

# Bulletin

## Rolando announces RAA appointments

NALC President Fredric Rolando has announced the appointment of several letter carriers to regional administrative assistant (RAA) positions.



Calvin Brookins

Rolando has appointed Van Nuys, CA Branch 2462 President Calvin Brookins as an RAA for Region 1, which serves letter carriers in California, Hawaii, Nevada and Guam. Brookins' appointment fills the vacancy created by the retirement of Santa Clara Branch 1427 member Brian Voigt.

Brookins served as a shop steward from 1989 to 2001. For the past 13 years, he has served as Branch 2462 president; before that, he served as branch vice president and trustee. He also is an arbitration advocate.

Rolando also has appointed Garden Grove, CA Branch 1100's Allan Rios as a Region 1 RAA. Rios, a Leadership Academy Class 16 graduate, began his advocacy for letter carriers as a shop steward in 2009. In 2010, he became an area steward; a year later, he took on the role of local business agent. Rios also is an arbitration advocate and has served on the Santa Ana District's Dispute Resolution B Team.



Allan Rios

Brookins and Rios are joining RAAs Bryant Almario (a member of Branch 1427) and James Henry (a member of Branch 1100) as assistants to Region 1 National Business Agent (NBA) Christopher Jackson.

In Region 5, which serves the letter carriers of Missouri, Iowa, Nebraska and Kansas, Rolando has appointed St. Louis, MO Branch 343 Recording Secretary Charles Sexton as an RAA to fill the vacancy created when former RAA Michael Birkett was elected last year as Region 5 NBA. Sexton is a Leadership Academy Class 2 graduate who has served as a local business agent and as an arbitration advocate.



Charles Sexton

President Rolando also has appointed Central Iowa Merged Branch 352 President Stephanie Stewart as an RAA for Region 5. Stewart, a Leadership Academy Class 9 graduate, also is the vice president of the Iowa State Association of Letter Carriers. She is an arbitration advocate as well, and among her other duties she has served on the district safety committee.



Stephanie Stewart

Stewart's appointment fills the vacancy created by the detailing of RAA Mark Sims, a member of Springfield, MO Branch 203, to Washington, DC, to the position of NALC Headquarters contract administration assistant.

And in Region 9, which serves the letter carriers of Florida, Georgia, North Carolina and South Carolina, President Rolando has appointed Central Florida Branch 1091 letter carrier Lynne Pendleton as an RAA to fill the vacancy created when former RAA Kenneth Gibbs was elected last year as Region 9 NBA. Pendleton has served as a local business agent for Region 9, branch trustee and as a Dispute Resolution Team representative, as well as vice president of the Florida State Association. She is a graduate of Leadership Academy Class 5.



Lynne Pendleton

All of these appointments are effective as of Feb. 2.

## Monitoring of USPS response to cyber breach continues

NALC is staying on top of the Postal Service's handling of the cyber breach in September that compromised the agency's computers that hold workers' personal and employment information, including medical, injury compensation, banking, Social Security and other personal information.

On Nov. 10, NALC received the first notification from USPS about the hack. A few days later, the union filed an unfair labor practice charge with the National Labor Relations Board against USPS, alleging that the Postal Service had violated its duty to negotiate with the NALC over the impact of the security breach on letter carriers. That charge remains pending.

Current and former USPS workers whose information was compromised by the breach should have received in December a letter from the Postal Service containing important new information. Meanwhile, individual letter carriers may elect to enroll in the credit monitoring services offered by the Postal Service, with the knowledge that NALC may seek different or additional remedies.

Search for "hacked" at [nalc.org](http://nalc.org) to learn more.

## NALC joins postal banking coalition

NALC President Fredric Rolando has announced that the union has joined a new coalition to explore ways the U.S. Postal Service could provide affordable financial services to the tens of millions of Americans who lack access to such services.

The coalition, the Campaign for Postal Banking, is made up of consumer advocates, community groups, worker representatives, faith-based groups and civil rights organizations.

"The Postal Service already provides several affordable financial services," Rolando said—such as money orders, Treasury check cashing and international electronic money transfers. "Not only do we as letter carriers touch every community in America, six days a week—and sometimes seven—but every community in America has at least one post office nearby, something that can't be said about banks and other similar financial institutions."

According to the latest Federal Deposit Insurance Corporation (FDIC) "National Survey of Unbanked and Underbanked," 28 percent of U.S. households—or nearly 100 million people—are underserved by currently available banking options.

"This coalition will help us explore opportunities to close this gap and help move millions of Americans away from payday lenders and other predatory alternative financial services," the president said. "Our nationwide post office network, combined with its highly skilled and dedicated workforce, could help solve this serious public policy problem."

# National election appeals denied

The National Election Committee met at NALC National Headquarters in Washington, DC, during the week of Jan. 6 to review the election-result appeals that the committee received in December from four unsuccessful candidates in the 2014 election of NALC national officers. The results of the national election were published in the December 2014 *Postal Record*.

Following a thorough review, the committee's decision was to deny the appeals submitted by candidate for national president David Noble, candidate for national trustee Eryca Bloom, candidate for vice president Deidre Beal and candidate for assistant secretary-treasurer Sharella Spikes.

Letters from the committee notified the appellants of this decision.

Unfortunately, during the investigation of the appeals, NALC's election contractor, Peake-DeLancey, discovered that there were errors in the preliminary report of the election results in the final report that was mailed to branches. None of these errors affected the outcome of the election for any office. Moreover, the vote totals reported for each individual branch in the final report are accurate. However, in some regions the branch totals were not added correctly, which, in turn, resulted in errors in the national total. The corrected national vote totals for each candidate are actually higher than the totals reflected in the report.

A corrected report that also lists the discrepancies will be posted at [nalc.org](http://nalc.org). Note that the discrepancies affected the vote count only in NALC Regions 2, 5, 9 and 15, and they affected only the national office races. The regional office races were not affected.

## Pro-postal resolutions introduced



### Six-day mail delivery

As a first step, the U.S. Postal Service proposes to... Panel Regulatory Committee to PRC... NALC supports H.Res. 12, which calls on Congress and the Postal Service to take all appropriate steps to continue six-day mail delivery.

The 114th Congress was sworn in on Jan. 6, and in the House of Representatives, Reps. Sam Graves (R-MO) and Gerry Connolly (D-VA) wasted no time in renewing their commitment to preserving six-day mail delivery by quickly introducing H.Res. 12.

H.Res. 12 is identical to previous sessions' resolutions that called on Congress and the Postal Service to take all appropriate steps to continue six-day mail delivery. The version introduced early in the 113th Congress (2013-2014) wound up with 228 co-sponsors from both political parties.

"Attempts to eliminate Saturday delivery or any other postal services are, in reality, short-sighted excuses for failing to address an onerous pre-funding mandate that perpetuates a cut-cut-cut mentality," NALC President Fredric Rolando said. "Six-day mail delivery service meets the demands of American households and businesses, and we applaud Congressmen Graves and Connolly for leading efforts to preserve it."

A few days later, Reps. Susan Davis (D-CA), David Joyce (R-OH) and Peter King (R-NY) introduced a resolution that calls on Congress to "take all appropriate measures to ensure the continuation of door delivery for all business and residential customers."

The resolution, H.Res. 28, is identical to H.Res. 711, which was introduced last August during the 113th Congress and which ended up with 75 sponsors from both parties.

"This resolution affirms our message that cutting a vital service like door delivery is not the way to strengthen the Postal Service," President Rolando said. "We are grateful to Representatives Davis, Joyce and King for introducing this resolution right out of the gate in this session of Congress."

Visit [nalc.org](http://nalc.org) to download fact sheets and other information about these resolutions.

## Saturday, May 9! Registration for 2015 Food Drive in full swing

NALC President Fredric Rolando has sent a letter to branch presidents to encourage them to sign up as soon as possible to take part in the 23rd annual Letter Carriers' "Stamp Out Hunger" national food drive, set for Saturday, May 9.

"Our extraordinary history of filling local food shelves is possible because of the dedication and hard work of leaders such as you," Rolando wrote. "While our history provides us with confidence, what matters most is our renewed commitment to the Food Drive."

Included with Rolando's letter was the official branch Food Drive registration form. Branch Food Drive leaders can visit [nalc.org/food](http://nalc.org/food) to find these resources and much more—including the official artwork for this year's drive, designed by "Family Circus" artist Jeff Keane.

The Stamp Out Hunger Food Drive is the nation's largest single-day food collection effort—last year, it gathered 72.5 million pounds of food, marking the 11th consecutive year the drive has surpassed 70 million pounds and bringing the total to more than 1.3 billion pounds since the national drive began in 1992.

The registration form must be returned by mail (no faxes or e-mails) to NALC Headquarters by Feb. 15.



## National Association of Letter Carriers

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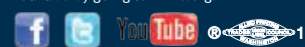
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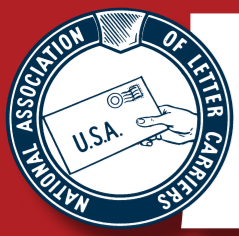
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NALC

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# Bulletin

## Strong 1st quarter for USPS

On Feb. 6, the U.S. Postal Service reported that it had made a \$1.1 billion operating profit in the first quarter of Fiscal Year 2015, up from \$765 million in the same period last year and \$144 million two years ago. In addition, USPS' cash balance grew to \$7 billion as of Dec. 31, 2014, an increase of more than \$2 billion from the same point in time last year.

"The Postal Service financial turnaround is continuing into its third year of operating profitability, never more evident than in this quarter," NALC President Fredric Rolando said. "This is great news for Americans throughout the country and for the millions of businesses that rely on a strong Postal Service."

Overall revenue increased by \$767 million over the same period last year, an increase of 4.3 percent. Volume increased as well, to 42.6 billion pieces in the first quarter of 2015, up from 42 billion pieces in the first quarter of 2014.

As letter carriers can attest, the package business was off the charts. The "Parcel Select, Parcel Return, and Standard Parcels" package segment volume increased by 22.6 percent over last year. Priority Mail volume increased by 8.5 percent over last year. Overall package revenue was up by 10.5 percent, boosting the Postal Service's bottom line.

"The continuing rise in both letter and package revenue—and now even in overall mail volume—is yet another reason why the Postal Service should strengthen—not degrade—its now-profitable networks," Rolando said. "We hope to work with lawmakers on both sides of the aisle, with the administration and with the new postmaster general to build on the progress achieved in the last Congress, within the mailing industry and among major stakeholders on consensus postal reform that promotes a strong and vibrant Postal Service."

## 2015 NALC 'Rap Session' announced

NALC is finishing up the arrangements for holding the 2015 national rap session (also known as the national conference) in Houston, TX, from July 17 to 19.

A reception will be held on Friday, July 17, with workshops on Saturday and the rap session held on Sunday.

Article 3 Section 4(b) of the NALC Constitution states: "The National President shall, once each year except in the year of the National Convention, call a national conference. This conference shall be voluntarily attended by only State and Branch Presidents or their designees, with their expenses to be borne by the State Association or Branch represented."

Information on registration and hotel accommodations will be available at a later date. Please check [nalc.org](http://nalc.org) for updates.

## Local work key to Food Drive's success

While national-level preparations are full-steam ahead for the 23rd annual Letter Carriers' "Stamp Out Hunger" Food Drive on Saturday, May 9, some of the hardest work taking place ahead of America's largest one-day food drive is happening on the ground at branches across the country.

"What makes this drive truly successful, year after year, is the amount of effort our food drive volunteers put in to help bring in as much food as possible," NALC President Fredric Rolando said. "Rather than taking a well-deserved rest after a full day of delivering the mail, countless letter carriers spend their precious free time working out ways to make their local food drive a success."

Last year, letter carriers and dedicated volunteers

helped collect almost 73 million pounds of non-perishable food, bringing the total to more than 1.3 billion pounds of food collected since the national drive began in 1992.

"Our food drive is a clear demonstration of the power of solidarity," Rolando said. "It starts with the individual letter carrier, who not only delivers the mail as usual on Food Drive Day, but also voluntarily collects the often heavy bags of non-perishable food that get left alongside our patrons' mailboxes."

