracadabra, hocus pocus, mumbo jumbo. It's crap.

Granted, all the numbers are printed out on some kind of a postal form, it probably has a route number, and a leave time. It certainly seems very businesslike. It's crap. It's designed to keep you on your heels, so you're unable to stand your ground. For what it's worth, the letter carrier is unarmed when it comes to this suppositional garbage, while the management personnel are packing. They're packing all that unverifiable gibberish that evidently cannot be contested.

A letter carrier may contest the outcome, but that can devolve into a daily harangue. Life has enough stress, and adding a protracted “he said, she said” argument over the numbers seems needless. Laugh it off, do your best, get out when you can, and let the threats and the worry trail in your wake. As a wise sage told me, “If you're not stealing anything, there's nothing they can do to you.”

Don Nokes, Branch 79

Southeast Pennsylvania Merged

We cannot be April fools! USPS management is sending mixed messages as usual. They are violating the contract at a rampant rate. It is so overt, Stevie Wonder can see their plan. If they violate so much, we won't be able to keep up. But guess what, grievances are being filed at a historic rate. What's the moral of the story? NALC does not die, we just multiply. We are not fools.

The biggest obstacle we have is us! It is so hard to stay united in the wake of sensationalistic tools such as social media. People will believe anything that fits their immediate needs. Lies are sexy! The truth is boring. But NALC is built on a foundation of fact-finding protocol and truth seeking. The organization has internal structures that ensure accountability and is built on a democratic premise.

NALC is always working hard for its membership. Just look around and if you take an objective accounting, you will see this great union has *always* been there for you. At a time where unions are making a comeback, we must give credit to the best of the best unions—yes, NALC!

If we look in the mirror, we will know if we are not coming to work. We will see if we are driving around talking on the phone or with earbuds displaying like white feathered wings at a Victoria's Secret fashion show. There is a sad trend going on where carriers seem to think it is OK to fight one another at work or threaten management with our loved ones coming to the office to “see” them. OK, you get fired, and your mate faces federal criminal charges. Is that a good thing?

The situation is so dire, we have help one another!

#WeCannotGiveUpOnOurNextGeneration-OfCarriers

Eric Jackson, Branch 725

Springfield, Ohio

Cinderella sang, “You don't know what you got till it's gone.” It's been a year and a half since we were relieved of one of the worst management teams we've ever had. In my nearly 30 years here, we've had some bad management. Some were incompetent, some were incapable and some were intolerable. I had an OIC once who denied my leave for my son's high school graduation. Union got involved and it went all the way up to a vice president in the Eastern

Area who took one look at it and said, “Why am I seeing this?” It was a no-brainer as to what should have happened with the leave request.

“You don't know what you've got till it's gone” has a flip side to it as well. After reading horror stories about other offices and how bad things are there, you come to realize that maybe we should be grateful for the relaxed atmosphere in our office. Is everything perfect? Of course not. As long as we're all human, things never will be. But we have a postmaster who genuinely cares. He might not get the support he deserves from upper management, but he tries his best. Our senior carrier supervisor carried mail here for years and knows the routes and the carriers. It makes a difference when you have someone who knows the job.

This job is physically hard, and you really have to pay attention to detail for accurate delivery. But if you show up for work, take a 30-minute lunch and two 10-minute breaks and deliver the mail in a safe manner, you've got it made. Remember, things can always be worse.

Branch meetings are the second Thursday of the month in Room 221. Pizza at 6:15 p.m., meeting at 6:30 p.m.

Jerry Martens, Branch 45

Staunton, Virginia

Enough is enough! Protect our letter carriers! You could hear this chant all along the Blue Bridge over the St. Johns River in Jacksonville, FL, on our way to the rally at city hall. So proud to join my voice with so many of my letter carrier family and say “enough is enough” to violence against letter carriers.

Earlier that day, I heard the mayor of Jacksonville and the chief attorney from that district's DOJ. Both spoke passionately and knowledgeably about this issue. Both were 100 percent in support of efforts to stop the violence and prosecute the perpetrators. The sheriff's department stood in solidarity with us as they protected us on the bridge.

I was moved by the bravery of two local carriers willing to speak in front of the crowd and tell their personal stories of crimes against them while at work. They brought this issue to life. Sadly, they are only two of the thousands who have faced this violence in just the last few years.

