NALC Bulletin
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Rolando appoints Drass VP, Renfroe city delivery director

Lew Drass

NALC President Fredric Rolando has appointed Lew Drass of Huntsville, AL Branch 462 as national vice president and Brian Renfroe of Hattiesburg, MS Branch 938 as national director of city delivery.

Drass has served as director of city delivery since his election to that spot by the 67th Biennial Convention in Anaheim in 2010. In 1977, Drass began his postal career in Riverdale, MD, where he served as a shop steward beginning in 1983. He transferred to Huntsville in 1989, and in 1993 he was elected president of Branch 462. Drass served as president, vice president and director of education for the Alabama State Association, as well as a local business agent and arbitration advocate in Region 8. He was first elected national business agent for Region 8 in 2002. He was re-elected NBA by acclamation at the 2006 Las Vegas Convention.

Brian Renfroe

Drass' appointment as vice president fills the vacancy left when George Mignosi stepped down in January to assume the office of president of Brooklyn, NY Branch 41.

Renfroe's appointment to director of city delivery was made to fill the vacancy left by Drass' appointment as vice president. Renfroe came to Washington, DC, in 2011 to work in the Contract Administration Unit on city delivery issues at NALC Headquarters. Last summer, he was appointed special assistant to President Rolando. Before coming to the nation's capital, Renfroe served as president of Hattiesburg, MS Branch 938 as well as president of the Mississippi State Association and as a local business agent in Region 8. Renfroe, a second-generation letter carrier, began his career in 2004. He also is a graduate of the NALC Leadership Academy, having attended Class 6 in 2008.

"I am thrilled to have Lew and Brian in their new positions on the NALC Executive Council," Rolando said. "Both of them are smart, hard working and totally dedicated to the well-being of fellow letter carriers."

Under the *NALC Constitution*, the president has the authority to fill vacancies on the Executive Council until the next election and installation. The appointments are effective March 10.

'Highly encouraging' quarterly report

On Feb. 7, the Postal Service released its financial report for the first quarter of Fiscal Year 2014, which covers the last three months of 2013. Although a $1.4 billion pre-funding expense once again led to a reported net loss (of $354 million), the report showed that the return to operational profitability that began in 2013 continued in the first quarter. Excluding pre-funding, the USPS earned a net income of $1.1 billion—which includes an operating profit of $765 million, figures NALC President Fredric Rolando called "highly encouraging."

"The Postal Service's unmatched networks and outstanding employees have made these striking results possible," Rolando said. "And these trends augur well for the future, because they reflect the opportunities increasingly presented by the Internet and by an improving economy."

In fact, package revenues resulting from online shopping rose by more than 14 percent this quarter—more than offsetting the small decline in letter revenue. And to see another sign of improving postal finances, compare this quarter's $765 million operating profit with the $100 million from the same period last year.

"These results are exactly why lawmakers need to work on strengthening the postal network while addressing the real problem: the congressional mandate to pre-fund future retiree health benefits, which is required of no other public or private entity in the country," Rolando said. "Efforts such as S. 1486 that call for degrading the network and reducing services to the public and businesses would jeopardize this dramatic postal turnaround."

Philadelphia Convention news

Delegate eligibility lists (DELs) for the 69th biennial national convention in Philadelphia July 21-25 have been mailed to all branches. The lists must be completed and returned to Secretary-Treasurer Jane Broendel's office at NALC Headquarters no later than May 21 in order for branch representatives to be registered as delegates to the convention.

All of the DELs have been mailed to the branch secretaries. If you are a branch secretary and you have not yet received your DEL, contact the Secretary-Treasurer's office at NALC Headquarters so a replacement DEL can be printed and mailed to out.

Housing: The NALC has made special arrangements with 23 hotels to accommodate letter carrier delegates attending the convention. All NALC-block hotels are within one mile of the convention center. The room rates have been set so branches can begin budgeting for the convention. Please do not contact the hotels. All room reservations will be made through the NALC official housing company.

The reservation process does not start until after the branch's DEL is received at NALC Headquarters, delegates are registered, and the credentials are mailed to the branch secretary.

NALC Headquarters will be advising its official housing company, Meeting Services Plus, of all confirmed registered delegates. Anyone booking a room who is not a confirmed registered delegate at the time of the booking will be subject to cancellation and will receive a notice of such.

Individuals are advised that they must go through their own branch to make reservations and this cannot be done until the DEL has been received and processed, and credentials have been mailed to the branch secretary.

