



National Association
of Letter Carriers

William H. Young, President
September 28, 2006 No. 06-20

NALC Bulletin

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Negotiations Take Center Stage



NALC President William H. Young, fourth from left at left side of main table, discusses union's responses to initial proposals by the Postal Service September 19 during the first "main table" bargaining since negotiations formally opened. He is accompanied at the table by (l-r) Director of City Delivery Fred Rolando, Vice President Gary Mullins, Executive Vice President Jim Williams, and General Counsel Bruce Simon. At table behind them are (l-r) Director of Health Benefits Timothy O'Malley, Director of Safety and Health Brian Hellman, Director of Retired Members Don Southern, Director of Life Insurance Myra Warren, and Associate Counsel Keith Secular. USPS negotiators are across from NALC, along with other postal officials at right table.

(Photo by Michael Shea)

NALC President William H. Young reiterated at the opening of "main table" bargaining sessions September 19 that the union has a deep desire to reach a negotiated settlement on a new National Agreement this year rather than revert to arbitration that leaves the fate of contract provisions to an outside third party.

"I honestly want to make a voluntary agreement with the Postal Service," Young told a team of postal management negotiators in the session at NALC Headquarters.

The two sides set their second main table session for Tuesday, October 3 at NALC Headquarters. In addition, there are several subcommittee sessions dealing with specific issues as the parties proceed with discussion of the contract on an article-by-article basis.

Young explained that NALC's demeanor in the talks — such as voicing a desire for a negotiated contract — "doesn't mean we'll be less aggressive."

At another point, in responding to a Postal Service proposal that appeared aimed more at other postal unions currently engaged in separate bargaining rather than the NALC, Young made it clear that the NALC team was negotiating only for the letter carriers it represents and should not be tied to any other union's negotiations.

"I don't want to be whip-sawed by other unions' problems," Young said.

Three other postal unions — the National Rural Letter Carriers Association, the National Postal Mail Handlers Union and the American Postal Workers Union — are also negotiating on their contracts with the same November 20 contract expiration date as NALC.

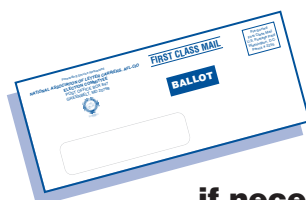
Ballots Set in Region 11 NBA Race

Election Committee Must Receive Votes by October 22

The NALC National Election Committee is getting ready to mail out nearly 22,000 election ballots to all members in good standing of NALC Region 11 (Cincinnati) for voting in the lone contested election among 28 National Office positions to be voted on by active and retired union members — that for National Business Agent in Region 11.

The ballots are to be placed in the mail system October 3. The period set for voting is from October 3 through October 22. To be eligible to vote, a person must be a regular member of the NALC and in good standing as of June 1, 2006.

National Business Agents are elected by the membership within each respective region.



If you are an eligible voter in Region 11 and have not received a ballot by Friday, October 13, please contact your branch office immediately and a branch officer should then immediately call NALC Headquarters at (202) 662-2836 and provide your name, Social Security number, address, and branch number so that your eligibility can be verified, and, if necessary, a ballot can be mailed.

The ballots are accompanied by a copy of printed voting instructions and two envelopes. The larger envelope will be postage pre-paid and have printed on it, for purposes of identification, spaces for the voter's name and branch number. It will be pre-addressed to a post office box established by the National Election Committee. The smaller envelope will be used for securing the ballot within the return envelope and must have no markings on it.

To be counted, ballots must be received by 11:59 p.m. ET on October 22, 2006.

Members of the National Election Committee will supervise the placement of the ballots in the mail by PeakeDeLancey Printing, Cheverly, Maryland, the official election tabulator.

Candidates for all 10 National Resident Officer positions, three National Trustees, and the other 14 NBA spots were elected by acclamation at the NALC Convention in Las Vegas.