During my career, my mom often called worrying about things she saw on TV. I always told

COLA: Cost-of-living adjustment

- The 2025 projected COLAs for the Civil Service Retirement System (CSRS) and the Federal Employees Retirement System (FERS) are **1.0 percent** following the release of the February consumer price index (CPI). The 2025 COLAs will be finalized with the publication of the September 2024 CPI in October 2024.
- The 2024 projected COLA under the Federal Employees' Compensation Act (FECA) is **1.2 percent** following the release of the February CPI. This COLA is based on the change in the CPI between December 2023 and December 2024.
- Visit nalc.org for the latest updates.

her, “Don’t worry, no one messes with letter carriers,” and that’s truly how I felt. I’m heartbroken this changed so drastically.

In Staunton, so far, we haven’t faced one of these crimes, but as President Thigpen of Jacksonville said: “Chicago, we see you; New York, we see you...carriers and branches across the country facing violence...we see you.”

Rallies are key to raising awareness. Our work doesn’t end there. Rank-and-file lobbying efforts are crucial to the passage of legislation to fund new Arrow Key systems, protect and prosecute.

Hope to see a ton of Virginia letter carriers at Lobby Day in Washington, DC, May 2. Let’s show our fellow letter carriers, “We see you!”

Cindy Connors, Branch 513

Toledo, Ohio

TIAAREAP is now conducting all special inspections in our area. I hope they’re proficient at their job, since I live on an overburdened route. My regular carrier has been receiving auxiliary assistance for months. Some days I get my mail at 11 in the morning. Other days I have to wait until 7 in the evening. The Postal Service is advertising in TV commercials that it’s making more on-time deliveries. Could have fooled me!

Mail processing in our area, with everything going to Michigan and back, has become unreliable, to say the least. I have been charged with late fees for some payments mailed well over a week before the due date. I received a bill dated the fourth of the month on the 20th of the month.

Because I am a former letter carrier, I use the Postal Service. If mail processing continues to deteriorate, I will be forced to pay electronically in the future. Go ahead, management, run us out of business. And they wonder why volume keeps dropping.

We have a delegation headed to Washington, DC, next week for the Ohio Legislative Conference. One of the topics to be discussed



Del Rio, TX Branch 2511 member Lino S. Hernandez receives the Million Mile Safe Driver’s award in December. Lino has worked for the U.S. Postal Service since 1983 and has carried his route for more than 35 years.

with our representatives will be the Windfall Elimination Provision, and the Government Pension Offset. I worked the 40 quarters in the private sector prior to coming to work for the Postal Service yet am penalized due to my federal pension and receive less than half of my earned Social Security. It’s just not right!

Ray Bricker, Branch 100

Tri-Valley, California

Shop stewards are sometimes subjected to criticism from those who chose not to become actively involved in unionism. When individuals enjoy job security, reasonable wages, satisfactory working conditions, and an absence of immediate workplace issues, they

may become less involved in union activism. Stewards manage to discern themselves from inappropriate and unnecessary negativity. Moreover, stewards also dedicate themselves to continue advocating for our membership despite facing challenges and confrontation from management while enforcing contractual compliance.

Letter carriers greatly depend on union representation. Members trust union advocates to guide them safely and truthfully. When letter carriers follow the wrong guidance, they often don’t realize it until the damage is done. So, let’s seek out our local and national leaders, including stewards who have shown trustworthiness, a grounding of carriers’ rights, and knowledge of the National Agreement. And let’s pray for our leaders, so that their eyes may remain opened and focused.

I remind members that the benefits we enjoy are the result of collective efforts of men and women who came before us and made the choice to represent all carriers conscientiously, thoroughly and equally. Members should not assume there will always be someone else willing, able and prepared to do the work of representation.

I want to acknowledge the hard work and thank Kathi Albritten, Steve Dickerson, Louie Rodriguez and Robert Tracy for their leadership as retired letter carriers who volunteered to serve as shop stewards for our branch. Their experience and wisdom continue to faithfully lead members of our branch where there are vacancies in representation.

The success of our branch relies on the strength of the membership and the boots that we have on the ground to represent; figuratively, if you only live in hope, you may die in sh-t. I’m just saying.