All of that picked-up food then gets sorted by volunteers at the carrier's local office before it's hauled off to nearby food banks and food pantries.

In the past, the food drive has been helped by the support of a national sponsor that could foot the bill for the nationally distributed Food Drive Day reminder postcards upon which many customers have grown to depend. This year, however, no such sponsor has come forward.

NALC has agreed to help pay for the costs of printing a number of postcards, and thanks to the efforts of the non-profit Feeding America, many local food banks also have agreed to kick in what they can for postcard production as well. But even with this outpouring of timely support, it remains uncertain whether every address in America will receive a reminder postcard this year.

Another challenge that a lot of local branches face from year to year is securing sponsors for special food drive bags, and 2015 is no different.

"Far and away, specially marked food drive bags generate the biggest collections," NALC Director of Community Services Pam Donato said. "Customers love getting the reminder postcards, but nothing beats a bag that practically screams, 'Fill me up and set me outside!'"

The food drive's online toolkit, available at [nalc.org/food](http://nalc.org/food), provides local and regional coordinators with a wealth of resources to help make soliciting sponsorships for postcards and bags a little easier. The toolkit contains downloadable templates suitable for use by professional bag and card producers, as well as tips that coordinators can use for help in identifying and encouraging local sponsorships.



This year marks the 50th anniversary of three pivotal events in the struggle for civil rights in America: "Bloody Sunday," the Selma-to-Montgomery march, and the passage of the 1965 Voting Rights Act. On Sunday, March 8, hundreds of letter carriers and their families joined leaders from other labor unions and a host of civil rights organizations—not to mention tens of thousands of visitors from all over the world—to commemorate these historic occasions with a reenactment of the historic civil rights march across the Edmund Pettus Bridge.

## HQ, regional staff appointments

NALC President Fredric Rolando has detailed three regional administrative assistants (RAAs) as regional workers' compensation assistants: from Region 2, Seattle Branch 79's Coby Jones; from Region 6, South Central Indiana Branch 828's Jeffrey Fultz; and from Region 11, Syracuse, NY Branch 134's Ronald Adams. These three letter carriers join four other NALC members as regional workers' compensation assistants: New Hampshire Merged Branch 44's Bill Bothwell; Kansas City, MO Branch 30's David Teegarden; Ft. Lauderdale, FL Branch 2550's Joanne Wright; and Philadelphia Branch 157's Lee Zachwieja.

For Region 2, Rolando has appointed Debra Dixon, vice president of Olympia, WA Branch 351 as an RAA. Dixon is a Region 2 arbitration advocate and district dispute resolution team member, as well as director of education and executive council member for the Washington State Association of Letter Carriers.

For Region 6, Rolando has named Louisville, KY Branch 14 Executive Vice President David Mudd as an RAA. Mudd has served as a route adjustment district lead, arbitration advocate and dispute resolution team member, and in 2008 he was named steward of the year for Region 6.

And for Region 11, John Collins now serves as an RAA. Collins was president of Zanesville, OH Branch 63 for nearly 25 years. He has served as a member of the Ohio State Association Executive Board and a primary dispute resolution team member for Region 11. He moves from his current position at Headquarters as assistant to the president for contract administration.

Meanwhile, Dallas Branch 132 member Shawn Boyd has been appointed an RAA for Region 10, replacing former Region 10 RAA Ken Claxton, who has retired. Boyd has served as a chief steward, Formal Step A designee and branch trustee, and he was a state board member and treasurer for the Texas State Association of Letter Carriers. Most recently, Boyd served at Headquarters as an assistant to the president for contract administration.

And President Rolando has named Charleston, WV Branch 531 President Tim McKay as Headquarters city delivery assistant. Aside from the branch presidency, McKay is also vice president of the West Virginia State Association of Letter Carriers. He is an arbitration advocate and local business agent, and has served as district lead for route adjustments.

The new appointments were effective March 2.

## NALC and 'A Grand Alliance'

The NALC is pleased to be working with the three other postal worker unions to form the foundation of what's known as "A Grand Alliance to Save Our Public Postal Service."

Rounding out this grand alliance is a growing number of progressive national organizations who share the goal of fighting for the protection and enhancement of a vibrant USPS, both for now and for generations to come. The alliance is made up of a broad group of other labor unions, civil rights groups, religious organizations and progressive policy advocates that all support high-quality public services for all Americans.

"This new alliance is a good complement to the coalition NALC and the other postal unions have been working closely with over the past 18 months," NALC President Fredric Rolando said, "a coalition made up of postal union and mailing industry stakeholders with a mission to advance in Congress a multi-point postal strategy that includes a comprehensive solution to pre-funding, freedom to offer new products, fair treatment on pension valuations, strengthened service standards and a moratorium on plant closings."

Visit [AGrandAlliance.org](http://AGrandAlliance.org) to find out more.

## CCA Retirement Savings Plan

Last August, NALC introduced the CCA Retirement Savings Plan (RSP). This plan provides city carrier assistants (CCAs) an opportunity to begin saving for retirement prior to a career appointment with the U.S. Postal Service. The plan is administered by the United States Letter Carriers Mutual Benefit Association (MBA), NALC's fraternal life and annuity insurance company.

Each year, the MBA's board of trustees reviews the financial aspects of that plan to set its interest rate. The rate is based on actuarial studies of mortality changes, current market conditions and the MBA's operations.

Due to changes in the annuity mortality table calculation of annuities minimum reserve, the CCA RSP for 2015 now offers an interest rate of 4 percent. The guaranteed interest rate will never be lower than 2 percent.

The revised brochure and applications are now available at [nalc.org](http://nalc.org) under "Member Benefits." You may also call the MBA at 202-638-4318, extension 30, if you have any questions.

## Strike remembered in oral histories

Letter carriers who were involved in the Great Postal Strike, which began 45 years ago on March 18, 1970, are telling their stories for a new book about the walkout.

The book is being written by Philip Rubio, an associate professor of history at North Carolina A&T State University in Greensboro and author of *There's Always Work at the Post Office: African American Postal Workers and the Fight for Jobs, Justice, and Equality*.

Rubio conducted interviews last year at the NALC National Convention in Philadelphia for the new book, which will examine the United States Postal Service from the 1970 strike and its immediate aftermath to the current financial crisis.

The picture the interviews paint is one of a rich tapestry, with differing opinions and experiences. "Carriers told me of strike debates and votes held in union halls, bars, swing rooms, or even on the workroom floor," Rubio said. "Some of these debates and votes started in the weeks preceding the strike, while others happened spontaneously."

"Once the strike started, some local union officers would have to 'disappear' to avoid being served with court injunctions," he said. "Real rank-and-file leadership was being exercised by those who often had little or no experience in daily union affairs, and whose only communication was telephone, word of mouth, or news reports."

While much of the attention was on the New York City strikers, carriers throughout the country were engaged in the movement. "Participants frequently told how they felt they owed it to New York strikers to not leave them stranded," Rubio said.

After the book is completed, Rubio intends to house the oral histories at the Duke University archives in Durham, NC, where the interviews he conducted for his previous book are housed.

Those who wish to get in touch with Rubio about his work or to share a story with him can e-mail [ThePostalRecord@nalc.org](mailto:ThePostalRecord@nalc.org) or call 202-662-2480.



## Cost-of-living adjustment news

Based on the Feb. 26 release of the January 2015 Consumer Price Index (CPI), there will be no fifth cost-of-living adjustment (COLA) for letter carriers under the 2011-2016 National Agreement, because there was no increase in the CPI between July 2014 and January 2015.

Visit [nalc.org](http://nalc.org) to download the latest paychart.

## Update concerning dues error

Due to a system error, the Postal Service did not increase approximately 30,000 NALC members' bi-weekly dues for 2015 in their Pay Period 1 paychecks as reported in the November Secretary-Treasurer's article in *The Postal Record*. The dues amounts for these members were to be corrected in Pay Period 3.

As reported recently on the NALC website, a temporary adjustment to recoup the dues amounts not paid from Pay Period 1 through Pay Period 2 will be made in the near future.

Affected members will have a temporary adjustment to recoup the dues amounts not paid reflected in their Pay Period 6 (covering Feb. 21–March 6, 2015) and Pay Period 7 (covering March 7–20, 2015) paychecks. Branches affected will also receive the adjusted amounts in Pay Period 6 and Pay Period 7.

Affected members' dues will then be decreased in Pay Period 8 (covering March 21–April 3, 2015) from the adjusted amount to the correct amount.

Any questions should be directed to the NALC Membership Department.

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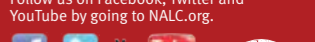
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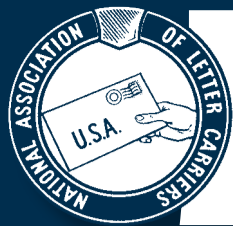
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# Bulletin

## Memorandums renewed, modified

The NALC and USPS have agreed to renew three Memorandums of Understanding: Re: Full-time Regular Opportunities – City Letter Carrier Craft (M-01856), Re: Sunday Delivery – City Carrier Assistant Staffing (M-01857), and Re: Signing Overtime Lists (M-01858).

The MOUs remain largely unchanged except for one significant change in M-01857, where the parties agreed that city carrier assistants (CCAs) who served a cumulative 360 days as a city carrier assistant directly before being converted to full-time career status will not serve a probationary period.

You can read more about these MOUs in Director of City Delivery Brian Renfroe’s upcoming column in the May edition of *The Postal Record*.

### Saturday, May 9

## Food drive just around the corner



As this *NALC Bulletin* was being prepared, the 23rd annual Letter Carriers’ “Stamp Out Hunger” Food Drive on Saturday, May 9, was just weeks away, and NALC President Fredric Rolando encouraged letter carriers to be ready to lend a hand to their branches’ busy food drive coordinators.

“To help make this country’s largest one-day food-collection effort a success,” Rolando said, “we need the help of as many letter carriers and volunteers as we can get.”

The food drive is one of the most visible things we do as NALC members, the president said, noting that last year’s drive resulted in the collection of nearly 73 million pounds of non-perishable food left by customers’ mailboxes.

“Thanks to that generosity since the national drive began in 1992,” Rolando said, “letter carriers have picked up and delivered to local food banks more than 1.3 billion pounds of food.

There had been some concern that not every address in America would receive a food drive “save the date” postcard reminder in the mail after national sponsor General Mills dropped out of the drive at the last moment.

Fortunately, national food drive sponsor Feeding America spearheaded a successful campaign of seeking contributions from their affiliate food banks in communities across the country, while many NALC branches also had a measure of success in garnering financial backing from the local chapters of another national sponsor, United Way Worldwide, as well as other organizations.

The U.S. Postal Service, the National Rural Letter Carriers’ Association and the AFL-CIO are the drive’s other national sponsors.

Perhaps most importantly, a lot of NALC branches themselves dug deep and made generous contributions toward postcard production. “We’re grateful that so many were willing to make an investment that could pay off in a big way on Food Drive Day—in the form of filled food pantry shelves,” said NALC Community and Membership Outreach Coordinator Pam Donato, the national coordinator for the food drive.

Visit [nalc.org/food](http://nalc.org/food) for tips on conducting a successful food drive, plus a host of resources including the coordinators’ manual, support documents, graphics, solicitation videos and answers to frequently asked questions.

Get in touch with Donato at 202-662-2489 or at [donato@nalc.org](mailto:donato@nalc.org) if you need further help.

## ‘Rap session’ housing info now available

Participants planning to attend the NALC’s 2015 National Conference—better known as a “rap session”—may now begin making their hotel reservations. National rap sessions for state and branch presidents (or their designees) are authorized in non-convention years by the *NALC Constitution* under Article 3, Section 4(b).

The session will be held July 17-19 in Houston, with registration taking place on Friday, July 17, followed by a full day of workshops Saturday, July 18, and the conference session itself on Sunday, July 19.

To help the national union plan the event, state and branch presidents will soon receive a postcard instructing them to use a link on the NALC website to indicate whether their state and branch organizations will participate in the rap session and, if so, who will represent them in Houston.

A limited number of rooms have been set aside for attendees at the Hilton Americas—Houston, with a group rate of \$169 single/double (plus 17 percent tax). A charge of \$20 will be added for each guest over double occupancy, with a maximum of four guests per room.

