

# Bulletin

# Special Convention Edition

## NALC CONVENTION CHRONICLE



occasion to serve our members and to preserve our unity.



While the challenges that NALC faces are daunting, Rolando said that his faith in letter carriers is undiminished.



Secretary-Treasurer Rhine asked delegates to observe a moment of silence in remembrance of members who have died since the 2018 convention.

outlined the present and future challenges that loom for letter carriers.

who made brief welcoming remarks. Later in the session, President Rolando introduced Illinois Gov. J. B. Pritzker, who heaped praise on letter carriers.

Rhine introduced the retired national officers and national business agents (NBAs) in attendance at this year's convention and asked Michael Caref, NBA for Region 3 (which includes Chicago), to come to the microphone to introduce his fellow NBAs and to acknowledge the union's regional administrative assistants (RAAs), regional office assistants (ROAs), regional grievance assistants (RGAs), legislative and political organizers (LPOs), regional workers' compensation assistants (RWCAAs) and NALC Headquarters letter carrier staff.

Returning to the lectern, Rhine introduced NALC's resident national officers before calling President Rolando to the microphone.



Branch 11 President Mack I. Julion



Illinois Gov. J. B. Pritzker

### CHALLENGES AND VICTORIES

Rolando began by thanking the delegates for abiding by the protocols to protect them from COVID-19, recognizing Honolulu Branch 860 for the work it did to prepare for the ultimately canceled 2020 convention, and reflecting on NALC and the labor movement's history in and around Chicago.

He then reminded delegates about the challenges that the 2018 convention in Detroit had confronted, including collective bargaining for a new contract and dealing with legislative gridlock in Congress.

In the last four years, Rolando said, NALC has:

- negotiated and ratified a 44-month contract with the Postal Service that included better pay and benefits for CCAs and the automatic conversion to career status after no more than 24 months; three general wage increases; seven cost-of-living adjustments; a new top Step P for the career pay scale; protections against contracting out and layoffs; and a series of MOUs to address route adjustments, workplace culture and more.
- resisted efforts by the Trump administration to privatize the Postal Service and repeal collective-bargaining rights.
- worked to elect pro-letter carrier majorities in both houses of Congress and a friend in the White House.
- helped calm public fear about vote-by-mail as letter carriers delivered nearly all of the 2020 ballots on time, even as the percentage of ballots cast rose by 25 percentage points from 2016.
- fought to secure supplies of personal protective equipment, develop new safe-work protocols, restructure workplaces and work schedules to accommodate social distancing, and negotiate a variety of COVID-19 leave policies.
- convinced the Postal Regulatory Commission to adopt a more favorable price cap to improve USPS's financial condition.
- pushed for the passage and enactment of postal reform legislation that included repeal of the pre-funding of retiree health benefits mandate and made the requirement of six-day mail delivery permanent.

"All these victories were made possible by the incredible solidarity, unity and strength of the NALC membership—and by the work of thousands of activists at

all levels of our union," Rolando said to thunderous applause. "We should all take pride in this progress."