James C. Perryman Jr., Branch 2902

How to submit items

Branches may submit items for publication in *The Postal Record* by standard mail or by e-mail. **But please note the important information below.** Due to production requirements, items that do not comply with the styles specified cannot be published. Call *The Postal Record* office at 202-662-2851 if you have questions.

Who can submit: Branch presidents must send *The Postal Record* a letter designating authorized scribes, especially if the branch scribe has changed. If items will be submitted by e-mail, the president also must list the e-mail address(es) that will be used.

Deadline: The deadline is the 10th of the month preceding the month of publication, or if it falls on a weekend or holiday, 9 a.m. E.T. the first business day after. For the May issue, the deadline is Wednesday, April 10. Items re-

ceived after the deadline will be held for the next issue.

Word limit: The *NALC Constitution* (Article 9, Section 1.b) limits items to 300 words. Submissions that are too long or violate the prohibition on defamatory or unlawful matter (such as electioneering) cannot be printed.

To submit items by mail: Use upper and lower case letters (not all capitals) on one sheet of 8.5 x 11” paper. Use an easy-to-read font (no scripts) and print in black. Mail to *The Postal Record*, 100 Indiana Ave. NW, Washington, DC 20001-2144. Include the following information: type of item (Branch Item, State Summary, Retiree Report, Election Notice, etc.); 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 format (not Microsoft Works). Do not type in all-capital letters. 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.

Photos: Branches may submit in-focus, professionally processed photos or email digital image files of at least 300 dpi resolution as attachments. Include caption information **identifying all individuals** and the event. Do not send photos printed on a desktop printer. Due to space limitations, *The Postal Record* does not guarantee publication of photos. Photos may be posted online at nalc.org or in one of NALC’s social media accounts.

