Special Philadelphia Convention Edition

NALC Bulletin

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Thursday, July 24

Expressing unity and solidarity

Dressed as "Rocky," NALC President Fredric Rolando started the day's proceedings by running from the back of the hall to the main stage while the movie's theme song played over the loudspeakers—a nod to the fact that the movie was filmed in Philadelphia.

Next, Asheboro, NC Branch 2560 letter carrier Tim Greene sang the National Anthem, followed by the Pledge of Allegiance led by Philadelphia Branch 157 Vice President Joe Rogers and an invocation from the Rev. Joseph Leggieri of Thomas Jefferson University Hospital.

Then, on an enthusiastic voice vote, delegates passed a floor motion of no confidence in Postmaster General Patrick Donahoe, calling on the Postal Board of Governors to replace Donahoe with someone "more positive" about USPS.

President Rolando next appointed a National Election Committee made up of:

Brooklyn, NY Br. 41's Joe DeRossi (chairman); Manhattan, KS Br. 1018's Rod Holub; Birmingham, AL Branch 530's Antonia Shields; Garden Grove, CA Br. 1100's Barbara Stickler; Jamaica, NY Br. 562's Andrew Wiener; Royal Oak, MI Br. 3126's Paul Roznowski; Van Nuys, CA Br. 2462's Calvin Brookins; Houston, TX Br. 283's Ethel Ford; Central Florida Br. 1091's Lynne Pendleton; and Silver Spring, MD Br. 2611's Delano Wilson.

General Resolutions

On Monday, the convention had voted to accept *en bloc* those general resolutions approved by the NALC Executive Council. Director of Retired Members Ron Watson, Director of Life Insurance Myra Warren and Health Benefit Plan Director Brian Hellman took turns reading the remaining resolutions on which the Executive Council had taken a position either of disapproval or of no recommendation.

NPMHU President John Hegarty

The Council's disapproval of General Resolution 3, calling for an unlikely-to-be-successful lawsuit against the Government Pension Offset (GPO) and the Windfall Elimination Provision (WEP), was upheld following a teller vote, with 2,323 voting in favor of the Council's disapproval and 1,921 voting against.

General Resolution 7 was withdrawn by its makers.

The Council had no recommendation on General Resolution 11, calling for NALC to negotiate with the Postal Service a no-smoking policy in all postal vehicles. The resolution was approved by the convention following a division.

Four floor resolutions were approved by the Executive Council.

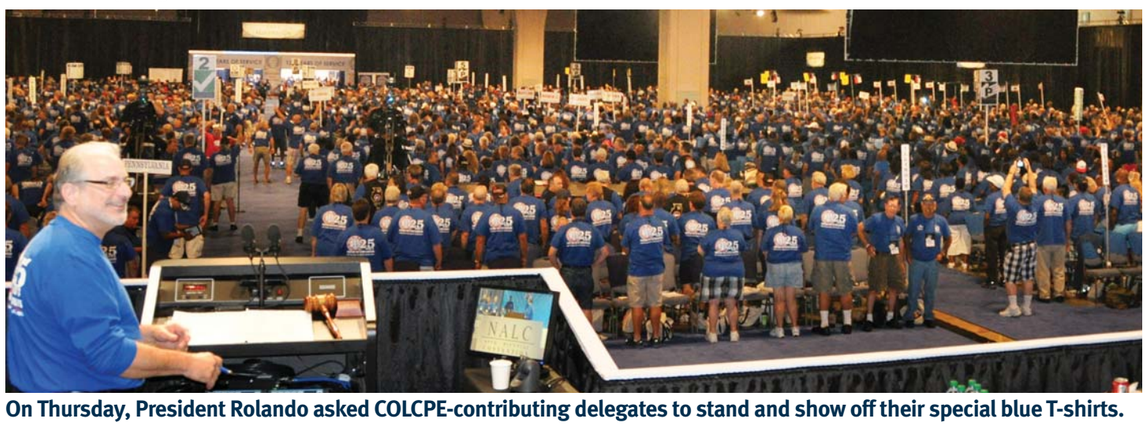
The convention also passed a motion that any money collected when delegates passed the hat would be matched by National Headquarters. Tellers collected $17,421 for Noe Herrera and the family of David Jorah.

Before inviting National Postal Mail Handlers Union President John Hegarty to the stage for an address, President Rolando showed delegates a brief video of highlights from Wednesday afternoon's "Stop Staples" rally. He said that the video had been sent to the American Postal Workers Union to be shown as part of their convention.