To receive the group rate, callers must identify they are with the NALC using group code *1LC*.

The Hilton is located in the heart of downtown Houston, across the street from Discovery Green Park, next to Toyota Center and two blocks from Minute Maid Park.

*Note:* Rates cannot be changed at check-in or check-out for guests who fail to identify their affiliation with NALC at the time the reservation is made.

All reservations and any changes must be made by the cutoff date of Monday, June 23. After this date, reservations will be accepted by the hotel based on availability and hotel rate.

Visit [nalc.org](http://nalc.org) for full reservation details, as well as information about travel to and from the hotel from one of Houston’s two airports.



## Court issues lawsuit decision

On March 27, the U.S. District Court in Washington, DC, issued a 52-page decision in the 20-year-old lawsuit filed by Washington, DC Branch 142 retiree David Noble against the NALC.

The District Court dismissed the plaintiff’s claim that 12 former officers, including President Emeritus William H. Young and the late President Emeritus Vincent R. Sombrotto, had improperly accepted a \$500 monthly allowance for in-town expenses.

The in-town expenses issue was the only remaining issue involving the individual officers after a 2008 decision by the U.S. Court of Appeals for the DC Circuit had rejected Noble’s claims regarding the payment of per diem and the employee share of FICA (Social Security) taxes.

The District Court deferred for a later decision a single remaining issue involving Noble’s request to review NALC records.

## Rolando rebuts Brookings’ claims

In an April 1 letter to the editor of *The Washington Post*, NALC President Fredric Rolando rebutted some misleading statements made recently by the Brookings Institution—statements that were reported on by the *Post* as well as other news outlets.

“The U.S. Postal Service and private delivery firms aren’t unmitigated rivals; they’re often partners,” Rolando wrote. “Private carriers now bring millions of packages to post offices for last-mile delivery, saving themselves and their customers money via the Postal Service’s unmatched networks.”

The president wrote that postal unions have many ideas—beyond fixing the pre-funding mandate—for moving the Postal Service forward.

“While this unfair \$5.6 billion annual charge, required of no other entity, must be addressed, we’ve proposed and supported other ideas,” he wrote, listing examples such as expanding Sunday or same-day delivery using private partnerships with local stores, as well as allowing companies to use space at postal plants to store products close to customers and then have letter carriers deliver them.

“Financially, the Postal Service is mounting a dramatic comeback,” Rolando wrote. “With an improving economy sparking increases in letter revenue and online shopping boosting package revenue, the Postal Service had an operating profit of \$1.4 billion in fiscal 2014; already in fiscal 2015, operations are \$1.4 billion in the black.”

You can read the president’s letter—which links to the *Post*’s story about the Brookings report—at [nalc.org](http://nalc.org) under “Postal Facts.”

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NALC

Number 15-04

May 20, 2015

# Bulletin

## Postal Service's quarterly report shows continued revenue growth

On May 8, the U.S. Postal Service released another positive financial report, showing that it had made a \$313 million operating profit for the second quarter of Fiscal Year 2015 (covering January–March 2015).

The figures also showed that, for the first half of FY 2015 (covering October 2014–March 2015), USPS had more than \$1.4 billion in operating profit—surpassing the profit it had made during the entire previous fiscal year.

“These results show the impressive Postal Service financial turnaround continuing in full force,” NALC President Fredric Rolando said in a statement following the report’s release.

The operating profit for the three months ending March 31 increased by \$52 million—or 20 percent—over the results for the same period of Fiscal Year 2014. The \$1.437 billion USPS made in operating profit for the first half of this fiscal year represented an increase of 40 percent over the results for the same period in the last fiscal year.

“Equally encouraging is what produced the operating profit,” Rolando said: “Continuing revenue growth as an improving economy and rising online shopping drive better performances in letter mail and package deliveries.”

Package revenue was up a striking 11.2 percent so far this fiscal year, and revenue from first-class letter mail and standard mail was higher than the same period last fiscal year.

Operating profit excludes items that are unrelated to postal operations. The first is the 2006 mandate that the Postal Service pre-fund the health benefits of future postal retirees by setting aside about \$5.5 billion a year over a 10-year period. No other government agency or private enterprise is required by law to pre-fund these benefits.

The second involves non-cash accounting adjustments to workers’ compensation. Such adjustments are not payments, but merely ledger adjustments, and they are driven primarily by the ups and downs in market interest rates and by actuarial estimate changes.

“Excluding these items gets us to a picture of what is really going on with the business of selling postage and delivering mail,” Rolando said, “and this picture continues to improve.”

The Postal Service’s fiscal years run from Oct. 1 through Sept. 30, and Rolando noted that the agency now is well into its third consecutive year of operating profits.

“This trend makes it clear that we need to work to strengthen the now-profitable networks, not degrade them,” he said. “We hope to work with lawmakers on both sides of the aisle, the White House and Postmaster General Megan Brennan to build on the progress toward consensus postal reform that was achieved in the last Congress, within the mailing industry and among major stakeholders—reform that promotes a strong and vibrant Postal Service.”

## Forward motion on ‘Fast Track’

As this *NALC Bulletin* was being prepared, the Senate was getting close to a deal to move forward on granting the White House so-called “Fast Track” authority for the next several years.

Fast Track would enable the United States Trade Representative (USTR) under this and future presidential administrations to negotiate trade and investment deals quietly and would force Congress to give these deals up or down votes—with no opportunity to strike or amend problematic provisions in such trade agreements.

On May 12, Senate Democrats, led by Minority Leader Harry Reid (D-NV), had successfully filibustered debate on the measure. A new deal that was struck the next day, however, had the potential for allowing the full Senate to debate the legislation.

NALC President Fredric Rolando sent a letter to Congress, calling on lawmakers to ensure “that there is transparency and equity in the trade process.”

“Congress must maintain its ability to approve trade partners in advance,” Rolando wrote, “to determine whether America’s objectives are being met inclusively, and to have the ability to strike or amend from trade deals those provisions that fail to incorporate your input.”

At issue, Rolando said, is giving President Barack Obama—as well as future presidents—streamlined authority to negotiate trade deals such as the Trans-Pacific Partnership (TPP), a 12-country free-trade deal that would dwarf the 1994 North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA).

“Many letter carriers can well recall how NAFTA devastated the American labor force by sending millions of jobs overseas,” Rolando said.

Fast Track faces significant opposition in the House of Representatives as well, where it needed to obtain 218 votes for passage. However, dozens of Republicans reportedly have raised concerns about the Obama administration’s trade agenda, so the leadership potentially would need to secure the votes of dozens of Democrats to offset any Republican defections by the time the measure reaches the House floor. (Republican lawmakers tend to be more supportive of free trade agreements than do Democrats.)

If approved, the TPP could impose a ban on postal banking in the United States. Even worse, other trade agreements that are up for possible Fast Track approval could pose a direct threat to our jobs and our system of affordable universal service.

The World Trade Organization, for example, is sponsoring the negotiation of a trade-in-services agreement (TISA) among dozens of countries, while the U.S. government is in talks with the European Union on a Trans-Atlantic Trade and Investment Partnership (T-TIP), which would cover our economic interaction with the EU’s 27 countries.

In both of these negotiations, the Europeans are calling for the United States to phase out the Postal Service’s monopoly on the delivery of letter mail—a policy that the EU already has adopted.

Assuming that both Fast Track measures pass their respective chambers, the next step for the House and Senate bills would be a conference to iron out differences between the bills. To stay on top of these and other developments, make sure you’re signed up for the NALC e-Activist Network. Visit [nalc.org](http://nalc.org) to learn more.

## Online ‘rap session app’ now available

The 2015 national conference (“rap session”) for state and branch presidents (or their designees), which is authorized in non-convention years by the *NALC Constitution* under Article 3, Section 4(b), will take place July 17-19 in Houston.

To assist the national union’s planning for this event, branch presidents must log into a special application that the NALC has developed, to identify who is representing their branches at the rap session.

Branch presidents can go to [nalc.org/houston](http://nalc.org/houston) and follow the link to create usernames and passwords for logging into the application. Once you are logged in, simply supply the requested information.

Note that this online form does not reserve a room at the Hilton Americas-Houston. Rap session participants must make reservations through the hotel.

Visit [nalc.org/houston](http://nalc.org/houston) for information.

## Budget plans move ahead—without hits to USPS workers

Following a House and Senate conference to work out the differences between each chamber’s Fiscal Year 2016 budget resolutions, the House on April 30 passed the measure by a vote of 226-197.

The House plan originally had proposed making cuts to a wide range of programs by instructing each House committee to find savings through budget reconciliation, but conferees ultimately agreed to the Senate’s plan, which opted to focus reconciliation on the committees with jurisdiction over the Affordable Care Act.

“This is a minor victory for letter carriers and all federal employees,” Rolando said. That’s because House and Senate conferees ultimately rejected proposals in the House plan that took aim at federal employees by seeking an additional \$318 billion from the federal/postal community.

The president said that while this is a bit of good news from the ongoing budget battle, the agreed-upon levels of cuts continue to be insufficient because sequestration remains in place. That means Congress will be looking at federal and postal employees in its quest to find an estimated \$9 billion in savings in 2016 and nearly \$194 billion over the next 10 years.

On May 5, the Senate approved the measure by a vote of 51 to 48. It’s important to remember that this budget measure is non-binding; it simply sets a blueprint for Congress as lawmakers continue their appropriations process over the coming weeks and months.

## Another food drive is in the books

Once again this year—on Saturday, May 9—thousands of active NALC members, joined by countless throngs of retired letter carriers and volunteers, not only went about their daily rounds to deliver mail and parcels, but also picked up bags and boxes of non-perishable food ultimately destined for local food banks in more than 10,000 cities and towns in all 50 states, as well as Puerto Rico, the U.S. Virgin Islands, Guam and the District of Columbia.

NALC President Fredric Rolando expressed his gratitude on behalf of the NALC to the letter carriers from the more than 1,300 branches that took part this year, and also to the U.S. Postal Service and the National Rural Letter Carriers’ Association, both of which served as national food drive sponsors. He also thanked the other national sponsors—the AFL-CIO, Feeding America, Valpak, United Way Worldwide and Valassis—for their ongoing support of the food drive.

“It is truly amazing to see the level of cooperation,” Rolando said, “not just between labor and management, but among all of the postal employee crafts, coming together to provide a way for millions of our customers to do something to help curb the continuing problem of hunger in America.”

The weather on Food Drive Day often plays a significant role in determining the success at the local level. Many letter carriers this year had warm sunshine and blue skies, while some encountered various levels of rainfall. Carriers and residents throughout Texas and Oklahoma, meanwhile, had to deal with tornado-producing storms that weekend, while an early-May surprise snowfall brought with it some logistical problems for letter carriers from Colorado to the Dakotas.

“It’s a sad reality that hunger continues to affect so many people in America,” President Rolando said. “About 49 million people around the country, including millions of children and senior citizens, aren’t sure where their next meal is coming from. And one in four households with a member currently serving in the U.S. military turns to the Feeding America network for food assistance.”

Rolando said the food drive’s effectiveness ultimately comes down to the solidarity of letter carriers.

“As we’ve seen time and again, our successes are connected to the level of activism and engagement of our local branch leaders and our rank-and-file members who work together to achieve a goal,” Rolando said. “And year after year, our efforts to help ‘stamp out hunger’—one bag at a time, one delivery point at a time—add up to prove that in a big and noticeable way.”

Branch official results of this year’s campaign are due at NALC Headquarters by May 23. The grand total is scheduled to be announced by June 12, with a complete report on the drive, including branch-by-branch weight totals and photos, to appear in the July issue of *The Postal Record*. The final reports mailed by branches to NALC Headquarters will be used to determine the top branches in 10 membership categories.



Pennsylvania letter carriers and volunteers on Food Drive Day

## House bill aims to modernize fleet

On April 22, Rep. Jared Huffman (D-CA) introduced H.R. 1963, the Federal Leadership in Energy & Efficient Transportation (FLEET) Act. The bill seeks to modernize the Postal Service’s fleet of aging Long Life Vehicles (LLVs). If passed, H.R. 1963 would provide USPS an opportunity to save money while reducing its vehicles’ effects on the environment, and it would offer letter carriers a more efficient vehicle that would better accommodate the agency’s booming package delivery service.