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

Dave E. Perkins	Br. 4319	Anchorage, AK	James E. Bumann	Br. 14	Louisville, KY	Robert F. Kingston	Br. 3	Buffalo-Western NY
Robert A. Maichel	Br. 1902	AZ Mgd.	Cameron Garner	Br. 234	Owensboro, KY	J. W. Knowlton	Br. 3	Buffalo-Western NY
James R. Michaud	Br. 1902	AZ Mgd.	Eugene W. Schell	Br. 234	Owensboro, KY	Ronald J. Kurnik	Br. 3	Buffalo-Western NY
Joseph F. Provateare	Br. 1902	AZ Mgd.	Raymond J. Willard	Br. 176	Baltimore, MD	Lance W. Squires	Br. 21	Elmira, NY
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Gerald F. Schneider	Br. 1100	Garden Grove, CA	Ralph P. Vozzella	Br. 34	Boston, MA	Richard J. Vallier	Br. 134	Syracuse, NY
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Harry W. Parrish	Br. 1071	South FL	Elmer E. Schmidhuber	Br. 3697	Le Center, MN	Dennis P. St. John	Br. 284	Erie, PA
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Geneva O. Shine	Br. 270	Macon, GA	Normand J. Bourgeois	Br. 72	Concord, NH	Leroy W. Smith	Br. 520	Uniontown, PA
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William H. Craig	Br. 1364	Idaho Falls, ID	Robert J. Weiner	Br. 5420	Brick Town, NJ	V. W. Trimm	Br. 27	Memphis, TN
James M. Berbeka	Br. 11	Chicago, IL	Joseph L. Harris	Br. 540	Camden, NJ Mgd.	Jack R. Billington	Br. 4	Nashville, TN
Ronald L. Carothers	Br. 11	Chicago, IL	Michael Schiavone Jr.	Br. 444	Garden State Mgd., NJ	R. E. Chadwell	Br. 4	Nashville, TN
Raymond F. Madej	Br. 11	Chicago, IL	John R. Aiello	Br. 38	NJ Mgd.	William R. Herman	Br. 4	Nashville, TN
William C. Najdowski	Br. 11	Chicago, IL	John H. Angelbeck	Br. 38	NJ Mgd.	William H. Hurd	Br. 4	Nashville, TN
Brian Rawls	Br. 11	Chicago, IL	Domenico D. Carnevale	Br. 38	NJ Mgd.	Arthur C. Lindsley	Br. 4	Nashville, TN
Richard F. Stefan	Br. 4099	Mount Prospect, IL	Louis R. Cassamassa	Br. 38	NJ Mgd.	James N. Marlin	Br. 4	Nashville, TN
Timothy P. Bartlebaugh	Br. 245	Rockford, IL	Carmen M. Chisvetti	Br. 38	NJ Mgd.	Gwen Pardin	Br. 4	Nashville, TN
Kathleen A. Conwell	Br. 4016	S. Suburban Mgd., IL	Paul E. Dargenzio	Br. 38	NJ Mgd.	William R. Schultz	Br. 4	Nashville, TN
Carolyn L. Downie	Br. 4016	S. Suburban Mgd., IL	Mark S. Enz	Br. 38	NJ Mgd.	Clyde K. Winters	Br. 4	Nashville, TN
James E. Smith	Br. 4016	S. Suburban Mgd., IL	Thomas L. Esposito	Br. 38	NJ Mgd.	W. P. Burkett	Br. 950	Abilene, TX
Marion E. Aud	Br. 80	Springfield, IL	Ronald V. Ford	Br. 38	NJ Mgd.	W. J. Eudy	Br. 950	Abilene, TX
Clarence L. Durham	Br. 80	Springfield, IL	Robert M. Hock	Br. 38	NJ Mgd.	J. Martin Burks	Br. 181	Austin, TX
Thomas J. Rapps	Br. 80	Springfield, IL	Raymond L. Merz	Br. 38	NJ Mgd.	Terry W. Chase	Br. 132	Dallas, TX
Orville E. Stringfield	Br. 80	Springfield, IL	Henry Oppewall	Br. 38	NJ Mgd.	Sherry L. Vanicek	Br. 132	Dallas, TX
Thomas R. Wilson	Br. 80	Springfield, IL	James L. Rush	Br. 38	NJ Mgd.	Charles E. Wumberley	Br. 132	Dallas, TX
Thomas D. Nelson	Br. 547	Elkhart, IN	Edward J. DiPatria	Br. 120	Paterson, NJ	Donna K. Humphrey	Br. 283	Houston, TX
Gwendol Patterson	Br. 39	Indianapolis, IN	Howard M. Foxwell Jr.	Br. 908	South Jersey, NJ	Ogler Leyva	Br. 283	Houston, TX
Alice W. Jones	Br. 466	Lafayette, IN	Wayne L. Kline	Br. 908	South Jersey, NJ	Calvin H. Doughtie	Br. 283	Houston, TX
John H. Green	Br. 98	Muncie, IN	Glen A. Isaacson Jr.	Br. 4377	Farmington, NM	Lawrence C. Kidder	Br. 521	Burlington, VT
Randall D. Davis	Br. 814	New Castle, IN	John F. Graves	Br. 29	Albany, NY			
John R. Lucas	Br. 5521	Shawnee Mission, KS	Alfonse Monaco	Br. 333	Binghamton, NY			
Chester P. Gentet	Br. 201	Wichita, KS	Armando F. Paduano	Br. 3	Buffalo-Western NY			
Clarence L. Chaney	Br. 14	Louisville, KY	Douglas R. Emerson	Br. 3	Buffalo-Western NY			

Auxiliary Update



Cynthia Martinez
President

National Auxiliary Board

News and updates from the officers



Crystal Bragg
Secretary



Samantha Yerg
Treasurer

From the President

Hello, Auxiliary members and friends. Spring is one of my favorite times of the year. It is still pleasant outside, and the flowers are blooming.

It has been an eventful year so far. Phoenix Branch 576 held its retirees lunch early in February. The food was fabulous. President Staley was the master of ceremonies. Director of Retirees Rose White set up and decorated the hall. The retirees were recognized for their years of membership. NALC Director of Retired members Dan Toth and our Region 4 national business agent, Dan Versulis, spoke. They both brought news from National. We also had the pleasure of hearing from our political consultant from Washington. He reminded us of the importance of voting for people who will protect our way of life. Our local auxiliary assisted with the cleanup.

Two days later, Arizona Merged Branch 1902 held its retirees luncheon in Mesa. The setting was inviting, the food was very good, and it was very well attended. There is where I got a delightful surprise. I was introduced to a long-time Auxiliary member, Fran Dole. She resides in the East Valley. Her friends told me she was 93 years young and still very active. I will be seeing she again soon—what a delight.

