

Iowa State Association of Letter Carriers



President's Report

June 2008

Hard to believe it's almost been a month since the Iowa Spring Training session was held in Altoona. I've heard nothing but great comments concerning the presentations put on by Executive Vice President Fred Rolando and Regional Field Coordinator Lindsay Burr. Hopefully every attendee was able to gather information to take back to their respective branches and share with the membership. That's what it's all about. It was also great to see the nearly dozen or so new stewards who attended the new steward training breakout. They were given a lot of information and seemed to absorb it well. As I've said many times, the front line steward has by far, the most difficult job in the union.

In an earlier article, I wrote about my concerns about discipline being used by management because of their lack of leadership skills. Unfortunately, my concerns seem to be coming true in many offices around the state. I believe that your branch leaders can easily represent their members against this unwarranted attack against letter carriers and hopefully we can get thru this cycle as we have in the past, with the NALC teaching many of these supervisors that respect is earned, not given with their appointments.

I was recently appointed by National Business Agent Mike Weir, along with Branch 352 Steward, Cathy Chambers as your NALC representatives to the District Safety Team. Both Cathy and I agree that as we meet during the coming months with our management counterparts, that the safety and well being of our members is priority number one. We know that no carrier comes to work planning on becoming injured. We also are well aware of the obstacles faced by letter carriers daily, including managements unwillingness to make decisions at times, which may put carriers at risk.

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It's our belief that we can not only reduce the number of injuries and accidents by looking at specific problems, but that we will also reduce the amount of discipline issued. This is part of a nationwide program which has shown great results in many other districts and we look forward to participating in this program. However, if management in this district, only plans on using our participation as another tool to harass and discipline our membership, our cooperation and participation shall be short lived.

For you branch leaders, brother Fallis, NBA Weir and I will be meeting in the next few months to put together a rough agenda for the fall training to be held in Iowa City. If you have any suggestions, in either the contractual or legislative arena's. Let us know.

Lastly, I'd like to once again direct everyone to our web-site, which can be found at "www.iowalettercarriers.org" We've reworked many of the pages, added some links, cartoons by an Iowa letter carrier, and included many photos from the past couple of years. If you have photo's to share of letter carrier events, please send them to me at: mbirkett@iowalettercarriers.org

As I've mentioned before, the part of the site which I'm quite proud of is the Iowa Letter Carrier Hall of Fame. We've already posted some short bio's for some of the inductee's and are looking for members who can provide short bio's on others, so if you know any one in the Hall of Fame and there is currently no biography, once again, send them to me.

Mike Birkett

President

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