Sombrotto Resigns as AFL-CIO Delegate; Heege Appointed by Young to Fill Post



Charles Heege

President Emeritus Vincent R. Sombrotto has resigned his position as a delegate to the AFL-CIO and has been replaced by Charles Heege, executive vice president of Sombrotto's home local, Branch 36 in New York City.

Sombrotto, who was automatically a delegate under the NALC Constitution during his 24 years as NALC president, agreed to continue on to help the union during a turbulent period for the labor federation. He was elected a delegate at the Honolulu convention in 2004.

"President Sombrotto graciously agreed to continue to serve the NALC in our relationship with the AFL-CIO," Young said. "His experience and counsel was especially helpful during the turbulent Chicago convention last year. Now that things have settled down, I hope he will have more time to enjoy his retirement."

Heege is a former AFL-CIO delegate and relinquished his position in 2004 when Sombrotto became a candidate.

Seattle Carriers to Conduct Emergency Drill

As part of NALC's participation in the Cities Readiness Initiative to rapidly deliver medication to Americans in a bioterrorist attack, volunteer letter carriers represented by Branch 79 in Seattle, Washington will engage in a drill on Saturday, November 11 (Veterans Day) to deliver containers simulating bottles of antibiotic pills to 38,000 homes in northeast Seattle.

Director of Safety and Health Brian Hellman said the drill is being conducted to evaluate the use of postal delivery as a mass medication distribution method. The Cities Readiness Initiative is sponsored by the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services and USPS in conjunction with the NALC and National Rural Letter Carriers Association.

In the November 11 drill, Seattle Police will be deployed as part of security operations with one police officer accompanying each letter carrier. Homes included in the drill and the general public will be informed prior to, during and after the exercise through a coordinated communications strategy, including use of a pre-event mailing, press conferences, and a web site.

Further information is available on the Safety and Health section of the NALC website: www.nalc.org.

NALC Health Benefit Plan Announces Rates for 2007

'Open Season' November 13-December 11 Provides Annual Opportunity to Enroll

Letter carriers who are enrolled in the NALC Health Benefit Plan will experience only a modest increase in their employee contribution in 2007, offset by some additional benefit improvements that will both ease the impact of health care on their wallets and help families prevent illnesses and other medical afflictions.

The contribution rates set by the U.S. Office of Personnel Management (OPM) to be paid by postal employees for the NALC Health Benefit Plan reflect increases of 3 percent or less for all categories and for both active employees and annuitants.

"This is great news for all NALC members and their families," said NALC President William H. Young and Director of Health Benefit Plan Timothy O'Malley. "Every NALC member in every branch should take this opportunity to enroll in the NALC Health Benefit Plan during 'Open Season'."



The NALC Health Benefit Plan, along with many others participating in the Federal Employees Health Benefits program (FEHB), was successful in holding down the amount of rate increases for 2007 despite continually rising medical costs and in maintaining quality benefits for both active and retired enrollees.

Employee contribution rates effective in January 2007 for active letter carriers and annuitants in the NALC Health Benefit Plan are:

	Self-Only	Self & Family
Active Carriers (biweekly)	\$ 38.80	\$ 60.85
Annuitants (monthly)	\$139.58	\$257.77

Young and O'Malley were pleased that the NALC Plan, administered and operated by the union, was able to enhance its high quality benefit package while limiting rate increases. The NALC Health Benefit Plan covers medical services provided by physicians, inpatient and outpatient hospital services, emergency treatment, mental health and substance abuse treatment, along with NALC's prescription drug program.

Further information about the new benefits included in the 2007 Plan will appear in the November issue of the *Postal Record* and future editions of the *NALC Bulletin*.

Members not currently enrolled in the NALC Health Benefit Plan can do so during Open Season — November 13 through December 11.

This is a summary of some of the features of the NALC Health Benefit Plan. Detailed information on the 2007 NALC Health Benefit Plan can be found in the official brochure. Before making a final decision, please read the Plan's officially approved Brochure (R171-009). All benefits are subject to the definitions, limitations, and exclusions set forth in the official brochure.