The AFL-CIO hosted a rally at the state capitol. Four of our Auxiliary members—Cynthia Staley, Jana Maron, Rose White and me—attended. There were workshops to attend; we choose two and they were very informative. Then we listened to speakers and enjoyed a box lunch. The California speaker was really good. We need to support the people in office who support our views. Working people support candidates who care about good working conditions, safety in the workplace, and equality for everyone.

It is also time to start thinking about the national convention. It will be here before we know it. Early registration is \$30. Funds must be in by the end of June to take advantage of the savings.

On a more somber note, it is not too early to start sending in the names of any of our members who are no longer with us for the memorial service held at our Auxiliary convention.

Be kind to yourself and others; life is special and so are you.

In solidarity—

Cynthia A Martinez



Clockwise from top left: Longtime Auxiliary member Fran Dole and NALC Auxiliary President Cynthia A. Martinez in Mesa, AZ; Phoenix Aux. #377 members Steven Martinez and Barbara Lewis; a labor activist from California with Martinez at the AFL-CIO rally in Pheonix; and Aux. #377 members Martinez, Jana Maron and Rose White at the rally.

AUXILIARY OFFICERS

Cynthia Martinez, President
3532 W. Mauna Loa Lane
Phoenix, AZ 85053
602-505-2215
casm1m@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

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.

Mutual Exchanges

FL: Naples (4/23) to Sarasota, FL or surrounding areas. Call or text with any questions. George, 727-385-5668.

NY: Selden (8/21) to Charlotte, NC; Fort Lauderdale, FL or surrounding areas. Seeking mutual exchange. Route is all curbside mounted. Thomas, 516-782-5355 or tommybahama1996@gmail.com.

UT: Cedar City (3/20) to College Station, Bryan, TX or surrounding areas. Driving distance to several famous parks and Las Vegas. Dorian, 909-630-1686 or barragan82@gmail.com.

WI: Green Bay (7/18) to SD or WY. Roughly 60 out of 100 in seniority. Adam, 330-705-4792 (call or text).

How to place a Mutual Exchange ad

The cost of Mutual Exchange ads is \$15 for up to 30 words and \$25 for 31-50 words per month. Ads must be received by the 5th of the month preceding the month in which the ad will appear (e.g., April's deadline is for the May 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.

MDA Report

How to submit your MDA donations

First, thank you for your continued support for MDA. Below are ways your branch can get funds raised at your events to MDA. Remember to send copies of all donations sent to MDA to NALC so that your branch can get the proper credit for 2024. If you have any questions, you can email mda@nalc.org or call



202-662-2489. Keep up the awesome work, and let's shoot for \$1 million in 2024.



—Christina Vela Davidson

1. Send allocation form and checks to Chicago. See below.

2. Deposit the funds directly to one of MDA's bank accounts.

NALC MDA Donation Allocation Form

NALC Branch Number _____

State Association _____

Auxiliary _____

MDA District/City _____

MDA Contact/Staff _____

MDA Event Name/Event Type _____


MDA Event Date _____ Donation Amount _____

Donor Name _____

NEW ADDRESS BELOW: Please fill out and mail along with your MDA donation check to:

Muscular Dystrophy Association Inc
Attn: NALC
PO Box 7410354
Chicago, IL 60674-0354

Thank you.



Thank you for supporting MDA! Follow these instructions to get your donations to MDA.

- Deposit funds into your branch's bank account and write a check made payable to MDA. Once you have a check, you have two options:
 - Deposit the check directly into one of MDA's bank accounts. Send a picture of the deposit slip, check, allocation form and your receipt to NALC@mdausa.org.

Bank of America	457006977150
Fifth Third	7025693388
Regions Bank	1063561150
First Hawaiian Bank	65032783
First Bank of PR	106217526
 - Mail the check directly to MDA at the address below. Please make sure to fill out the allocation form and send with your check.

Muscular Dystrophy Association Inc
Attn: NALC
PO Box 7410354
Chicago, IL 60674-0354
- In certain cases, you may be able to deposit cash directly into one of MDA's bank accounts. Please reach out to Sabrina Allen to ask about the possibility. To consider this an option, we require a minimum of 2-4 weeks' notice.

Tawny Saunders
Director, Organizational Partnership
Phone: 303-418-2180
NALC: 312-392-1100 or nalc@mdausa.org
MDA.org

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.



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**