NPMHU President John Hegarty

"The members of the mail handlers' union have an extraordinary leader in John Hegarty, who has the unflinching support of the NALC," Rolando said as he introduced the NPMHU president. "He has been a very effective voice in Washington for all postal employees. He's smart and reasonable, but firm."

Hegarty told delegates that postal reform has been at the top of his union's legislative agenda for more than a decade. "I think it's apparent that we have an uphill battle for passage of postal reform this year," he said, "but we're not going to give up and we're certainly not going to give in. All four unions are on the same page, and all four unions are going to work together."



On Thursday, President Rolando asked COLCPE-contributing delegates to stand and show off their special blue T-shirts.

COLCPE awards

President Rolando then presented awards for participation in COLCPE, the union's political action committee. The winners were:

Branch with the highest overall rate of member participation—Newport, RI Branch 57, 78 percent; state with the highest participation rate—North Dakota State Association, 37 percent; region with the highest participation rate—Region 8, 16 percent; branch with the highest percentage of "Gimme 5" automatic contributors with 50 to 99 members—Hattiesburg, MS Branch 938, 38 percent; branch with the highest "Gimme 5" percentage, 100 to 499 members—Newport, RI Branch 57, 66 percent; branch with the highest "Gimme 5" percentage, 500 to 999 members—Honolulu, HI Branch 860, 27 percent; branch with the highest "Gimme 5" percentage, 1,000 to 1,999 members—Salt Lake City, UT Branch 111, 12 percent; branch with the highest "Gimme 5" percentage, 2,000 to 3,999 members—Minneapolis, MN Branch 9, 9 percent; branch with the highest "Gimme 5" percentage, 4,000 members or more—Chicago, IL Branch 11, 11 percent; state with the highest "Gimme 5" percentage—Rhode Island State Association, 27 percent; and region with the highest "Gimme 5" percentage—Region 8, 10 percent.

Mileage and per diem

Next, Rolando gave the microphone to members of the Mileage and Per Diem Committee, who delivered the committee's final report. The total per diem and mileage to be paid for the convention, the committee reported, was $143,992.42. The delegates voted to accept the report.

AFGE President J. David Cox

Rolando then welcomed J. David Cox, president of the American Federation of Government Employees (AFGE). Cox spoke with passion about his respect for letter carriers and his union's commitment to standing with us to protect USPS and our jobs. "We're going to join with you to keep six-day delivery of the mail going; we're going to fight with all our might to fight consolidation and privatization," Cox said. "We join with you to stop closures and reduced services and we join with you to fight for your safety and health to keep letter carriers out of harm's way."

Cox also had choice words for congressional foes of labor such as Rep. Darrell Issa (R-CA). "He wants to privatize everything that moves, he doesn't like government and he doesn't like government workers," Cox said. "We're going to whoop his ass before we're through."

Future conventions

Rolando then invited to the podium Secretary-Treasurer Jane Broendel, who introduced the Convention Site Committee: Howard Komine of Honolulu, HI Branch 860; retired NALC Assistant Secretary-Treasurer Jim Korolowicz of South Macomb, MI Branch 4374; and Glen Norton of Las Vegas Branch 2502. The committee reported that a decision on the 2018 site was on hold.

Larry Brown, president of Los Angeles Branch 24, and delegates from that branch took the stage to invite delegates to Los Angeles for the 70th Biennial Convention in 2016. The 2016 convention has been set for August 15-19 at the Los Angeles Convention Center.

Health Benefit Plan Director Brian Hellman

CWU President Billy Hayes

Rolando then handed the microphone to Billy Hayes, general secretary of the Communication Workers Union in the United Kingdom. Hayes described the challenge of protecting mail service and employees' interests after the U.K.'s postal system, the Royal Mail, was privatized last year. He urged the NALC delegates to fight to protect service in their postal system. "Saturday delivery is a key part of the Postal Service in the U.S.A.," he said, "and let's fight to keep it."

Muscular Dystrophy Association

The convention then turned its attention to NALC's official charity, the Muscular Dystrophy Association. Delegates watched a video recording of a television broadcast from 1952—the first installment of what became the annual MDA Telethon—that demonstrated the union's early commitment to the cause.

Jim Williams, a member of Portland, OR Branch 82 and NALC's liaison with MDA, announced that a 50/50 raffle for MDA had sold $10,862 worth of tickets. Williams said that Escondido, CA Branch 2525's Willie Little had won a Harley-Davidson motorcycle in a raffle held Wednesday evening, which netted $40,000 for MDA.