The FLEET Act was introduced by Huffman with a companion bill for energy-efficient schools, in honor of Earth Day. “Each Earth Day, people across the country and around the world pledge themselves to becoming better stewards of our planet,” Huffman said. “By working constructively with these American institutions—public schools and the U.S. Postal Service—we can reduce energy use, modernize our infrastructure and fight climate change—together.”

Fueling currently accounts for 10 cents of every dollar spent by the Postal Service, and the agency operates the largest commercial fleet in the world. Most LLVs in service are between 18 and 24 years old, and the current fleet has an average fuel economy of just 10 miles per gallon. Modernized and fuel-efficient vehicles could help reduce their impact on the environment.

Lowering fuel costs also would free more funds for USPS to spend on increasing customer satisfaction and on investment.

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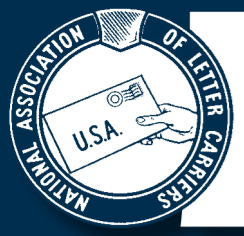
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## June is 'Customer Connect Leads Month'

Throughout the month of June, each letter carrier is reminded to make a special effort to submit at least two Customer Connect leads.

Since mid-2003, letter carriers have successfully used Customer Connect to take advantage of their special relationship with businesses, encouraging business patrons to ship with the U.S. Postal Service instead of with a private delivery service.

"Please make an inquiry at businesses and ask if a USPS salesperson can make contact," said NALC Executive Vice President Timothy O'Malley, who oversees the Customer Connect program at the national level. "Then bring back those leads."

Even if a letter carrier has a purely residential route, O'Malley said, he or she can still be on the lookout for lead opportunities as they go about their daily activities.

"Look for the dry cleaners, shoe stores, pizza restaurants, lawn-care businesses," he said. "All of these are potential sites for leads for a Postal Service product—such as Every Door Direct Mail, better known as EDDM."

As of June 12, letter carriers had identified and submitted 33,565 leads this year alone—leads that have resulted in projected new revenue for the Postal Service of more than \$60 million. That amount brings the grand revenue total to just over \$1.9 billion.

"We are getting closer to our \$2 billion mark," O'Malley said, "and we expect to reach this milestone sometime this year."

"This is fantastic!" he said. "Thank you for your efforts, and keep up the excellent work."

Click the Customer Connect quick link at [nalc.org](http://nalc.org) to check out some of the program's recent success stories and to download a lead card.

## Application period now open for 2016 Leadership Academy



The application period for participation in the Leadership Academy in 2016 is now open.

Every year since 2005, NALC's Leadership Academy has brought together letter carriers representing each of NALC's 15 regions for intensive training and development of the skills effective leaders need.

Under the tutelage of their mentors—established NALC leaders such as branch presidents or regional administrative assistants—the students combine three separate weeks of classroom learning at a facility near Baltimore with take-home assignments and special projects.

The mentor should be in a position to provide time and venues for the student to practice the skills he or she has been building at the Academy, to be available to observe their mentee's work and to provide appropriate feedback and critique.

Retired NALC Executive Vice President Jim Williams (standing), one of the Leadership Academy's coordinators, leads a class discussion.

Branch presidents or other branch officers are good choices for mentors. Previous Academy graduates often make the best mentors.

During the classes, students take part in lively discussions on such subjects as effective leadership skills and the union's legislative agenda. They learn about topics such as the Dispute Resolution Process, strategic planning, branch financial responsibilities, retirement issues, DOIS and route protection, workers' compensation, effective negotiation techniques, getting the NALC's message out and dealing with the media.

Each week of the Academy includes an ongoing emphasis on effective written and oral communication skills for use in forums such as membership meetings, awards ceremonies and dinners, as well as written reports and oral presentations about students' take-home projects.

Some Leadership Academy graduates may hold union office; others may simply lead their fellow carriers by inspiring them to support a common goal. All leave with new skills and a new sense of confidence, thanks to this rigorous but rewarding program.

Classes are held at the Conference Center at the Maritime Institute in Linthicum, MD, near BWI Marshall Airport outside Baltimore.

Students are required to complete outside learning projects upon returning home following Weeks 1 and 2, and upon graduation the students will spend a fourth week working in their national business agents' offices.

The application period ends on Aug. 31, and the schedule of classes in 2016 will be announced later.

To get a Leadership Academy application form, contact your national business agent's office, or visit [nalc.org](http://nalc.org), select "Member Benefits" and click on "Education." Talk with your NBA if you have any questions about the Academy.

## Future plant closures on hold

Citing "a barrage of pressure from across the spectrum of postal stakeholders," *Government Executive* joined other news sources in May in reporting that the Postal Service has postponed indefinitely the scheduled closures of mail-processing plants.

"Letter carriers have been a consistent part of that group of interested postal parties," NALC President Fredric Rolando said, "and we have done our best to spread this message in communities big and small. Not only would such closures hurt the Postal Service, but they're not financially justified and, in fact, would be counterproductive."

The Postal Service recently removed the dates for the scheduled closure of dozens of plants, marking them now as "to be determined."

## Be safe in summer's heat

NALC joins the Postal Service in alerting letter carriers to the dangers of heat in the spring and summer.

"Learn about heat safety and pay close attention to the heat index where you work," NALC Director of Safety and Health Manuel Peralta Jr. said. "Take all necessary safety precautions when you are out delivering your routes. Don't let yourself be overcome by hot weather."

National business agents have received the May 2015 talk "Beat the Heat, Stay Cool" stand-up talk and have distributed it to their region's branches. If this mandatory stand-up talk has not been given in your station, please reach out to your NBA.

Here are key pieces of advice from the safety talk:

- Hydrate before, during and after work. Prevention is important, so make sure to maintain good hydration by drinking at least 8 ounces of water every 20 minutes.
- Dress appropriately for the weather. On warm days, make sure to wear light-colored, loose-fitting, breathable clothing to keep body temperatures down.
- Utilize shade to stay cool. When possible, use shaded areas to stay out of direct sunlight.
- Know the signs of heat stress. You should understand what heat stress is, and how it can affect your health and safety. Here are some things to look out for:

|                                     |                       |
|-------------------------------------|-----------------------|
| • Hot, dry skin or profuse sweating | • Muscle cramps       |
| • Headache                          | • Weakness or fatigue |
| • Confusion or dizziness            | • Rash                |
| • Nausea                            |                       |

Finally, it's important to notify your supervisor or call 911 if you're experiencing signs of heat-related illnesses.

For more on how to prepare for extreme heat and sun, visit the Safety and Health web page at [nalc.org](http://nalc.org).

## NALC to conduct special election for director of retired members

The U.S. Department of Labor (DOL) has advised the NALC that it has rejected complaints filed by four unsuccessful candidates in the 2014 election of national officers. But at the DOL's request, NALC will conduct a special election for the office of director of retired members.

As previously reported, in December 2014, the National Election Committee received appeals submitted by four candidates for national office. The committee met at NALC National Headquarters in Washington, DC, during the week of Jan. 6 to review the election-result appeals. Its decision was to deny the appeals.

The four appellants subsequently filed election protests with the DOL, which has advised NALC that its findings do not provide a basis for action by the department to set aside the protested election.

However, the DOL also advised the NALC that it did not agree with the National Election Committee's decision to reject the nomination of Minneapolis Branch 9 member Ken Ring for the office of director of retired members.

In August of 2014, the committee determined that three nominations for national officer positions did not meet the requirements for certification under the terms of the *NALC Constitution*, and committee members voted unanimously to disqualify all three.

In the case of candidate Ring, the committee found that the nomination/acceptance form submitted on his behalf during the 2014 convention in Philadelphia did not contain his handwritten signature.

Ring's disqualification resulted in the uncontested election of Corvallis, OR Branch 1274 member Ron Watson as director of retired members.

The DOL found that the nomination/acceptance form submitted on behalf of candidate Ring had an electronic signature. It further concluded that neither the form nor the NALC's notice of nominations, as published in *The Postal Record*, provided sufficient notice that a handwritten signature was required.

During a teleconference conducted on June 2, the NALC Executive Council unanimously agreed to accept the DOL's request to conduct a special election for director of retired members between Watson and Ring.

Under the terms of a compliance agreement signed by NALC President Fredric Rolando on June 5, the election will be conducted before Oct. 15, 2015.

Further details regarding the special election will be published in a future *Postal Record* and will be posted on the NALC website.

## Impressive results from this year's food drive

The 23rd annual Letter Carriers' "Stamp Out Hunger" Food Drive has come and gone, and this year's collection figures once again are impressive.

On Saturday, May 9, active and retired NALC members, alongside family members, friends and other volunteers, collected—in the form of non-perishable food as well as monetary donations—the equivalent of more than 70 million pounds donated by generous postal customers.

"Everyone involved in this year's food drive should be proud of this terrific result," NALC President Fredric Rolando said. "Your generous donation of time and energy will help ensure that millions of our customers—children and adults—can put desperately needed food on their tables."



Letter carriers and volunteers in Arkansas prepare a bounty of food drive collections that are destined for the Northeast Arkansas Food Bank.

The official national tally, announced on June 15, showed that the more than 1,300 NALC branches participating this year had worked together to deliver to community food banks, pantries and shelters 64,572, 665 pounds of actual food, plus an additional \$1,668,799.13 in monetary donations. By a formula provided by national food drive partner Feeding America, \$1 can buy 3.6 pounds of food, so a bit of simple math turns \$1.6 million in cash into 6,007,677 pounds, for a grand total of 70,580,342 pounds of food collected this year.

Taking top honors for food collections among all NALC branches was Central Florida Branch 1091, which collected 1,725,772 pounds of food. West Coast Florida Branch 1477 came in second with 1,460,280 pounds, followed by Clearwater, FL Branch 2008 with 1,275,289 pounds. The top money collector was Oklahoma City, OK Branch 458, which recognized donations of \$851,452.48—a sum that converts to an additional 3,065,229 pounds of food.

Held as always on the second Saturday in May, this year's food drive was made possible by the participation of letter carriers and customers in more than 10,000 cities and towns in all 50 states, the District of Columbia, Puerto Rico, the Virgin Islands and Guam.

City letter carriers—full-time and part-time alike—were helped in many communities by their brothers and sisters in the National Rural Letter Carriers' Association, a national sponsor of this year's drive. The other national sponsors offered equally invaluable support in a variety of ways: the U.S. Postal Service, United Way Worldwide, the AFL-CIO, Valpak and Valassis—not to mention Feeding America and its network of food bank affiliates.

"This year's achievement demonstrates the power of solidarity, the generosity of our customers and the determination of letter carriers to help those in need," he said. "It's solid proof of what has been said many times before: Our commitment to our communities doesn't end at the mailbox."

A list of the top branches in each of 11 categories, as well as a branch-by-branch breakdown of results, will be printed in the July *Postal Record*.

## Congress not yet finished with Fast Track

The House of Representatives voted on June 12 to reject a trade adjustment assistance (TAA) bill, a surprising but positive move that applied some much needed brakes to the more contentious Trade Promotion Authority (TPA) legislation—the so-called "Fast Track" bill that called for granting a president, current or future, the authority to approve trade agreements quietly, without Congress having a chance to review or amend such agreements.

The Senate had approved a combined TAA-TPA package before the Memorial Day recess. But a few days before the House took up the package in June, the House passed a procedural move that required representatives to break the package apart and consider TAA as a separate bill first. Under House rules, only if TAA had passed would the House have been able to move on and consider the Fast Track piece.

As it happened, the House was voted down TAA on June 12 by a definitive vote of 302 to 126—even after President Obama personally visited Capitol Hill to lobby for its support.

Next, even though the disapproval of TAA should have spelled the end of further consideration of Fast Track, the House proceeded anyway to consider—and approve—its own stand-alone Fast Track bill. This was mainly a symbolic win, however; since the Senate had approved a joint TAA-TPA package, there appeared to be the slimmest of chances that it would be inclined to take up this separated, House-approved Fast Track bill without the TAA attachment.

A flood of calls from legislative activists around the country is credited with playing a key role in efforts to ensure that such threats get set aside.

