



REGION 5 NBA REPORT



March 2012

National Business Agent's Report

NALC

We are all disappointed our employer decided to back out of negotiations at the last moment but I want all of you to know that the NALC will not stop negotiating even during the 60 day mediation period. We will do this because it is the right thing to do for our membership and the future of our craft. President Rolando and the entire Executive Council will work tirelessly to protect the rights of our members, 6 day delivery, and preserve the USPS, now and in the future. In the meantime our current National Agreement continues to be in force.

I realize that my article will be printed in many newsletters that will be published after our Regional Rap Session. At the same time with the help from many local editors, my friend Gary Mills in Rolla, Missouri, the internet and chat/rooms, this message will be read prior to our Rap Session. Along with a presentation from a National Officer, Mark, Mike, and several leadership academy graduates will be discussing a wide range of issues. Training on 3999's and their value, Article 12 (withholding/excessing), which is becoming a very crucial issue to our craft especially in light of the current reduction in clerk craft positions nationwide. New Deliveries that were assigned to Rural and HCR routes in violation of the New Delivery Memo (M-01694). This last issue is very important which has taken numerous hours of research. The NALC has given this top priority and all of you may be asked for assistance in gathering additional information. I have tasked Gerard Henke of Florissant, Mo, Don Rowlett, of St. Charles, Mo, Ron Lewis, of Springfield, Missouri, Chuck Walls, of Omaha, Nebraska, and Jim Beach of Muscatine, Iowa to help out on this crucial endeavor. All of this plus a discussion on the Casers/Streeters pilot program which is currently going on in our Region and across the Nation. NALC National Headquarters has filed a national level dispute against this pilot program. All of this will undoubtedly create a spirited debate at this year's Rap Session.

Speaking of spirited debate, we are certainly engaged in at least that on the National Level concerning Unions. We have four states in our Region and two are "right-to-work" states and some Missouri lawmakers are rattling that hateful saber once again. The newspapers and television covered the Wisconsin Governor and Legislature's attack on public employees in that state last year and Indiana just passed anti-union legislation. Let me ask a question; when did the Union become such a bad thing?

As union members we have become a minority in this country—a country built with union labor I might add. The American middle class was built by union labor and it was a time of great economic growth and opportunity. The 40-hour week, something we take for granted, came from American Labor. The weekend, something letter carriers seldom see, was brought to you by the union. Those who want to dismantle unions and take away your rights aren't doing so to help you or any other working family. They are in it for big business and big profits—profits you won't see. Unfortunately, when we hear the spirited debate about the downfall of the country, all I can see is working men and women busting their humps at multiple low wage no benefit jobs to make ends meet. That isn't an America that is prosperous and vital.

It is the picture of an old man or woman beaten down by a bully. Well that isn't what comes to mind when I think about the America I grew up in.

We don't have to agree on everything, likely as not we may only agree on a few things. However, there is one thing we must all agree on and that is the union isn't a dirty word and we must stand up to anyone who suggests it is. There have always been union members who were Republicans and others who were Democrats—that isn't going to change and shouldn't—but we should all come together on this one and stand against those who would try to take away what we have banded together to earn. Union labor pays our bills and pays our taxes. Union labor is still the envy of the world and a bane of those who would take it away by means of jealousy and deceit. Your family, my family, has only benefited from the union paycheck. We mustn't sit back and "hide our light under a bushel" we must stand strong and tall so other Americans can see we have something great to offer. The choice is yours. We can support the right side of this spirited debate or we can simply say it doesn't affect me and stay silent. That excuse will ring pretty hollow when we are the last ones standing and they come for our jobs. Then we will ask who will speak up for me?! But it will be too late; we were the last ones left. Think about it.

Employee Survey – Recently letter carriers around Region 5 have received a questionnaire entitled "RESPONSE OF THE EMPLOYEE." This questionnaire is not from the U. S. Postal Service. This survey is from a private corporation, Capital Keystone Group, LLC. While attempting to look like an official document from the postal service, this corporation provides leads to other businesses, which in turn will use the information you provide them to sell you some type of life insurance or retirement savings/investment program. Personally, I'll be returning the Business Return Envelope to the sender, with a short note that I am not interested in their product.

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