



REGION 5 NBA REPORT



July 2011

National Business Agent's Report

NALC

It's been a really active and, at times, destructive spring in our region. While the day to day issues we face as letter carriers are always in the forefront of our concerns, there are times when those pale in comparison with the tragedies our friends and neighbors suffer when Mother Nature comes by to offer a reality check.

Joplin, MO Branch 366 President, Tracy Parkes, was one of the many who lost their homes from the destructive F-5 tornado which passed through the city on May 22nd. Our thoughts go out to the carriers in Joplin as well as those who were hit by another tornado in Sedalia just a few days later. Flooding in Iowa and Missouri has wreaked havoc on letter carriers and customers alike. The outpouring of support nation-wide has been unbelievable. Carriers and branches from all over the country have given, and given big time, to help their brothers and sisters who have been harmed by these disasters. The recovery/rebuilding efforts will take years to bring things back to "normal" and our continued support will be essential.

I am writing this article from the Missouri State Convention in Osage Beach, Missouri and I want to take this opportunity to thank RAA's Mike Birkett, Mark Sims, Region Trainer Rod Holub and Regional Field Coordinator Brandon Thompson who assisted Missouri State President Kevin Boyer in presenting the best training possible.

While we deal with the high-stress pressures of the work place, along with the constant battle to enforce our Contractual Rights, we must not forget we are also dealing with a high-stakes battle for our future in the Legislative arena too. These legislative battles we face were driven home at all four of our State Conventions and the closer we get to our Contract negotiations and the scheduled USPS payment of our retiree's health benefits pre-funding the more ominous these battles become.

My concern is that a large majority of our members do not understand that our Collective Bargaining Agreement is now being discussed on the floor of Congress. This is the first time the Collective Bargaining Agreements with the Postal Service have been debated in Congress and the debates are designed to bring collective bargaining for you to an end; or at minimum, hamstringing us in our efforts to achieve a fair contract which protects our rights and benefits.

Like it or not our jobs are in the political cross-hairs of our enemies and the lies they spread have the potential to be devastating. As I look at our Regional participation in Committee for Letter Carrier Political Education (COLCPE), eActivist and Carrier Corps, I am amazed that 92% of letter carriers do not participate in our legislative efforts through these programs. If we do not successfully challenge these lies and change the current legislative attacks our days are numbered. This is not the “boy crying wolf”, this is the absolute truth.

If you think someone else will do it for you, then you may well go the way of the dinosaur—extinction! If that is OK with you then quit reading and accept what happens without a whimper. If you appreciate your job and the benefits you and your family enjoy and want to keep them then get busy! To get the latest news and call to action, sign up to become an eActivist. You WILL NOT be bombarded with spam, you will get up to date and timely information about what’s going on in Congress and precise direction on how to combat our enemies. Carrier Corps will provide you with opportunities to actively show your support for letter carrier causes—we’ve seen what numbers of mobilized activist can accomplish world-wide in the past several months.

92% of all letter carriers belong to the NALC in an “open shop.” That number confounds the leaders of every other union with an “open shop”—meaning no one is forced to join the union. However, of that 92% only 8% contribute to (COLCPE). COLCPE is our political action fund and is separate from your dues money. This is the only way we can finance our political efforts in Congress to protect our jobs. 92% of letter carriers will pay dues for collective bargaining but 92% of our members will not contribute to COLCPE which protects the right to have collective bargaining. Frankly, I don’t get it! We are under attack and we have the opportunity to fight back for \$130 a year (\$5 per pay period) and 92% of us won’t participate? Please! This is the cheapest job insurance you can get and time is running out. It’s quick and easy to sign up and the dividend is your job, if you don’t...ask a fossil what happens.

In closing, let me shift gears back to our brothers and sisters in Joplin and offer our thoughts and prayers as they continue the long process of rebuilding their lives. If you would be interested in helping in a material way you can contact this office and we will put you in contact with the specific needs and opportunities.

Until next time, keep up the fight.

Dan Pittman
National Business Agent
[NALC Region 5](#) (St. Louis)