Following a video about MDA's goodwill ambassadors—children with neuromuscular diseases who spread the word about MDA—Rolando interviewed the current ambassador, Reagan Imhoff of New Berlin, WI. Imhoff charmed not only Rolando but also the convention delegates, who gave the little girl a letter carrier cheer and passed a motion to make her an honorary NALC member.

Rolando then presented awards to branches that had raised the most money for MDA. The winners were:

Among branches with 10-49 members—Adrian, MI Branch 579, $3,117; 50-99 members—Jefferson City, MO Branch 127, $5,289; 100-199 members—Fargo-West Fargo, ND Branch 205, $18,895; 200-349 members—Saginaw, MI Branch 74, $11,583; 350-499 members—Rockford, IL Branch 245, $13,097; 500-699 members—Colorado Springs, CO Branch 204, $12,697; 700-999 members—Northeastern New York Branch 358, $20,006; 1,000-1,499 members—Hartford, CT Branch 86, $44,913; 1,500-1,999 members—Atlanta, GA Branch 73, $25,679; 2,000 or more members—Long Island Merged, NY Branch 6000, $57,277; and the grand prize for the most raised among all branches—New Jersey Merged Branch 38, $82,632.

The Great Postal Strike

The delegates then viewed a video of television coverage of the 1970 strike.

Following the video, Rolando introduced teacher and arbitrator Tom Germano, who, as a New York City Branch 36 letter carrier in 1970, helped lead his fellow strikers. Germano shared his reflections on how the strike changed the Postal Service and energized rank-and-file letter carriers. Though he left the craft, his time as a carrier left an indelible mark. "I am first a union person," he said, "and the NALC will always be my union. Always. Underneath it all, in my heart of hearts, I will always be a letter carrier."

The convention voted to make Germano an honorary permanent member of the NALC.

Rolando then recessed the convention at 3:28 p.m.

Friday, July 25

Focusing on NALC's future

President Rolando called the convention to order at 10 a.m. with the airing of a highlight video of the week's events at the Pennsylvania Convention Center. He invited Minneapolis Branch 9 President Mike Zagaros to the microphone to sing the National Anthem. Marge McCann of Philadelphia Branch 157 led the Pledge of Allegiance, followed by an invocation by Branch 157 Chaplain Lillian Young. The convention then approved a motion offered from the floor to honor retiring NALC Auxiliary officers at future NALC retiring officers' dinners.

President Rolando next invited Director of Life Insurance Myra Warren to the podium. Warren introduced the members of the Uniform Committee: Chairman Tom Gavin of Scranton, PA Branch 17, and Stafford Price of Chicago Branch 11. The committee reported that it was working to convince USPS to allow carriers to wear several new items that would enhance their visibility in the dark and comfort in bad weather.

Warren then introduced the members of the Mutual Benefit Association Committee: Chairman Zulma Betancourt of West Coast Florida Branch 1477; Dan Torres of San Antonio, TX Branch 421; and Michael Keels of Seattle Branch 79. The committee reported that the MBA is in very good financial shape and continues to grow.

Sen. Bernie Sanders (I-VT)

Sen. Bernie Sanders

Rolando next introduced Sen. Bernie Sanders (I-VT), who came to the stage to enthusiastic applause, accompanied by members of the Vermont delegation and veterans from all 15 NALC regions. Sanders is the author of the Postal Service Protection Act (S. 316), legislation supported by NALC.

Sanders told delegates that the struggle to strengthen the Postal Service and to stop plans by Postmaster General Patrick Donahoe and hostile members of Congress to cut service and jobs is about much more than the mail or postal employees. "I want you to know that the work you are doing is not only important to the jobs in the Postal Service," Sanders said, "it is vitally important to the future of the entire American economy.

"At a time when the middle class of this country is disappearing, at a time when unemployment is much too high, at a time when most of the new jobs being created are part-time and low-wage, we are not going to destroy middle-class jobs at the Postal Service."

Sanders then described his bill, which would give the Postal Service more flexibility to offer new products and services and free it from the mandate to pre-fund retiree health care benefits, a burden that has obscured the Postal Service's operational profits of $1.6 billion since October of 2012.

"There is no business in America, no corporation in America, no government agency in America that has anything close to this onerous and horrendous mandate," he said. "We have got to get rid of that mandate once and for all."

Sanders told delegates that we may not have the money wielded by the billionaires working to privatize the Postal Service and destroy unions, but we have strength in numbers. "We are the majority of America—we are America—and when we stand together, there's nothing that we can't accomplish," the senator said.