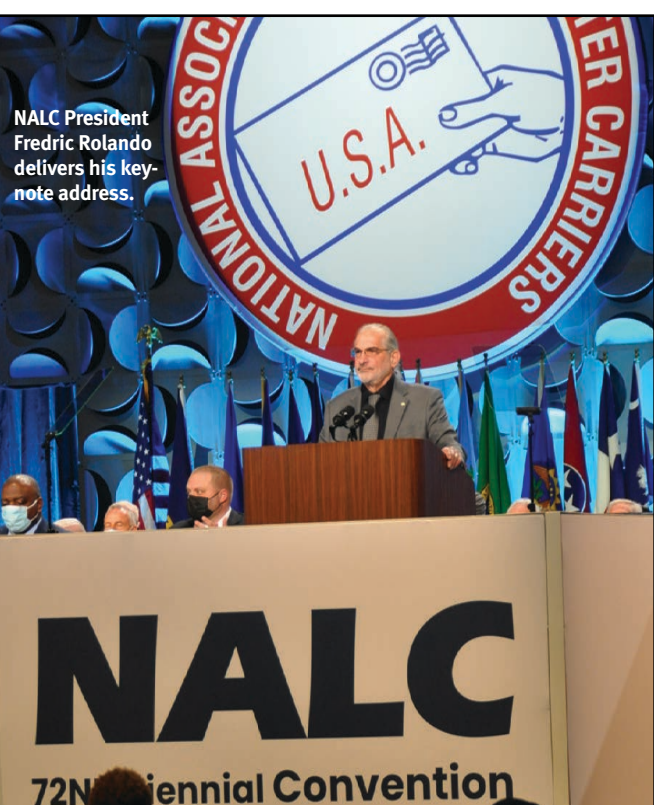
### LOOKING AHEAD

Letter carriers cannot rest on their laurels, Rolando said, because they face ongoing challenges, including the 2022 midterm elections and the 2023 round of collective bargaining. NALC's president encouraged delegates to attend the many workshops being held before and after the general sessions on Monday through Thursday, to be informed about those and other subjects and to get involved.

"We're also going to begin to address some longer-term challenges—those that the NALC's present and future leaders are sure to face far beyond the next two years," he said.

First, Rolando discussed Postmaster General Louis DeJoy's 10-year strategic Delivering for America (DFA) plan. "[The DFA plan] combines a massive reorganization of the managerial structure of the Postal Service with proposed legislative and administrative actions, and a strategy to fundamentally restructure the operations of the Postal Service," Rolando said.

He also said that any transformation of the Postal Service won't succeed unless it solves its chronic staffing problems. And, he added, this will continue to guide NALC in its approach to collective bargaining.



NALC President Fredric Rolando delivers his keynote address.

"Even if we're filing grievances to compensate letter carriers for work-hour limits and other Article 8 violations of the National Agreement, we also are engaging management to address staffing issues with additional career conversions and the direct hiring of career employees rather than non-career employees," he said.

While the City Delivery and Workplace Improvement Task Force's pilot programs to improve the new employee experience are showing promise, Rolando vowed that the union would continue to push for an all-career workforce with competitive starting wages.

### TAMING AMAZON

The rise of Amazon was the second long-term challenge Rolando broached. Because the Postal Service's finances now are closely tied to package delivery, it's much more driven by market forces and the competition: UPS, FedEx and Amazon, with the latter expected to become the nation's largest package delivery company this year.

For letter carriers, the focus is on Amazon's workforce. "We support the unionization of Amazon workers—both to help these suffering workers and of course to curb Amazon's market power," Rolando said.

While much attention has been paid to the organizing efforts for Amazon's

warehouse employees, organizing Amazon's delivery drivers will be much more difficult, he said.

"Rather than employing delivery drivers directly, Amazon contracts with a handful of delivery companies at each of their Amazon facilities," Rolando said. "These small companies, known as delivery service providers (or DSPs), then hire drivers themselves. So this means a union would need to organize anywhere between five to 15 DSPs at each facility—while also hiding these efforts from Amazon, which can and will just cancel contracts with DSPs with little warning."

Rolando told delegates that NALC is working with more than a dozen other U.S. unions to organize these workers and with the AFL-CIO and international labor partners to come up with successful strategies to engage the company going forward.

### CRISIS OF DEMOCRACY

Turning to his third long-term challenge, Rolando explained how the will of the powerful few is diminishing the power of the many, connecting the dots between the filibuster's effect in the Senate with the Supreme Court's decisions removing limits on political spending and gutting the Voting Rights Act of 1965.

"Very powerful economic interests are both making it harder for working-class people to vote and drowning out their voices in the media," he said.

The assault on the Capitol on Jan. 6, 2021, and the continued belief by 40 percent of Americans that the 2020 presidential election was stolen, despite all evidence to the contrary, is now fueling a wave of voter suppression efforts in many states, Rolando said.

"The legacy of the 2020 elections should be the remarkable everyday heroism of postal workers who made this surge in mail-in voting possible, not the attack on the Capitol," Rolando said.

He then called on delegates to return home at the end of the week and ask their friends and family to vote for democracy in the upcoming midterm elections.

"By voting, we can begin the arduous work of restoring confidence in our public institutions—and send a message that we won't let democracy fail on our watch," he said.

### 'ESSENTIAL'

Rolando finished his speech by recognizing how letter carriers have delivered for the American public during the pandemic—helping people to work from home and stay safe; distributing relief checks, health bulletins, and COVID-19 tests; and delivering and collecting vote-by-mail ballots.

