

# 2008 Heroes of the Year



Ten NALC members were honored as Heroes of the Year during a special celebration in Washington on September 18. President William H. Young was master of ceremonies for the luncheon, which was attended by a host of special guests, including the union's national officers, plus representatives from Congress, other postal and labor unions and the Postal Service. Three regional heroes and a special Carrier Alert hero were recognized along with a National Humanitarian. Five letter carriers who joined forces to evacuate residents from a burning senior citizen apartment complex shared the title of National Heroes of the Year. At right, President Young and Executive Vice President Fred Rolando met informally with the winners the day before the ceremony. Summaries of these carriers' heroism appeared in the August-September *Postal Record* (pages 2-3) and full details along with a report on the awards ceremony will be published in next month's magazine.



## Victims of 2008 storms eligible for PERF grants

**A**ctive and retired postal employees—including letter carriers, clerks, mail handlers and managers—are eligible to apply for grants from the Postal Employees' Relief Fund to help repair or rebuild homes, or replace personal property, damaged during this year's unusually active tropical storm season.

The country's eastern and Gulf coasts had enjoyed something of a reprieve from deadly storms following the record-breaking 2005 season that made infamous household names of Katrina, Rita and Wilma, the back-to-back-to-back hurricanes. But the

2008 Atlantic storm season has been a brutal reminder of just how destructive Mother Nature can be, as four separate named storms wreaked havoc along the Gulf coastline and on some land-locked states as well:

■ Although Fay may not have been an official hurricane when it arrived in Florida in mid-August, the tropical storm packed quite a punch as it traveled an erratic five-day course over the Sunshine State plus parts of Alabama.

■ A week later, Louisiana residents experienced a bit of *déjà vu* over the Labor Day weekend as Category 3 Hurricane Gustav followed Katrina's

2005 track almost exactly. Thankfully, Gustav spared New Orleans and made landfall to the west of the Crescent City.

■ Once a Category 1 hurricane, Hanna had weakened by the time it came ashore the evening of September 5, but it still managed to ravage the east coast from Charleston, South Carolina, all the way up to Boston with high winds and heavy rains before heading out into the north Atlantic.

■ As this issue of *The Postal Record* was going to press, damages were still being assessed after Hurricane Ike slammed Texas, inundating Galveston and

blasting Houston with gale-force winds, and then dumped buckets of rain as it wound its way up the Mississippi and Ohio River valleys, leaving behind flooding and widespread power outages as far north as southern Ohio.

Hurricane season does not officially end until November 30.

### A helping hand

The unions and management associations joined the Postal Service in 1990 to create PERF to help employees affected by Hurricane Hugo and the Loma Prieta earthquake. PERF does not provide immediate assistance. Rather, its grants come after

President Young's annual letter urging NALC members to support the Combined Federal Campaign

# New lapel pins for past officers



Special lapel pins honoring past branch and state association officers will be available for purchase in mid-October from the NALC Supply Department, Secretary-Treasurer Jane Broendel announced.

The round pins, featuring the NALC seal, will include the words "Past Officer" at the top and either "Branch" or "State Assn." at the bottom. They were created in response to a resolution adopted at the NALC Convention in Boston in July.

The Supply Department presently offers "Past President" and "Past Secretary" pins (see photo above). The new pin was designed to signify those who have held other branch and state positions. ✉

other forms of relief, including insurance, have been settled.

PERF grants can run anywhere from \$1,000 to \$14,000, depending on the total out-of-pocket loss not covered by insurance or other types of assistance, such as payments from the Federal Emergency Management Agency or the American Red Cross.

Since its inception, the fund has distributed nearly \$15 million to active and retired postal employees impacted by tropical storms, floods, earthquakes, tornadoes, wildfires and home fires. Most recently, PERF approved 50 grants totaling \$330,000, mostly for victims of the 2005 Gulf Coast hurricanes.

NALC Director of Public

Relations Drew Von Bergen serves as chair of PERF's executive committee, which consists of representatives from the fund's participating organizations, including the USPS, the NALC, the American Postal Workers Union, the National Postal Mail Handlers Union, the National Rural Letter Carriers' Association, the National Association of Postal Supervisors, the National League of Postmasters of the United States and the National Association of Postmasters of the United States.

Application forms are available at postalrelief.com, by writing to Postal Employees' Relief Fund, P.O. Box 34500, Washington, DC 20043-4500, or by calling 202-408-1869. ✉



## Union Plus: Here to help

Union letter carriers who have an NALC Union Plus credit card and experienced a significant loss of income or property in this season's hurricanes can apply for special grants of \$500 from the Union Plus Disaster Relief Fund.

To apply, first go to [fema.gov](http://fema.gov) to confirm that you live in a county designated as qualifying for assistance. Then call the Union Plus Credit Card program at 877-761-5028 to determine whether you are eligible for a disaster relief fund grant. The fund provided \$400,000 to qualifying union members after Hurricane Katrina in 2005.

Also, disaster victims who participate in the Union Plus loan, auto insurance, mortgage and UnionSecure insurance programs may be eligible to receive payment extensions or other special help. Contact your specific program provider for more information:

- Union Plus Loan: 800-224-5920
- Union Plus Mortgage: 866-766-2164
- Union Plus Auto Insurance: 877-244-0304
- UnionSecure Insurance: 800-393-0864

Information about all the money-saving benefits available to NALC members through Union Plus is available at [unionplus.org](http://unionplus.org).