Website and publications

Rolando then invited Director of City Delivery Brian Renfroe to the mic. Renfroe showed delegates what the NALC's redesigned website will look like when it goes live in the next few months. Delegates cheered the news that it would be fully functional on mobile devices, such as smart phones.

Rolando then presented plaques and certificates to the first-place winners of the branch publication awards:

Best News or Feature Story (tie): Dale Thaler, *The 'B' Mike*, Portland, OR Br. 82, and John Curtis, *The Maine Letter Carrier*, Central Maine Merged Br. 391; Promoting Unionism (tie): David Teegarden, *Viewpoint*, Kansas City, MO Br. 30, and Tony Boyd, *Timely Messenger*, San Antonio, TX Br. 421; Best Website: nalc916.org, Eugene, OR Br. 916; Best Editorial or Column (tie): Warren Cooke, *The Mountaineer*, Springfield, MO Br. 203, and Ivars Lauersons, *The Voice*, San Francisco, CA Br. 214; Best Cartoon or Photo: Neal Couey, *The Beast of Burden*, Santa Barbara, CA Br. 290; General Excellence, Large Branch or State Association Publication (tie): *South Florida Letter Carrier*, South Florida Br. 1071, and *Branch 34's CLAN*, Boston Br. 34; General Excellence, Small Branch Publication: *The Relay Box*, Eugene, OR Br. 916.

Stephen DeMatteo, UNI

Coming to the stage next was Stephen DeMatteo, the director of Union Network International (UNI) Global Union's post and logistics division. Based in Geneva, Switzerland, UNI is a federation of national and regional trade unions, of which NALC is a member.

DeMatteo, who formerly worked at NALC Headquarters as a researcher, told delegates that postal unions and postal workers are a tough bunch. "We're standing up against privatization and fighting back," he said. "We know as unions and workers that there is a future for the Postal Service. Together we'll break through, we'll fight and we'll win."

Committee on Appeals

Next, President Rolando asked Vice President Lew Drass, chairman of the Committee on Appeals, to come to the stage. Drass told delegates that two appeals had been presented to his committee for presentation to the convention. For the first appeal, neither the appellant nor a representative of the appellant spoke to the assembly. The Appeals Committee's recommendation to deny the appeal was upheld by a voice vote.

For the second appeal, the appellant addressed the convention, the branch gave its rebuttal, and the appellant was permitted a minute for a response to the rebuttal. The committee's decision to deny part of the appeal was overturned by the convention, and the decision was remanded to the Appeals Committee for further consideration.

Scholarship, Health Benefit committees

President Rolando then invited the members of the Scholarship Committee to come to the stage to give the committee's report: Los Angeles Br. 24's Jacqueline White (chairman), Detroit Br. 1's Sandra Laemmel, and Buffalo-Western New York Br. 3's Larry Kania.

Director of Life Insurance Myra Warren

The president next asked Health Benefit Plan Director Brian Hellman to come to the stage and introduce the members of the Health Benefits Committee. Garden Grove, CA Br. 1100's Marilyn Youman (chairman); Cleveland Br. 40's Robert Murphy; and Nashville Br. 4's Geoff Quimet presented their report to the convention.

Postal banking

Next, President Rolando turned the convention's attention to the subject of postal banking and invited two speakers to the stage to talk about the growing momentum to bring back a postal savings bank. First to address the convention was Marc Armstrong, a postal banking advocate and founder of BankAct. "In Minneapolis, the NALC convention passed a resolution in support of postal banking," Armstrong said. "The vision and the leadership that you showed has led to many exciting postal banking developments."

Following Armstrong at the podium was George Collins, post and logistics' national industry organizer for New Zealand's Engineering, Printing and Manufacturing Union (EPMU), that country's largest private-sector union.

"Kiwibank is a New Zealand success story," Collins said. "Through nationalistic support and great marketing, after 12 years it is now seen as one of the major banks in New Zealand. A wholly owned subsidiary of New Zealand Post, it capitalized on the post's existing retail network to provide banking services and, like last year, makes most of the New Zealand Post's profit."

Letter Carriers' Food Drive

Coming to the stage next to talk about the Letter Carriers' Food Drive was Pam Donato, NALC Headquarters' community service and membership outreach coordinator. Donato showed the convention a video recap of this year's national food drive, which gathered 72.5 million pounds of non-perishable food. Donato also introduced Feeding America of South Jersey's Sabine Mehnert, who expressed her appreciation for the letter carriers' annual food collection effort.