"Letter carriers have always known how essential we are to the political, social and economic well-being of our country—long before COVID-19 struck," Rolando said. "But now the rest of the country has taken notice, too."

He recognized the delegates for all the well-recognized and lesser-noticed tasks they do for the success of their branches and NALC as a whole, from the shop stewards to the food drive coordinators, and the active carriers to the retirees.

### BACK TO BUSINESS

Following Rolando's remarks, the chairman of the Credentials Committee, Delano Wilson of Silver Spring, MD Branch 2611, called the committee to the floor to deliver a preliminary report. Wilson said that 4,273 delegates representing 554 branches were present.

Rolando then called Dan Tegreeny, chairman of the Rules Committee, to the podium. Tegreeny introduced the committee members: Renee Eberhardt, Casper, WY Br. 1681; Joe Henschen, West Coast Florida Br. 1477; Walter Sanko, Scranton, PA Br. 17; and Troy Scott, Baton Rouge, LA Br. 129. After the committee read its report, the convention voted to approve the rules.

The president then called Andrew Weiner of Jamaica, NY Br. 562, election



Director of Health Benefits Stephanie Stewart



Director of Life Insurance Jim Yates

James Brown, Nashville, TN Br. 4; Gary Butts, Tulsa, OK Br. 1358; Keith Deason, Wichita Falls, TX Br. 1227; Daniel Estep, Toledo, OH Br. 100; Tom Filipone, Philadelphia, PA Br. 157; Robert Fuentes, Chicago, IL Br. 11; Wayne Green Jr., Winston-Salem, NC Br. 461; Corey Grotte, Eau Claire, WI Br. 728; Mike Harazmus, Western Massachusetts Br. 46; Keith Hooks, Washington, DC Br. 142; Shauna Houghton, New Hampshire Merged Br. 44; Chris Hubble, West Coast Florida Br. 1477; Yvette Kinard, New York, NY Br. 36; Eric Lomax, Jamaica, NY Br. 562; Jemmy Macaraeg, Van Nuys, CA Br. 2462; Guillermo McPherson, Austin, TX Br. 181; Marie Montano, Albuquerque, NM Br. 504; Lori Ann Mottolo, Wil-

loughby, OH Br. 3688; Mark Myers, Seattle, WA Br. 79; Karen Nance, Washington, DC Br. 142; Edwin Oliveras, South Florida Br. 1071; Joe Otero, New Jersey Merged Br. 38; Bryan Pate, Champaign, IL Br. 671; Francisco Pecunia-Vega, Fayetteville, NC Br. 1128; Salvador Rodriguez, El Paso, TX Br. 505; Jerri Stockberger, Lafayette, IN Br. 466; Michael Stockman, Fort Wayne, IN Br. 116; Ted Thompson, Cincinnati, OH Br. 43; Richard Thurman, St. Louis, MO Br. 343; Chuck Walls, Omaha, NE Br. 5; Christina Williams, New Jersey Merged Br. 38; and Rick Zerenner, Trenton, NJ Br. 380.

The convention then heard a video greeting from President Joe Biden. "Each of you who carry the mail from home to home and business to business are essential to our economy, our democracy and our national identity," Biden told the delegates. "As president, I've got your back—I promise you."

The convention turned to resolutions, with Director of Health Benefits Stephanie Stewart presenting several before the body paused so Rolando could introduce Lee Moak, a member of the USPS Board of Governors (BOG), who addressed the convention. Moak is the first former union president to serve on the BOG—he was president of the Air Line Pilots Association from 2011 to 2014.

Moak praised letter carriers for getting their jobs done despite deteriorat-



USPS Gov. Lee Moak



Assistant Secretary Paul Barner

ing conditions and equipment, a situation he is working to turn around. "I don't know how you did it," he said. "Without you, the letter carriers, we would have turned the lights out."

Despite the difficult conditions, "you still accomplish the mission. Imagine what you could do with all the proper support," he said. Moak said that the BOG is striving to improve facilities and vehicles, as well as safety, security and workforce issues, a task that will be easier without the burden of pre-funding of retiree health care following the passage of the Postal Service Reform Act this year.

The delegates then debated more resolutions, with Director of Life Insurance Jim Yates presenting a few. The body also passed a motion to adopt proposed resolutions that were approved by the Executive Council, with the caveat that if anyone wants to discuss one, they can.