But it appeared that, as this *NALC Bulletin* was being prepared, Fast Track was not completely dead. There were attempts in the House to find some path for reviving and pushing through a version of a Fast Track package that could find its way to the Senate for another round of consideration. Visit [nalc.org](http://nalc.org) for late-breaking updates.

What's so wrong with Fast Track? "It's a dangerous idea for many, many reasons," President Rolando said, "not least of which is the way it could open the door for a whole host of new threats against the U.S. Postal Service and letter carrier jobs."

The Trade in Services Agreement (TISA), for example, contains a call to deregulate the USPS, while the Transatlantic Trade and Investment Partnership (T-TIP) wants the agency's monopoly on delivery of letter mail—with its roots in the Constitution—to be phased out. TISA also has language in it that, if approved, could jeopardize package delivery service as part of the agency's universal service obligation—and package delivery has been crucial to the Postal Service's financial recovery in recent years. And the Trans-Pacific Partnership (TPP) would prevent USPS from being allowed to use its vast postal retail network to offer low-cost banking services for the tens of millions of Americans who are unbanked or under-banked.

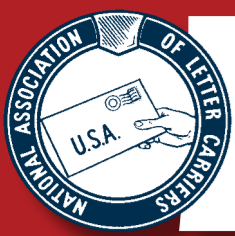
"Trade agreements should be negotiated out in the open," President Rolando said, "where Congress can scrutinize and amend them if necessary."

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NALC

Number 15-06

July 27, 2015

# Bulletin

## Notice: NALC special election

Pursuant to an election complaint received by the United States Department of Labor's Office of Labor-Management Standards (OLMS), the National Association of Letter Carriers (NALC) entered into a voluntary agreement with OLMS to conduct a new officer election for the position of NALC Director of Retired Members, under OLMS' supervision. There will not be new nominations for this position. This new election will take place in September and October 2015.

The election will be conducted by mail ballot. All NALC members are encouraged to update their addresses with the union by contacting the NALC Membership Department at 202-662-2836 or by visiting <http://forms.nalc.org/update>. Ballots will be mailed to eligible members in the middle of September 2015 and will be due back in the beginning of October 2015. Further details and dates for this election will be provided in an official election notice to be included in *The Postal Record* and in the mail ballot packages.

**Campaigning:** Union or employer equipment (including copiers, computers, printers, telephones, e-mail, etc.), office supplies, websites, newsletters, social media, membership lists, facilities, cash, or any other financial or in-kind resources cannot be used to promote or attack any candidate in the election. This prohibition extends to the use of union funds or resources to publicize a branch's endorsement of a candidate. Campaigning cannot be conducted on union or Postal Service time (including during union meetings or training events) and Postal Service rules regarding campaigning must be followed.

These rules apply to any union (including the national, state association, branch and any other union) and to any employer (whether or not they employ union members). However, these rules do not prohibit branches from publishing campaign advertisements in their newsletters that have been paid for by a candidate. Branches also may sponsor a debate between the candidates, or invite the candidates to speak at meetings, so long as both candidates are afforded an equal opportunity to appear.

If you have any questions or concerns regarding the new election and/or campaign activities, please contact the OLMS Election Supervisor Brian Lucy at [OLMS-NALC-Election@dol.gov](mailto:OLMS-NALC-Election@dol.gov).

### NALC's 2015 National Conference:

## Future in focus during Houston 'rap session'



NALC President Fredric Rolando listens to a question during the Sunday 'rap session' portion of the union's 2015 National Conference.

The future was very much on the minds of the nearly 1,500 letter carrier activists who were present for NALC's 2015 National Conference in Houston July 17-19.

"None of what we do as a union works without you, the brothers and sisters of this union who step up as leaders," NALC President Fredric Rolando said as he opened up the rap session portion of the weekend-long conference on Sunday.

Such conferences are called for by the *NALC Constitution*, which states that in years in which there is no national convention, the president shall call a national conference for state association and branch presidents or their designees.

Attendees began arriving and checking in on Friday afternoon. On Saturday, these branch and state leaders attended a selection of educational workshops in the morning and afternoon.

On Sunday at 9 a.m., President Rolando called the rap session to order in the Hilton-Americas Houston's Grand Ballroom. Getting down to business, Rolando told the audience that the legislative arena is the most important thing that we as letter carriers must deal with presently.

"In Congress, we have a 535-member board of directors," he said. "They don't all have the same agenda that we do, and that's why we have to be so vigilant."

Pre-funding—the 2006 law that requires the Postal Service to set aside billions of dollars a year to pre-fund the health benefits of future retirees decades in advance—gave privatizing-minded ideologues an "in," Rolando said. "The billions of dollars that began to show up as red ink on the Postal Service's balance sheets gave them an opportunity to say, 'We have to fix the Postal Service.' But instead of fixing the pre-funding problem, they moved to attack the institution and its employees."

"The good news for us is that we are profitable and we have been for a while now," he said. By the end of May, USPS' year-to-date operating profit was \$1.5 billion, about \$370 million ahead of the Postal Service's projected operating profit for the period, and higher than the \$1.4 billion operating profit for all of last year.



On Saturday, branch and state leaders could choose to attend a number of educational workshops, most offered twice.

The conventional wisdom—that the Internet is the enemy of the Postal Service—is a myth, he said. "What the Internet taketh away, the Internet turned around and giveth," he said with a laugh. "Customers nowadays want the ability to use their smartphones to buy things and to have them delivered tomorrow.

"And one thing that all of these big-box online companies—Amazon, Walmart, Google—have in common, whether they know it or not, is that they need a delivery network," he said. "They need us."

"We've done a great job of playing political defense over the last five years," Rolando said, "but fighting off the bad stuff isn't enough."

NALC has taken the lead, and continues to do so, in what postal employ-

## Two national-level arb decisions announced

On July 2, National Arbitrator Shyam Das issued an award (C-31979) upholding the U.S. Postal Service's position that former city carrier assistants must complete a 90-day qualifying period following their conversion to career status before they may be credited with, or take, annual leave.

The award interprets section 512.313(a) of the *ELM*, which provides that "new employees are not credited with and may not take annual leave until they complete 90 days of continuous employment under one or more appointments without a break in service."

The arbitrator rejected NALC's argument that this requirement should not be applied to newly converted CCAs because they are not "new employees" and concluded that the *ELM* language that restricts the use of annual leave for 90 days applies to new "career employees," which includes CCAs.

National Arbitrator Dennis Nolan issued an award (C-31980) on June 29 that denied NALC's position that Section 126.3 of the *M-39 Handbook* is enforceable under Article 19 of the National Agreement.

NALC had contended that Section 126.3 requires management to schedule in advance replacements for carriers it knows will be absent on a given day. However, the arbitrator disagreed, finding that this section is only "an instruction to supervisors to complete a particular form, described as a 'Unit Daily Record,' several days in advance."

The arbitrator concluded that these instructions on the proper use of a form do not "assign or guarantee employees any hours." Accordingly, the form does not "directly relate to wages, hours, and working conditions" as required by Article 19.

Although the award addresses only *M-39* Section 126.3, Arbitrator Nolan's opinion discusses criteria for determining when handbook and manual provisions are enforceable under Article 19. Nolan's analysis should prove helpful to NALC stewards, branch officers, and arbitration advocates when preparing and presenting Article 19 grievances.

Both of these decisions are available for review on the Contract Administration page at [nalc.org](http://nalc.org).



Nearly 1,500 letter carriers activists were on hand for NALC's 2015 National Conference in Houston July 17-19. Here, the assortment of state association and branch presidents listens attentively during Sunday's 'rap session.'

ees are doing to go on the offense. "We know we can't do it alone," he said, "which is why we started forming and joining all of these different coalitions, starting with the other postal unions to make sure all four unions are on the same page."

While working closely with the other postal unions, NALC also has worked with mailers and enlisted the support of a number of groups and organizations interested in the future success of the Postal Service. Now that we've built these coalitions, Rolando said, "The trick is fixing pre-funding without dismantling the network.

"Our pre-funding account is basically a low-interest loan to the federal government," he said, "so getting rid of the mandate to pre-fund will be difficult." So NALC has had to look for more creative ways to address pre-funding's costs.

"Our goal is to develop a narrow bill that fixes the basic problems and grows the networks," Rolando said.

Fortunately, our issues aren't partisan issues. "Serving all Americans, serving rural communities, employing veterans—these are things all political parties can agree on," he said.

Another thing we have going for us is our diversity. "Politically, we mirror America," Rolando said. "You find any point on the political spectrum and we have members on it."

In addition to such topics as the new name for NALC's political action committee (now known as the Letter Carrier Political Fund) and USPS' ongoing problems with a shrinking postal Board of Governors, Rolando spoke about a number of other important issues:

**Bargaining:** "We enter collective-bargaining talks in February, with our contract expiring in May," Rolando said. "But as always, we began preparing for this next round of negotiations from the moment the last contract began," with the Das arbitration award in January 2013. "It's a long, difficult process."

**CCAs:** "We've converted about 18,000 CCAs to career since the Das award," the president said. "And remember: CCAs will replace every one of us in this room." He added that there are about 5,000 more potential conversions in the coming weeks and months to increase full-time staffing where needed.

**City Delivery Route Alternative Adjustment Process (CDRAAP):** "Halfway through this process, we've seen about a thousand routes added, mostly due to the rise in parcel volume," Rolando said.

**Dispute Resolution Process (DRP):** "We must focus on achieving the best results for our members, especially in areas of the process under our control," the president said. "At the same time we will work with and engage management to jointly improve the process over time."

**Workers' compensation:** NALC's seven regional workers compensation assistants (RWCAs) show the union's commitment to helping members navigate the workers' compensation maze, Rolando said. "It's a complicated process with a lot of potential bureaucratic pitfalls for the injured workers. NALC is the one source of help injured workers can count on. Bottom line: If you get hurt, call your NBA's office to get some guidance."

Rolando then took questions from audience members for the last hour of the meeting. Members asked about workroom floor issues, concerns over local management's handling of actions related to this year's national "Stamp Out Hunger" Food Drive, vehicle problems (and how best to deal with them), overtime-desired list issues, worries over letter carrier safety and health in extreme temperatures, and more.

The president adjourned the national conference shortly before noon. The next national gathering of letter carriers will be at NALC's 70th Biennial National Convention, Aug. 15-19, 2016, at the Los Angeles Convention Center.

### National Association of Letter Carriers

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202-393-4695 | [www.nalc.org](http://www.nalc.org)

Fredric V. Rolando, President

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NALC

Number 15-07

Aug. 21, 2015

# Bulletin

## Election notice for national director of retired members

Pursuant to an election complaint received by the United States Department of Labor's Office of Labor-Management Standards (OLMS), the National Association of Letter Carriers has entered into a voluntary agreement with OLMS to conduct a new officer election for the position of NALC Director of Retired Members under OLMS' supervision. There will not be new nominations for this position. The term of office for this election is the remainder of the unexpired term, which will end in December 2018.

The election will be conducted by mail ballot. NALC members in good standing as of June 1, 2015, are eligible to vote. All NALC members are encouraged to update their addresses with the union by contacting the NALC Membership Department at 202-662-2836 or by visiting <http://forms.nalc.org/update>.

Ballots will be mailed to eligible members on Sept. 14 and Sept. 15, 2015. Ballots are due back in the post office box by 12 p.m. on Oct. 5, 2015. The tally will commence immediately afterward at Peake-DeLancey Printing, 2500 Schuster Drive, Cheverly, MD 20781. The results will be published on the NALC website, with the vote totals broken down by branch.

If you have not received your ballot by Sept. 21, 2015, or if you spoil your ballot or need another ballot for any reason, contact your local branch office and request that it contacts the NALC Membership Department to provide a duplicate ballot to you. When requesting a duplicate ballot, please provide your branch office with your name and current mailing address. The NALC Membership Department will process your duplicate ballot request. If you cast your original ballot and a duplicate ballot, only the duplicate ballot will be counted.