President Rolando then presented this year's food drive awards:

Category 11 (1-25 members): Grand Haven, MI Br. 1147, 51,450 lbs; Category 10 (25-49 members): Beaufort, SC Br. 3262, 86,125 lbs.; Category 9 (50-99 members): Ocala, FL Br. 1103, 212,344 lbs.; Category 8 (100-199 members): Billings, MT Br. 815, 367,000 lbs.; Category 7 (200-349 members): Sun City, AZ Br. 6156, 392,999 lbs.; Category 6 (350-499 members): Fort Wayne, IN Br. 116, 542,365 lbs.; Category 5 (500-699 members): Clearwater, FL Br. 2008, 1,230,750 lbs.; Category 4 (700-999 members): Nashville, TN Br. 4, 650,643 lbs.; Category 3, (1,0001,499 members): West Coast Florida Br. 1477, 1,670,688 lbs.; Category 2 (1,5001,999 members): Central Florida Br. 1091, 1,485,608 lbs.; Category 1 (2,000 members or more): Garden Grove, CA Br. 1100, 1,158,725 lbs.; NALC Regional Champion (most food collected by a region): Atlanta Region 9.

Rule 23 report

Convention Rule 23, approved by the convention on Monday, states that all motions calling for expenditure of money shall be referred to the convention for approval. Two pass-the-hat motions were approved by the convention during the week, as was a motion for the national union to match the donations. National Trustees Chairman Larry Brown reported that delegates had donated a total of $17,421. With the match, the amount rises to $34,842. The trustees proposed distributing the collected funds evenly to former Hayward, CA Branch 1707 president Noe Herrera, who is being treated for cancer, and to the family of Mt. Clemons, MI Branch 654 member David Jorah, who recently died unexpectedly. The convention accepted the trustees' report.

Distribution Committee

President Rolando next called to the stage Canoga Park, CA Branch 4006's Jill Lemons, the chairman of the Distribution Committee. Lemons introduced the members of her committee:

Marc Ashmon, Br. 2876, Linden, NJ; Alex Criego, Br. 84, Pittsburgh, PA; Eddie Davidson, Br. 382, Durham, NC; David Dry, Br. 258, Reading, PA; Angela Dunn, Br. 73, Atlanta; Scott Dulas, Br. 114, Duluth, MN; Rene Eberhardt, Br. 1681, Casper, WY; Kevin Flaherty, Br. 34, Boston; Al Friedman, Br. 2008, Clearwater, FL; Robert Fuentes, Br. 11, Chicago; Bryant Funches, Br. 11, Chicago; Marcos Gonzalez, Br. 989, Santa Fe; Wayne Harlow, Br. 439, Greenville, SC; Kevin Hevelone, Br. 8, Lincoln, NE; Ricky Horton, Br. 916, Eugene, OR; Darryl Johnson, Br. 24, Los Angeles; Melissa Kinworthy, Br. 209, Pekin, IL; Brian Manning, Br. 34, Boston; Alvin Matsumura, Br. 860, Honolulu; Joseph Pease, Br. 725, Southeast PA Mgd.; Vicki Piotter, Br. 916, Eugene, OR; Melody Roberts, Br. 27, Memphis, TN; Joe Rutkoski, Br. 38, New Jersey Merged; George Sarvis, Br. 137, Hudson Valley Mgd., NY; Timothy Sheehan, Br. 358, Northeastern NY; Eric Sloan, Br. 73, Atlanta; Troy Smith, Br. 30, Kansas City, MO; Tammy Sneed, Br. 62, Chattanooga, TN; Steve Strayer, Br. 205, Fargo-West Fargo, ND; Dan Szucs, Br. 38, New Jersey Mgd.; Steve Terry, Br. 14, Louisville; Trelle Thomas, Br. 129, Baton Rouge, LA; Tim Turner, Br. 533, Kokomo, IN; Darrel Vance, Br. 500, Harrisburg, PA; Charles Walls, Br. 5, Omaha, NE; and Daniel Yianakopolos, Br. 44, New Hampshire Mgd.

Thank you

Winding down the proceedings, President Rolando took a few moments of personal privilege to thank the convention delegates for their participation and attendance. He also thanked and led a letter carrier cheer for Philadelphia Branch 157's officers and members, the hosts of this year's convention. The president also thanked NALC Headquarters staff members, giving special recognition to NALC Chief of Staff Jim Sauber. And he expressed his appreciation to his fellow members of the NALC Executive Council. "I also want to thank my wonderful wife and children, who support me being your national president," he said.

The convention approved a motion to adjourn *sine die* at 2:08 p.m.

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