Do not contact the host branch officers in Philadelphia about housing—they will not be able to assist you.

After Secretary-Treasurer Broendel's office has received the DEL and registered the delegates, the credentials will be mailed to the branch secretary. Included with the credentials is information on the housing process. This information includes a web address and a code specific to your branch so that you may reserve rooms for your delegates. Branch secretaries may prefer to copy the instructions and give them to delegates and allow them to make their own reservations. Note that some hotels are already sold out, while others may have limited room availability.

Visit the convention page at nalc.org for detailed housing information and instructions.

All proposed amendments to the *NALC Constitution* to be submitted for consideration at the convention must be received by Broendel's office by May 21. That date is 60 days in advance of the convention, as prescribed by the Constitution. Proposed amendments will appear in this June's *Postal Record* for the membership to review.

Resolutions to be considered by delegates also must be received by the May 21 deadline in order to be printed in the Resolutions and Amendments book provided to delegates. Resolutions received after May 21 still may be considered at the convention.

Branch sales: Branches wishing to sell items in the designated branch sales area during the convention must contact Broendel's office no later than April 7 to secure guidelines and forms. The completed forms must be returned to Headquarters by April 21.

The special **NALC Baseball Night at Citizens Bank Park** is Tuesday, July 22. Tickets to the Philadelphia Phillies–San Francisco Giants game are $24 each, which includes bus transportation for those staying at NALC-block hotels. Tickets must be purchased in blocks by branch presidents, and any branch hoping to get seats for the game should act immediately. Download the ticket order form from nalc.org, then mail it along with a check or money order made payable to "Secretary-Treasurer, NALC" for the total amount, to: NALC Baseball Night; 100 Indiana Ave. NW; Washington, DC 20001-2144. All ticket orders must be received by June 1. Tickets will be available for pickup in the registration area; there will be no refunds on purchased tickets. Orders that cannot be filled will be refunded.

NALC is planning a **retiring officers' dinner** for Thursday, July 24. Details on this event will be provided soon.

Go to nalc.org for more convention news.

Seriously flawed postal bill clears Senate committee

On Feb. 6, the Senate committee with Postal Service oversight completed its mark-up of a fundamentally flawed postal bill, S. 1486, and approved it, 9 to 1.

As was previously reported in the *NALC Bulletin*, the leaders of the Homeland Security and Government Affairs Committee had introduced S. 1486 last summer.

Committee Chairman Tom Carper (D-DE) subsequently scheduled—and each time canceled within days—at least four separate mark-up sessions for the bill. Then on Jan. 23, Carper and committee ranking member Tom Coburn (R-OK) jointly introduced a substitute version of S. 1486, and booked a meeting for Jan. 29 to debate it along with a handful of proposed amendments. That meeting was held as scheduled (see the previous *NALC Bulletin*), but was continued to a second day on Feb. 6.

The substitute retained the service cuts and the attack on new employees' retirement benefits that prompted the NALC to oppose the original version of S. 1486.

Much of the discussion on Feb. 6 focused on postal property policies and postal pricing, although midway through the session, Sen. Heidi Heitkamp (D-ND) spoke up in strong support of USPS' six-day mail delivery, calling it "the one advantage it has" over its competitors.

As in the Jan. 29 meeting, the committee spent considerable time on Feb 6 on a gun amendment offered by Sen. Rand Paul (R-KY). After an extended debate, Paul's amendment was effectively rejected, but the committee later unanimously adopted an amendment by Sen. Mark Begich (D-AK) that would allow guns to be stored in vehicles parked on postal property. This amendment promises to cause considerable controversy in the future, as gun measures typically lead to gridlock in Congress.

The most controversial provision within the revised S. 1486 would create a so-called trigger for allowing the Postal Service to cut Saturday mail delivery. As written, the bill would let USPS implement five-day mail service if its volume dropped below 140 billion pieces a year—whether or not the Postal Service is fully solvent and profitable.

Sen. Carl Levin (D-MI) said that the Postal Service estimates it would not reach this volume level until late 2018. But rather than propose an amendment that would take away such a draconian volume trigger, Levin instead proposed an amendment that merely mandates the Postal Service to keep six-day mail delivery at least through September 2017. The committee approved Levin's amendment on a voice vote.

President Rolando expressed the NALC's staunch opposition to the trigger proposal. "The Postal Service's package delivery segment continues to boom," he said later, "and in January, Congress once again retained in its latest spending bill the language that calls for mail to be delivered six days a week. Yet despite these facts, the committee has disappointed postal employees and postal customers alike by buying into the absurd notion that cutting service will somehow save the Postal Service billions a year.