All phases of the election are being supervised by OLMS. If you have any questions, please call U.S. Department of Labor, OLMS, Election Supervisor Brian Lucy at 202-513-7318 or e-mail [OLMS-NALC-Election@dol.gov](mailto:OLMS-NALC-Election@dol.gov). Any NALC member wishing to file a protest regarding the conduct of this election must do so in writing to the election supervisor no later than Oct. 19, 2015. To receive the mailing address and fax number options to file a protest, contact OLMS Election Supervisor Brian Lucy at the phone number or e-mail address above.

## Branch Officers' Training set

Branch Officers' Training is an expansion of the secretary-treasurer educational seminars that NALC conducted for many years, tailored to assist branch secretary-treasurers and other branch (and state) officers who are chiefly responsible for financial administration. What's been added are specialized sessions for branch presidents/vice presidents, recording secretaries, financial secretaries and trustees.

Because of the expansion, the training will now run for three and a half days, instead of the previous two and a half days. It will be held Sept. 21-24 in Atlanta. **The registration deadline is Aug. 26.**

A preview of the new Branch Officers' Training was given by NALC Secretary-Treasurer Nicole Rhine and Assistant Secretary-Treasurer Judy Willoughby in July at the national rap session in Houston.

The new training includes sessions on:

- The *NALC Constitution* and branch bylaws
- Ethics
- Department of Labor and LMRDA reporting
- Preparing LM forms and 990s
- Managing branch finances and creating transparency
- Fiduciary issues and practices
- Payroll and wage issues
- Travel, reimbursements and per diem
- Handling MDA and PAC funds
- Why minutes matter
- Internal controls
- Fraud prevention and detection
- Running a branch meeting
- Auditing branch records
- Member notification requirements
- Electronic recordkeeping
- Branch elections
- Membership issues
- Planning and budgeting

There also will be a session for branch presidents and vice presidents that cover the responsibility and legal exposure that go along with signing certain documents, a session designed to identify policies that every branch should have in place, and a session focused on helping officers learn more about branch operations.

Clip the coupon below and mail it to NALC Headquarters as soon as you can. You also can fax it to Headquarters, or you can register online via the Secretary-Treasurer's web page at [nalc.org](http://nalc.org). **Note: Please do not make airline reservations until you receive notification of acceptance.**

## Branch Officers' Training registration form

Please register me for the Sept. 21-24 NALC Branch Officers' Training in Atlanta

Registration deadline is Aug. 26. Room rate [single/double] is \$169 plus tax.\*\*

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Branch or state position \_\_\_\_\_

Branch # \_\_\_\_\_ Branch city \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_

Home address: Street \_\_\_\_\_

City \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ ZIP \_\_\_\_\_

Phone number (required) \_\_\_\_\_

e-mail (required) \_\_\_\_\_

**Send to:**  
Secretary-Treasurer Nicole Rhine  
National Association of Letter Carriers  
100 Indiana Avenue NW  
Washington, DC 20001-2144

Or fax to: 202-737-1540

**\*\* Please do not make airline reservations until you receive notification of acceptance.**

## 'Impressive' USPS financial turnaround continues

On Aug. 10, the U.S. Postal Service released its financial report for the third quarter of Fiscal Year 2015, a period covering April, May and June. The figures in the report revealed an operating profit for USPS of \$1.2 billion so far this fiscal year, compared with \$1 billion at the same point last year.

"These results show the impressive Postal Service financial turnaround continuing in full force," NALC President Fredric Rolando said in a statement. "The relatively small operating loss of \$197 million for the third quarter isn't unexpected—the third quarter is typically the slowest—but it doesn't change the fact that 2015 is turning into one of the USPS' most impressive annual performances since the Great Recession.

"Moreover, this reflects the positive trend in operating profits that began in 2013 and that includes last year's \$1.4 billion operating profit," Rolando said, adding that when the report was released, USPS officials said that they expect "positive controllable income for the fiscal year."

The report showed that as the economy improves, letter-mail revenue has stabilized. Meanwhile, rising online shopping has produced skyrocketing package income—a striking 10.6 percent rise over the same three-month period in 2014.

"Because these operating profits stem from structural factors, they augur well for the future," Rolando said. "This three-year trend in operating profitability makes clear the need to strengthen, not degrade, the now-profitable postal networks."

The president said that the NALC hopes to continue working with lawmakers from both parties, with the White House and with postal officials at L'Enfant Plaza to build on progress made in the last Congress, within the mailing industry and with other interested parties toward consensus on a legislative postal reform package that promotes a strong and vibrant USPS. (For more on that proposal, see the September *Postal Record*.)

Rolando was quoted more than anyone else in overall news coverage of the report's release that ran in such places as Associated Press, *The New York Times*, *U.S. News & World Report*, *The Washington Post*, NBC News, *USA Today*, *The Hill*, *Federal Times*, *Government Executive* and *Linn's Stamp News*.

### 6th contract COLA: \$0

Based on the Aug. 19 release of the July 2015 Consumer Price Index (CPI), the sixth cost-of-living adjustment (COLA) for career letter carriers under the 2011-2016 National Agreement will be \$0.

## Arlington wreath-laying planned

Representatives of the NALC will have the honor of laying a wreath at the Tomb of the Unknown Soldier at Arlington National Cemetery in Virginia as part of ceremonies honoring the 2015 NALC Heroes of the Year.

All NALC members, their families and friends are invited to observe the event. It will be held on Wednesday, Oct. 7, directly following the noon changing-of-the-guard ceremony.

The Tomb of the Unknown Soldier is a monument dedicated to U.S. service members who have died but whose remains are unidentified. Traditionally, presidents and other dignitaries have laid wreaths there as a way of honoring the country's military veterans.

The Postal Service is the largest civilian employer of veterans. Currently, 120,000 postal workers—21 percent of USPS' workforce—are veterans.



## Combined Federal Campaign

As federal employees, letter carriers can participate in the world's largest annual workplace charitable giving program, the Combined Federal Campaign (CFC).

Pledges made by federal civilian, postal and military donors during the campaign season (Sept. 1 to Dec. 15) support eligible non-profit organizations through donations deducted voluntarily from their paychecks each pay period.

"The CFC is a wonderful way to help make the world a better place, a few dollars at a time," NALC President Fredric Rolando said.

Carriers can choose a charity, or several, to support, and an amount they choose will be deducted from their paychecks and automatically sent to each charity.

"By giving automatically, a little each pay period, you probably won't even notice the money coming out of your check," Rolando added. "But the charities notice, because the steady support of millions of participants makes a big impact on their ability to help people and do good throughout the year."

All letter carriers can participate in the CFC, and Rolando recently sent his annual reminder asking NALC members to contribute through the CFC in addition to the other ways they support the community.

"Each day, many of us encounter people enduring real life problems within the communities where we live and deliver the mail," Rolando wrote. "Throughout the year, we help by collecting food, providing clothing, mentoring children and looking after those who are vulnerable. We must continue to be good citizens by involving ourselves in these and other community efforts. However, it does not end there. The Combined Federal Campaign allows us easy access to contribute to charities that we care about through payroll deductions."

Rolando asked letter carriers to consider donating to three charities in particular: the Postal Employees' Relief Fund (PERF), the Muscular Dystrophy Association (MDA) and United Way Worldwide.



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NALC

Number 15-08

Oct. 14, 2015

# Bulletin

## Carper's iPost Act: A starting point

On Sept. 17, Senate Committee on Homeland Security and Government Affairs (HSGAC) Ranking Member Tom Carper (D-DE) introduced the Improving Postal Operations, Service and Transparency—or iPost—Act, S. 2051.

“While Senator Carper’s new bill contains several provisions we cannot support and raises a number of serious concerns for letter carriers and the larger federal employee community,” NALC President Fredric Rolando said in a statement, “we believe it is a good place to begin the conversation about how to preserve and strengthen the Postal Service for the American people while protecting the legitimate interests of all the key stakeholders.”

Over the past few months, the president said, NALC has been working with a coalition made up of the four major postal unions, several key mailing industry groups, and the executive leadership of the U.S. Postal Service, to develop consensus postal reform legislation.

“Our coalition intends to work with House and Senate leaders and members to pass postal reform legislation that makes sense and that fairly meets the needs of our country, its people and its businesses,” he said. “NALC appreciates the tireless efforts of Senator Carper and his staff to craft a bill that will advance the process of achieving much needed postal reform.”

Postal issues seem to have been drowned out by more headline-grabbing activities on Capitol Hill, such as the efforts to avoid a government shutdown, presidential primary season posturing and the House leadership elections. But the president said that if Congress finds the opportunity, the time and the willingness, it could take up postal reform.

“Carper’s bill is, for now, the only real ‘reform’ bill being considered,” Rolando said, “and it’s expected to change over the next few months as stakeholders provide feedback.” He added that members in the House of Representatives also continue to hold bipartisan discussions on some form of postal reform as well.

Visit the Government Affairs page at [nalc.org](http://nalc.org) to review a new fact sheet about postal reform efforts.

## Watson wins special election for NALC dir. of retired members

Pursuant to an election complaint received by the U.S. Department of Labor’s Office of Labor-Management Standards (OLMS), NALC entered into a voluntary agreement with OLMS to conduct, under OLMS’ supervision, a new officer election for the position of NALC director of retired members.

The election was conducted by ballots mailed on Sept. 14 and Sept. 15 to all NALC members in good standing as of June 1. Ballots were due back in the post office box by 12 noon on Oct. 5.

The ballot tally for this election took place immediately afterward at Peake-DeLancey Printing in Cheverly, MD, and it was completed on Oct. 7. The preliminary results of the count are:

- Corvallis, OR Branch 1274 member Ron Watson: 47,608
- Minneapolis Branch 9 member Ken Ring: 9,119

OLMS is reviewing the vote totals to ensure they are correct and accurate, and it will release a final tally report shortly. This report will include a breakdown of the vote totals by branch.

The term of office for this election is the remainder of the unexpired term, which will end in December 2018.

## Next Branch Officers Training set

NALC Secretary-Treasurer Nicole Rhine has announced that the next Branch Officers Training will be held Jan. 11-14 in Las Vegas. The room rate is \$80 and the room reservation deadline is Dec. 4. **Note: Please do not make airline reservations until you receive notification of acceptance.**

Branch Officers Training is an expansion of the secretary-treasurer educational seminars that NALC conducted for many years, tailored to assist branch secretary-treasurers and other branch (and state) officers who are chiefly responsible for financial administration. What’s been added are specialized sessions for branch presidents/vice presidents, recording secretaries, financial secretaries and trustees.

Because of the expansion, the training now runs for three and a half days, instead of the previous two and a half days. A preview of the new training was given at the national rap session in Houston, with the first Branch Officers Training held in September in Atlanta.

The new training includes sessions on:

- The NALC Constitution and branch bylaws
- Internal controls
- Ethics
- Fraud prevention and detection
- Department of Labor and LMRDA reporting
- Running a branch meeting
- Preparing LM forms and 990s
- Auditing branch records
- Managing branch finances and creating transparency
- Member notification requirements
- Fiduciary issues and practices
- Electronic recordkeeping
- Payroll and wage issues
- Branch elections
- Travel, reimbursements and per diem
- Membership issues
- Handling MDA and PAC funds
- Planning and budgeting
- Why minutes matter

There also will be a session that covers the responsibility and legal exposure that goes along with signing certain documents, a session designed to identify policies that every branch should have in place, and a session focused on helping officers learn more about branch operations.

Clip the coupon below and mail it to NALC Headquarters by Dec. 4. You also can fax it by that date to 202-737-1540.

### Branch Officers Training registration form

Please register me for the Jan. 11-14 NALC Branch Officers Training in Las Vegas.

Registration deadline is Dec. 4. Room rate [single/double] is \$80 including resort fee.\*\*

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Branch or state position \_\_\_\_\_

Branch # \_\_\_\_\_ Branch city \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_

Home address: Street \_\_\_\_\_

City \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ ZIP \_\_\_\_\_

Phone number (required) \_\_\_\_\_

Send to:  
Secretary-Treasurer Nicole Rhine  
National Association of Letter Carriers  
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# Rolando, NALC honor Letter Carrier Heroes

Letter carriers who helped save a woman who had been shot, got residents out of burning homes or rescued the unconscious driver of a submerged car were honored by NALC President Fredric Rolando at a special luncheon in Washington, DC, on Oct. 8.