After further announcements by Executive Vice President Brian Renfro and Assistant Secretary-Treasurer Paul Barner, the president introduced the chairman of the Committee on the President's Biennial Report, Alvin Matsumura of Honolulu, HI Br. 860, who introduced the committee members: Janell Harris, Grand Forks, ND Br. 517; Louise Jordan, San Antonio, TX Br. 421; Sylvain Stevens, Charlotte, NC Br. 545; and Andy Tuttle, Lawrence, KS Br. 104. The delegates voted to accept the report.

President Rolando then delivered a presentation honoring fallen letter carriers, and he explained the City Carrier Memorial at NALC Headquarters.

The president next called on delegates to celebrate the 50th anniversary of the Great Postal Strike of 1970, including watching a trailer for the film "The Revolt of the Good Guys."

"The 1970 strike was nothing less than a rebirth of the National Association of Letter Carriers," Rolando said. He then called on delegates who were active letter carriers when the strike occurred to stand and be recognized. The delegates gave them a resounding ovation and a Letter Carrier Cheer.

Several speakers throughout the day spoke about the pivotal labor history that occurred in Chicago, from the Pullman Strike to the Haymarket Massacre. Speaking in detail about that history was Dr. Robert Bruno, director of the Labor Studies Program and a professor of labor and employment at the University of Illinois-Chicago, who connected labor history to what carriers do today.

"If you don't think what you do matters, a generation from now, America will be different because of what you did in the 2020 election," he said. "America will be different because of what you do when you come out of this convention. Generations beyond you will come to understand how history was changed."

He continued: "There is no other institution here in America, or anywhere else, that is more equipped, more built for and more capable of creating this world of beauty, opportunity and equality for all than the American labor movement."

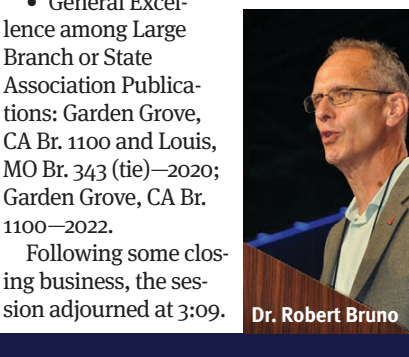
After that, President Rolando recognized the first-place winners of the publication awards for 2020 and 2022:

- Best Website: Duluth, MN Br. 114—2020; Garden Grove, CA Br. 1100—2022.
- Best Cartoon or Photo: William Stinson, Royal Oak, MI Br. 3126—2020; Neal Couey, Santa Barbara, CA Br. 290—2022.
- Best News or Feature Story: Julie McCormick, Greater East Bay, CA Br. 1111 and John T. Dick, Royal Oak, MI Br. 3126 (tie)—2020; Dick Bussa, Tacoma, WA Br. 130—2022.
- Promoting Unionism: Bill Rayson, South Florida Br. 1071 and Beki Serwach, South Macomb, MI Br. 4374 (tie)—2020; Matt Pierce, Portland, OR Br. 82—2020.
- Best Editorial or Column: Javier Rodriguez, South Florida Br. 1071 and John McLaughlin, St. Louis, MO Br. 343 (tie)—2020; Tim Ihssen, Tacoma, WA Br. 130—2022.
- General Excellence among Small Branch Publications: Royal Oak, MI Br. 3126—2020; Tacoma, WA Br. 130—2022.
- General Excellence among Large Branch or State Association Publications: Garden Grove, CA Br. 1100 and Louis, MO Br. 343 (tie)—2020; Garden Grove, CA Br. 1100—2022.



Executive Vice President Brian Renfro

Following some closing business, the session adjourned at 3:09.



Dr. Robert Bruno

## NALC AUXILIARY MONDAY, AUG. 8

Madam President Cythensis Lang called to order our 59th Biennial Convention. Rick Baird was appointed sergeant-at-arms. All members recited the Pledge of Allegiance and the collect.

Secretary Crystal Bragg gave the thought of the day. She also presented every member with a penny, since we are in the land of Lincoln. She gave the credentials report, and we had a quorum. We played human bingo to get to know our members and we had four winners.

We had three bylaws changes, which we accepted with additions and corrections.

The meeting was recessed until 10 a.m. on Aug. 9.

—Submitted by Linda Davis, NALCA Assistant Secretary



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