S. 1486 could eliminate door delivery for millions of businesses immediately and encourage the Postal Service to phase out residential door delivery to 35 million American households. These moves would destroy the Customer Connect program, not to mention reduce the value of the mail. Also, they would all but ensure the loss of 20,000 postal jobs—on top of the 40,000 positions threatened by an end of Saturday service.

"Paving the way for eliminating six-day delivery and door-to-door service would hurt millions of residents and small businesses as well as the Postal Service itself," the president said, "because it would slow service, drive mail out of the system and reduce the earned revenue that funds USPS."

With all the amendments considered, Carper called for a final vote, and the official tally to move S. 1486 out of committee was 9 to 1; only Sen. Jon Tester (D-MT) voted no. (Several committee members who were not present cast so-called proxy votes, but these votes—4 to 2 against the measure—are merely "for the record" and do not count toward the official vote total.)

"I am disappointed that the committee advanced this flawed legislation," said Rolando, who emphasized that this setback does not mean our fight against S. 1486 is over. "If the full Senate ends up considering any sort of postal legislation before the end of the year, we will fight to ensure that it focuses on solutions to the real issues facing the Postal Service—pre-funding, pricing, new products and pension surpluses."

The next step in the process for S. 1486 would be a floor vote by the entire Senate, although none has yet been scheduled. Typically, bills are passed by both the House of Representatives and Senate, after which they go to a conference committee where differences get worked out.

"Whatever happens, the bottom line is that this union remains committed to working with Congress and the Postal Service to work up a truly comprehensive reform package," the president said, "one that focuses on mutually acceptable reforms on health care, pension valuations and postal governance; that repeals pre-funding; and that explores ideas for new products and pricing—while rejecting damaging service cuts and measures aimed at undermining our collective-bargaining rights and living standards."

Webinars on common LM form reporting errors

This month, the Office of Labor-Management Standards (OLMS) will be presenting webinars on common reporting errors for Forms LM-3 and LM-2. Each webinar is limited to 200 participants, so visit the Secretary-Treasurer's page at nalc.org to sign up as soon as possible. Once you are approved by the meeting host, you will receive a confirmation e-mail with instructions for joining the session.

Webinar on Common Reporting Errors: Form LM-3
Tuesday, March 11, 1 p.m. Eastern Time
Session Number: 641 379 764
Registration password: Dis2014!

Webinar on Common Reporting Errors: Form LM-2
Thursday, March 13, 1 p.m. Eastern Time
Session Number: 642 128 396
Registration password: Dis2014!

Ahead of Saturday, May 10

Food Drive prep continues

Hard work and dedication have served as the key ingredients to a successful Letter Carriers' Food Drive ever since it went national back in 1992—and there is no question that the same will be true again this year on Saturday, May 10, when the NALC holds its 22nd annual national drive.

On that special day, hundreds of thousands of letter carriers, retirees, family members and volunteers will take to mail routes in every state and territory across America, pick up sacks of non-perishable food and deliver the goods to the food banks and pantries that serve their local communities.

"It's quite impressive that our drive has managed to collect almost 1.3 billion pounds of food over the past two decades," NALC President Fredric Rolando said. "But what really counts is that our extra effort each year on the second Saturday in May means that some of the people who are most in need and who live in our own back yards will be able to put a little more food on their families' tables."

Stepping up to help are this year's other national food drive sponsors: the National Rural Letter Carriers' Association, Campbell Soup, AARP's Drive to End Hunger, United Way, Publix grocery stores, the AFL-CIO, Valassis, Valpak and Uncle Bob's Self Storage—not to mention the U.S. Postal Service.

"We'll continue to encourage all postal employees across the country to support the food drive," USPS Postmaster General Patrick Donahoe wrote in a letter to President Rolando. "Working together, we will continue to make a difference in the lives of millions of Americans in need."

With the drive only two months away, NALC Community and Membership Outreach Coordinator Pam Donato was busy processing registration forms from NALC branches, with a fresh batch of forms arriving with each day's mail delivery.

"It's not too late for a branch to register," Donato stressed. "All branches are encouraged to mail in their registration forms as soon as possible." The form is available for download from the Food Drive page at nalc.org.

Questions regarding the food drive should be directed to Donato at 202-662-2489 or at donato@nalc.org.

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