“What these individual letter carriers gathered here today did to merit selection as our Heroes of 2015 is truly exceptional,” Rolando said. “And yet, in a profound sense, there is nothing extraordinary about what they did, nothing unusual—because every day, in communities all across this vast nation, letter carriers are on the lookout for, and often chance upon, opportunities to protect the families and neighborhoods they know so well.”

Rolando noted that many of the most impressive acts go unreported. “Because after responding to a need or a potential catastrophe,” he said, “most of our carriers simply dust off—or dry off—their uniforms and go back to work.”

“For many of our carrier heroes,” the president said, “looking out for the community simply comes with the uniform.”

Here are this year’s 2015 Letter Carrier Heroes of the Year:

- In just his fourth week on the job, 2015 National Hero of the Year Scott Gallegos, a Carmichael, CA Branch 4494 city carrier assistant and Iraq War Army veteran, risked his life on the route to save a woman who had been shot by a man who then engaged police in a five-hour standoff.
- The Eastern Region Hero is Gainesville, FL Branch 1025 letter carrier Alan Symonette, a Marine Corps veteran who extracted a driver whose car had plunged into a pond and was filling with water.
- Akron, OH Branch 148 letter carrier Kizzy Spaulding, who pulled an unresponsive woman from her burning home, and Tulsa, OK Branch 1358 letter carrier Steve Shipman, who rescued an 11-year-old girl from a house fire, are the Central Region and Western Region Heroes, respectively.
- Retired Garden Grove, CA Branch 1100 letter carrier James Robledo, a Vietnam War veteran who through the Guitars4Vets program helps others deal with their combat experiences, is Humanitarian of the Year.
- Carrier Alert winner Denice Howard, a Plainfield, NJ Branch 396 letter carrier, located an elderly customer who had fallen on ice, after concluding that the way he had parked his car indicated trouble.
- Eugene, OR Branch 916 letter carriers Terrence Graves, a Navy veteran, and Bryce McLean spotted and detained a suspected thief; they are recipients of the Unit Citation award. And retired Central Maine Merged Branch 391 letter carrier John Curtis, who received the Education Award, wrote a booklet about past labor struggles that resonate today.



NALC President Fredric Rolando (r) presents a certificate to 2015 Western Region Hero of the Year Steve Shipman.



Pictured (from l): National Hero Scott Gallegos, NALC President Fredric Rolando, National Humanitarian James Robledo, Unit Citation Hero Terrence Graves, Carrier Alert Hero Denice Howard, Central Region Hero Alan Symonette, Eastern Region Hero Kizzy Spaulding, USPS Postmaster General Megan Brennan, Unit Citation Hero Bryce McLean and Education Award winner John Curtis.

“Our honorees’ actions reflect something larger,” Rolando said. “They symbolize what is special about our craft.”

“Letter carriers are part of the fabric of the communities they serve,” he said. “They exhibit professionalism in the way they carry out their everyday duties, and every so often they get the opportunity to rise up and meet an unexpected challenge and improve—or protect—someone’s life.”

Special guests providing remarks at the Oct. 8 Heroes event were Rep. Ami Bera (D-CA), Rep. Norma Torres (D-CA), USPS Postmaster General Megan Brennan and AFL-CIO Executive Vice President Tefere Gebre.

Visit [nalc.org/heroes](http://nalc.org/heroes) to learn more.



### Heroes honor heroes

Representatives of the NALC had the honor of laying a wreath at the Tomb of the Unknown Soldier at Arlington National Cemetery in Virginia on Oct. 7, directly following the noon changing-of-the-guard ceremony. Representing NALC were four of the Letter Carrier Heroes of the Year for 2015 who are also military veterans: (from l) Eastern Region Hero Alan Symonette (Marine Corps), Unit Citation Hero Terrence Graves (Navy), National Humanitarian James Robledo (Army) and National Hero Scott Gallegos (Army).

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NALC

Number 15-09

Nov. 9, 2015

# Bulletin

**Open Season 2015**

## NALC's Health Benefit Plan: Taking care of our own



When it comes to the NALC Health Benefit Plan (HBP)—the Plan founded for and run by letter carriers—the numbers tell an impressive story:

- **1950:** The year NALC started its own independent Health Benefit Plan.
- **336:** The number of employees of the NALC Health Benefit Plan.
- **117,000-plus:** The number of members of the Plan. Including covered family members, the Plan protects the health of more than 224,000 people.
- **\$1.2 billion:** The value of claims processed last year.
- **766,089:** The amount of incoming calls from members, physicians and hospitals handled by the Plan's customer service representatives last year.
- **8,239,761:** The number of pieces mailed.

Those are only some of the numbers that tell the story of the HBP—numbers you should consider when choosing a health plan for you and your family. Letter carriers can make changes to their health care coverage during the Federal Employees Health Benefits (FEHB) program Open Season, Nov. 9 through Dec. 14.

The HBP was created by letter carriers and is still run by letter carriers. It offers an unparalleled level of

personal service. Unlike many health insurance plans, NALC's HBP does not operate to make a profit—it focuses its energy on keeping members healthy.

Plan employees know the health and insurance system inside and out, and they use their experience to help you. The Health Benefit Plan's customer service staff members are employees, not contractors, who work at the Plan's headquarters in Ashburn, VA.

Take a few minutes to review the HBP's poster that accompanies this *NALC Bulletin*. And check out the article and special insert in the November edition of *The Postal Record*.

"Crunch the numbers," NALC President Fredric Rolando said. "Compare our plan to the others. We think you'll agree that the NALC Health Benefit Plan is the best health plan, and the best value, for you and your family."

Hellman said the Health Benefit Plan is always evolving to keep up with the latest medical knowledge and the needs of its members, based in part on input from letter carriers. "We listen to what letter carriers are saying about their health needs, and that shows each year," he said. "This is our Plan, and we never stop improving it."

In 2016, the NALC Health Benefit Plan's benefits will get even better. And comparing the Plan's benefits to other plans is simple. Just go to [opm.gov/healthcare-insurance/healthcare/plan-information](http://opm.gov/healthcare-insurance/healthcare/plan-information).

Active letter carriers have four ways to enroll in the NALC Health Benefit Plan during Open Season: at [liteblue.usps.gov](http://liteblue.usps.gov), via The Blue Page (Intranet) at work, using Employee Self-Service Kiosks located at some USPS facilities or by phoning PostalEASE (877-477-3273, Option 1).

Annuitants and retirees can enroll by calling Employee Express at 800-332-9798, by going to OPM's Open Season website at [retireefehb.opm.gov](http://retireefehb.opm.gov), or by submitting a Standard 2809 to your retirement office. You can get additional information at [opm.gov/healthcare-insurance/healthcare/plan-information/enroll/#annuitants](http://opm.gov/healthcare-insurance/healthcare/plan-information/enroll/#annuitants). If you submit your change by mail, the address is: OPM, Open Season Processing Center, P.O. Box 5000, Lawrence, KS 66046-0500.

"Take a good look at the numbers and the benefits," Rolando said, "and see why so many letter carriers and their families trust the only health benefit plan founded and run by letter carriers. It's why we say we're 'taking care of our own.'"

Detailed information on the NALC Health Benefit Plan can be found in the official 2016 brochure (RI 71-009) available for download at [nalchbp.org](http://nalchbp.org). All benefits are subject to the definitions, limitations and exclusions set forth in the official brochure.

## Building an NALC Veterans Group

NALC is made up of approximately 275,000 active and retired members, of which almost a quarter are veterans of the U.S. Armed Forces. As we all commemorate Veterans Day on Nov. 11, we remind ourselves that these veterans traded their military uniforms for letter carrier uniforms, and that they continue to serve their communities and this great nation.

In an effort to express the union's sense of gratitude for our veteran members' service, NALC President Fredric Rolando invites all military veteran members—active and retired, full time and part time—to join the NALC Veterans Group.

"The Veterans Group is intended to be something tangible and useful," Rolando said, "providing NALC members who are military veterans access to the information and tools specific to veterans' rights and benefits within the Postal Service."

The group seeks to provide to these particular members resources, rights information and a sense of camaraderie, he said.

Veterans Group members receive a pin as a special symbol of gratitude for their military service and their membership in the NALC.

If you are interested in joining the group, complete the sign-up card included in the October issue of *The Postal Record* and return it to: NALC Veterans Group, National Association of Letter Carriers, 100 Indiana Ave. NW, Washington, DC 20001-2144.

You may also visit [nalc.org/veterans](http://nalc.org/veterans) to download a PDF version of the card.

Rolando asks all members to take a special moment on Veterans Day to remember the sacrifices made by our fellow members to serve, protect and defend the freedoms we hold dear.

# NALC responds to flawed Brookings paper on USPS

A paper published in September by the Brookings Institution, a Washington, DC-based think tank, absurdly calls for Congress to partially privatize the U.S. Postal Service, under the assumption that, as First Class Mail volumes continue to decline, such a move would help the agency compete with private-sector competitors.

NALC President Fredric Rolando wrote a letter to the author of the paper, urging her to withdraw the paper, which he labeled as "deeply and irretrievably flawed."

"It largely misdiagnoses the major problems the Postal Service faces," he wrote, adding that the paper "fundamentally misunderstands the Postal Service's universal service obligation, which covers and includes both market-dominant services and competitive services. This makes the paper's chief recommendation—to break up the Postal Service in two—both illogical and unfeasible."

"Finally," Rolando wrote, "after proposing the break-up and partial privatization of the Postal Service, [the paper] fails to analyze and explore the implications such a proposal would have on the country, the U.S. economy and on the major stakeholders in the postal industry."

Since its publication, the paper has been quoted and referenced in a number of news stories—including in *The Washington Post* and *The Baltimore Sun*.

Rolando wrote a letter to the editor of *The Post* about the paper's article on the study. "The article lacked any serious discussion of how the Brookings plan would work or whether it makes sense," he wrote. "(It doesn't.) What was the point of this article, beyond touting *The Post's* policy preferences?"

NALC Chief of Staff Jim Sauber was quoted in a separate Oct. 7 *Washington Post* story about reaction to the study.

"The conventional wisdom is that the Internet is killing the Postal Service," Sauber said. "I'm not denying that the Internet is having profound effects both positive and negative. But most of the loss is from the pre-funding [requirement] and the recession itself."

In *The Baltimore Sun's* story about the study, Sauber noted that USPS has reported an operating profit for the last two years and that the agency's \$5.5 billion net loss in 2014 was entirely the result of the 2006 congressional mandate that the Postal Service pre-fund its retiree health care costs decades into the future—a requirement placed on no other employer.

The chief of staff also said that UPS and FedEx now use USPS to deliver up to 30 to 40 percent of their packages for the "last mile."

And USPS spokeswoman Toni G. DeLancey told *The Sun* that separating and privatizing the agency's package delivery business "is poorly conceived at best. At worst, and aside from being politically and economically unrealistic, the proposal aims to shift an enormous financial burden onto taxpayers—which is unnecessary and unwanted in any policy context."

### Penalty Overtime Exclusion

As referenced in Article 8, Sections 4 and 5, of the National Agreement between the NALC and the U.S. Postal Service, the December period (during which penalty overtime regulations are not applicable) consists of four consecutive service weeks.

This year, the December period begins Pay Period 26-15, Week 2 (Dec. 5, 2015) and ends Pay Period 01-16, Week 1 (Jan. 1, 2016).

## Study: Millions depend on trillion-dollar postal industry

The Envelope Manufacturers Association's (EMA) Institute of Postal Studies recently released its latest "Mailing Industry Job Study."

The study found that the U.S. Postal Service remains at the center of the \$1.4 trillion industry that provides 7.5 million jobs—6 percent of all jobs in the United States. And 73 percent of these jobs are dependent on a thriving delivery infrastructure. The job tally includes manufacturing and distribution, as well as mail management and actual mail delivery.

Further, as the economy has continued to improve following the Great Recession, sales revenue associated with the delivery of the mail climbed to \$158.8 billion in 2014, a 9.5 percent increase over figures from just three years before.

Visit the "Latest News and Updates" page at [nalc.org](http://nalc.org) to learn more.