OPM Offers Dental and Vision Plans

The new Federal Employees Dental and Vision Program (FEDVIP) is being rolled out by the U.S. Office of Personnel Management (OPM) during a separate "Open Season" from November 13 to December 11. Effective date of coverage for enrollees will be December 31, 2006.

Enrollees will be responsible for 100 per cent of the premium rates.

Additional information, a comparison of the plans available and their premiums, can be obtained by logging onto the OPM website at www.opm.gov/insure/dentalvision. This site also provides links to each plan's website which will contain detailed information about benefits and preferred providers. OPM has also outlined basic information on the FEDVIP program in each Federal Employees Health Benefit (FEHB) Plan brochure for 2007.

Both federal and postal employees and annuitants are eligible to enroll in the FEDVIP if they are eligible for FEHB coverage — whether or not enrolled — and annuitants, regardless of FEHB status, may enroll in a dental plan and/or a vision plan.

Potential enrollees are reminded that they cannot enroll using any OPM or USPS health election form or electronic site. FEDVIP enrollment is made only at www.BENEFEDS.com. Those without access to a computer should call 1-877-888-FEDS (1-877-888-3337). The TTY number is 1-877-889-5680.

All questions related to the coverage and benefits offered should be directed to the specific plan in which a member is interested. The NALC Health Benefit Plan and its NALC Health Benefit Representatives (HBRs) are not sources for information regarding issues associated with FEDVIP, its insuring contractors or providers.

Installation of NALC National Officers Set for December 8 in Washington

Installation ceremonies of all 28 NALC national officers for four-year terms and seven AFL-CIO delegates will occur Friday, December 8 at the Hilton Washington and Towers hotel in our nation's capital.

Installation Day activities will kick off with an Open House from 1-3 p.m. at NALC Headquarters, 100 Indiana Ave. NW, in Washington (at the base of Capitol Hill). This is a time when members and their families will be able to meet with national officers and tour the NALC Headquarters building.

Following the Open House, guests will join NALC national officers at the Hilton (across town at 1919 Connecticut Ave. NW) for a reception beginning at 6 p.m., followed by dinner at 7 p.m., with the formal installation ceremony and dancing.

Tickets for this special evening are now available through the office of the NALC Secretary-Treasurer for \$55 per person. Full payment (payable to NALC Secretary-Treasurer), along with the Installation Dinner Order Form, must be received by the office of Secretary-Treasurer Jane E. Broendel no later than Monday, November 13.

Upon receipt of payment, tables will be reserved on a first-come, first-served basis only for those who purchase a block of at least 10 tickets. (The maximum number of seats at each table is 10). Individuals or smaller parties purchasing tickets will be assigned to 'open seating' tables.

Tickets and table assignments may be picked up in the Information Center on the 6th floor at Headquarters beginning at 10 a.m. December 8, in Hutchings Hall during the afternoon Open House, or at the Hilton during the reception prior to the dinner. The person authorized to pick up tickets must be listed on the order form, as only the officially designated person will be allowed to pick up tickets.

The NALC room rate at the Hilton Washington and Towers is \$145/single and \$165/double. The rate is good for the nights of December 6 through 9. All reservations must be made directly with the Hilton Washington and Towers, 1919 Connecticut Avenue NW, Washington, DC 20009; phone 1-800-HILTONS (1-800-445-8667). Please be sure to request the special NALC rate.

For additional details of installation activities and the official Dinner Tickets Order Form, see page 54 of the September-October issues of the *Postal Record*.

Texas, New Mexico Carriers in Joint Lobbying



NALC members from Texas and New Mexico joined forces September 17-21 to lobby their lawmakers on postal reform and other critical issues as House and Senate members pressed toward the final days in session before the November elections. Photos (l-r) show Texas NALC President Ethel Ford with Rep. Henry Cuellar (D-TX) at a special congressional reception; NALC President William Young outlining the union's legislative goals at a special Rap Session; and National Business Agent Gene Goodwin, right, in conversation with New Mexico NALC President Richard "Smiley" Martinez.