### Mailing Industry is Critical to the Economy

The U.S. mailing industry contributes to the economy with:

**\$1.4 T in sales revenue**  
and  
**4.6% of U.S. Total Output**

Source: Envelope Manufacturers Association's Institute of Postal Studies' "Mailing Industry Job Study."

## Congratulations!

## Customer Connect brings in \$2 billion

Because of the diligence and dedication of city letter carriers, NALC and the U.S. Postal Service are celebrating \$2 billion in estimated revenue earnings generated by the Customer Connect program.

"When the Customer Connect program was deployed 12 years ago," NALC President Fredric Rolando said, "its purpose was to call on letter carriers, through our valuable relationships with our customers, to generate new business while providing them with a better mailing value."

Over the last decade, the Customer Connect program has become a successful generator of new customers and revenue for USPS. The power of individual letter carriers is a key element in growing package volume and revenue.

"And as letter carriers," Rolando added, "we are a trusted and integral part of our customers' day—so there is no group better than letter carriers to communicate with the more than 15 million potential new customers."

On Nov. 17, NALC and USPS will observe National Customer Connect Day and will officially announce reaching the \$2 billion milestone. (Please note that this is a change from the Nov. 10 date reported in the November *Postal Record*.)



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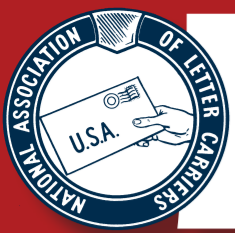
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# Bulletin

## NALC President Emeritus

### James H. Rademacher: 1921-2015

James H. Rademacher, national president of the NALC from 1968 to 1977, died on Dec. 15 of natural causes in Roanoke, VA. He was 94 years old.

“Jim spent his working life in the service of letter carriers, even through his retirement years,” NALC President Fredric Rolando said. “We will long remember his efforts and we offer our condolences to his family and friends.”

The son of a letter carrier, Rademacher joined the Post Office in 1941, when he became a temporary substitute carrier in Detroit. He became a station representative in 1946 after two years in the Navy. He was elected secretary of Detroit Branch 1 in 1948 and president in 1950, a position he held until he became national assistant secretary-treasurer in 1960. In 1962, he was elected NALC’s vice president and also became editor of *The Postal Record*; he served as vice president until he was elected president by acclamation at the 1968 convention in Boston. Within a year, he would face one of his first major tests as president.

**The Great Postal Strike:** By the late 1960s, many letter carriers were forced to work a second job just to make ends meet. NALC lobbied again and again for a pay increase that would finally raise the rank-and-file above the poverty level—lobbying efforts that often fell on deaf ears or, worse, resulted in broken promises. As letter carrier tempers flared, Rademacher urged members to keep calm, and in late 1969, he met privately with President Richard Nixon in an effort to forge a compromise on postal pay and postal reform. But after Nixon in February of 1970 again deferred another scheduled wage increase, letter carrier frustration reached a new height—and on the evening of March 17, NALC members in New York City voted to go out on strike. Soon, letter carriers from other NALC branches across the country—not to mention employees from other crafts—would join in the walkout.



In 1971, Rademacher signed NALC’s first collective-bargaining agreement with the newly created U.S. Postal Service.

Rademacher called an emergency meeting of the presidents of the union’s 300 largest branches on March 20 in Washington, while in a televised address three days later, Nixon declared a national emergency, ordering 25,000 soldiers into New York City to break the strike and move the mail. Unsurprisingly, the troops were ineffective since they had none of the skills that postal workers possessed.

Eight days after the strike began—and after receiving assurances from NALC leaders in Washington and from the Nixon administration—most letter carriers returned to their routes. Rademacher and other postal union leaders then began round-the-clock negotiations with the Post Office Department.

**Political action:** The collective-bargaining rights that postal employees now enjoyed were a product of congressional action—and letter carriers understood that what Congress could give, Congress could take away. So in March 1975, Rademacher announced the establishment of a Legislative Liaison Network designed to build relationships between NALC members and their congressional representatives. And in July, the wholly voluntary political action fund that the union had established the previous year was formally christened the Committee on Letter Carrier Political Education—COLCPE. (In 2015, COLCPE was officially renamed the Letter Carrier Political Fund.)

**The ‘Kokomo Plan’:** In April 1974, the cost-minded managers of the U.S. Postal Service—who were increasingly pressuring letter carriers to deliver their routes at break-neck speed—rolled out the Letter Carrier Route Evaluation System (LCRES), although it became better known as the “Kokomo Plan” because it was to be tested first in Kokomo, IN. The system involved establishing work and time standards for each letter carrier function. These would be fed into a computer that would then calculate an eight-hour route for each carrier.



In 2013, Rademacher joined a Roanoke, VA, protest against a USPS plan to unilaterally end Saturday mail delivery.

NALC and USPS entered into arbitration over the Kokomo Plan; with Rademacher charging that USPS had violated the National Agreement by unilaterally increasing the workload of letter carriers. In August 1976, right before NALC’s national convention in Houston, the arbitrator ruled in NALC’s favor, allowing Rademacher to announce to convention delegates, “Kokomo is dead.”

It was at that same convention that the president announced his retirement. He lived his later years near Roanoke, VA, where he remained active with Branch 524 as well as the national union.

Rademacher is survived by his wife, Ellen; his daughter, Linda; his son, Charles; and three grandchildren, five great-grandchildren and two great-great-grandchildren. (His first wife of 64 years, Martha, died in 2005.)

A private funeral service has already been held. Those who wish to honor Rademacher may contribute in his memory to their choice of charity.

News of his death was announced as the January 2016 edition of *The Postal Record* was going to press, so more information about Rademacher and his legacy will be published in the February issue.

Be sure to visit [nalc.org](http://nalc.org) to watch “Seven Decades of Activism: A Conversation with NALC President Emeritus James H. Rademacher,” a video created for and shown at the 2014 NALC Convention in Philadelphia.



James H. Rademacher served as president of NALC from 1968 to 1977.

## Survey: USPS is ‘most favorable’ agency

A national poll conducted by the Pew Research Center has again shown that the U.S. Postal Service is the most favored among all federal agencies.

“This honor recognizes the hard work and dedication of letter carriers and everyone who works for this venerable agency,” NALC President Fredric Rolando said. “I’m confident that as the public face of the Postal Service, letter carriers will continue to do what we can to ensure that our employer maintains and even strengthens that trust.”

The national survey’s findings, released on Nov. 23, were based on more than 6,000 interviews conducted by Pew between the end of August and the beginning of October. Favorable ratings were provided by 84 percent of those surveyed—up one percentage point from a similar survey conducted in 2010.

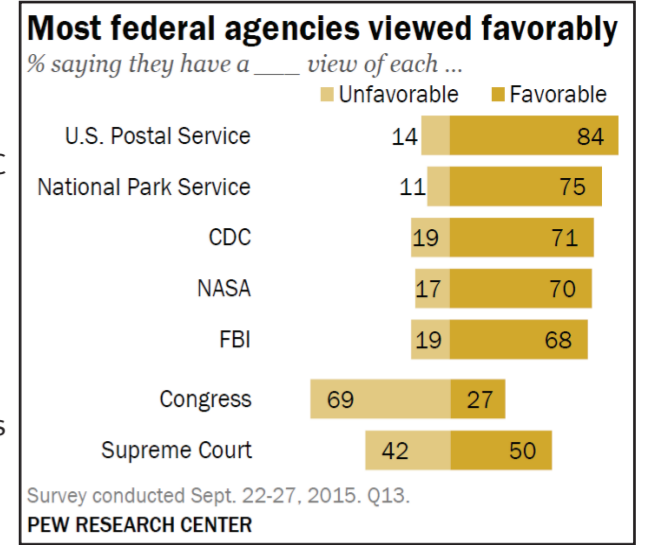
Rounding out the top five agencies were the National Park Service with 75 percent, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention with 71 percent, the National Aeronautics and Space Administration with 70 percent and the Federal Bureau of Investigation with 68 percent.

What entity was at the bottom of the list? Only 27 percent of those polled gave a favorable rating to Congress, the same body that has not yet eased the financial burden it created under the 2006 postal law that requires USPS—alone among government agencies and private enterprises—to pre-fund 75 years’ worth of future retiree health benefits and to do so over a 10-year period.

While the study found what it called “substantial partisan gaps” in the views of several federal departments and agencies, the Postal Service was not one of those entities. In fact, 89 percent of Democrats polled, including those whose political views lean to the left, held a favorable view of USPS, only 11 percentage points higher than Republican and right-leaning respondents.

Pew found that public attitudes about government and politics are not easy to categorize. “In general, the federal government continues to be viewed less favorably than state and local governments,” its survey report said. “The last time the federal government was viewed as favorably as state and local governments was in the period after the 9/11 terrorist attacks and during the early phase of the Iraq War.”

“A year ahead of the presidential election,” the Pew report added, “the American public is deeply cynical about government, politics and the nation’s elected leaders in a way that has become quite familiar.”



## OPM, USPS cyber attack update

The recent cyber attacks against the Office of Personnel Management and the U.S. Postal Service data systems remain under investigation.

NALC President Rolando has received a letter from OPM’s acting director advising that postal employees and retirees were affected by the OPM incident. According to OPM, it is highly likely that NALC members were affected if they underwent a background investigation through OPM in 2000 or afterward (which occurs through the submission of forms SF 86, SF 85 or SF 85P). Individuals who submitted this information prior to 2000 may be affected, but it is less likely.

OPM has begun notifying affected individuals beginning in late September and such notifications will continue on a rolling basis. NALC members are encouraged to review available resources on OPM’s cyber website at [opm.gov/cybersecurity](http://opm.gov/cybersecurity). Individuals may sign up for cybersecurity updates directly on this website.

Meanwhile, NALC and the other major postal unions are continuing to negotiate over issues arising from the earlier cyber attack on the Postal Service. Such negotiations are required by the settlement of the unfair labor practice charge against the Postal Service filed by NALC.



NALC President Fredric Rolando recently visited Garden Grove, CA Branch 1100 member Gertie Johnson, who is rehabilitating in Santa Ana following treatment for the serious injuries she received in an accident while delivering her route last July. Well wishes can be mailed care of Branch 1100, 13252 Garden Grove Blvd., Suite 100, Garden Grove, CA 92843-2204, or e-mailed to [lovetogertie@gmail.com](mailto:lovetogertie@gmail.com).

## Joint summary overview of FMLA released

On Nov. 24, NALC and the U.S. Postal Service agreed upon a jointly developed document, M-01866, to provide the mutual understanding of the national parties on issues related to leave covered by the Family and Medical Leave Act of 1993 (FMLA). A similar document was previously included in the 2005 *Joint Contract Administration Manual (JCAM)*.

The National Defense Authorization Acts (NDAA) of 2008 created two new categories of military family leave covered under the FMLA: qualifying exigency leave and military caregiver leave. The NDAA of 2010 expanded both categories of military family leave, and M-01866 describes the FMLA rights regarding those two categories.

**Qualifying exigency leave:** The Postal Service must grant an eligible employee up to 12 workweeks of FMLA leave during the 12-month FMLA leave period for qualifying exigencies that arise out of the fact that the employee’s spouse, son, daughter or parent, who is a member of the Regular Armed Forces, National Guard, Reserves, or a retired member of the Regular Armed Forces or Reserves, is under a call or order to covered active duty (or notification of an impending call or order to covered active duty) during the deployment of the member with the Armed Forces to a foreign country. For those military members in the National Guard or Reserves, the call to active duty must also be in support of a contingency operation.

**Military caregiver leave:** USPS must grant an eligible employee who is a spouse, son, daughter, parent or next of kin of a covered service member or covered veteran with a serious injury or illness up to a total of 26 workweeks of leave during a single 12-month period to care for the covered service member or covered veteran. While the 12-month period for every other category of FMLA leave coincides with the postal leave year, the 12-month period for military caregiver leave begins on the date that the eligible employee first takes military caregiver leave.

The definition of a spouse has also changed since the previous FMLA document was created in 2005. It now includes an individual in a same-sex or common-law marriage that either was entered into in a state that recognizes such marriages; or, if entered into outside of any state, is valid in the place where entered into and could have been entered into in at least one state.

For more information, refer to M-01866 in the Materials Reference System (MRS) at [nalc.org](http://nalc.org).

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