



August 2019

Business Agent's Report

NALC

Negotiations Open – On June 26, 2019, the NALC and the USPS opened negotiations on a new collective bargaining agreement. President Rolando stated: “As always, we will seek to preserve and improve the standard of living for city letter carriers. We aim to move forward, not backward. There will be no concessions offered or given. But we will work diligently and professionally to find common ground and mutual progress.” I was proud to represent the letter carriers of Region 5 at the opening ceremonies and to work with Vice President Drass on the committee he heads. The twenty-eight national officers also spent several days in committees working on proposals which will benefit letter carriers. I urge all letter carriers to read President Rolando’s full opening remarks which can be found at the NALC website.

Safety – Every letter carrier, every day, needs to make sure they are working safely. No matter what, take the time to put on your seat belt; close the door; set the emergency brake; take an extra break if you’re overheating or freezing; make sure you’re parked at a safe place. There are not enough savings in skipping any of these actions or any others you can think of which is worth your life. There have been too many letter carriers who have died on the job. Don’t be a statistic.

Consolidated Casing – This test is currently being conducted in Annandale, VA. The Neurosurgeons that run the postal service at headquarters thought it would be a great idea to go into an office and do away with a couple of routes. Then have one carrier do all the casing for six routes and then have six carriers do all the delivery work. Well, despite the effort thrown at this test, it’s been a failure (while this test is ongoing, the NALC has had eight union officials at Annandale to monitor every aspect of the test). Their projected savings is not materializing. Of course, it’s the carrier’s fault, not the cockamamie scheme. Not to be demoralized, the service is rolling out Phase two, one office in each Area. Phase three has been tentatively planned for this month and thirteen sites have been identified within Region 5. Those sites are; St. Louis (Jennings), Kansas City, MO (Hickman Mills & Waldo), Wichita (Delano & Chisholm), Springfield (Griesemer), Des Moines (University), Overland Park (Brookridge), Fort Dodge, Waterloo, Burlington, Grand Island and Hutchinson. Prior to the service initiating this “test” in each of the offices, the NALC will have RAA Bill Jackson (one of the eight mentioned above) come to each of the offices (already begun) with information for the carriers to explain what will happen and to prepare local officers for the grievances that will inevitably be filed. This office also plans on having someone from this office at each site when they start.



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Drones Again – Seems like there are a lot of companies wanting to take over the last mile delivery. The one that we read about almost weekly is Amazon and their projected fleet of drones that will block the sun with their presence and fill our ears with that melodic buzz. Well, here are just a few problems as outlined in TechNewsWorld in their June 10 edition: 1 – A drone mailbox. “Experts” (whomever they are) are predicting theft to become a major issue. Crooks can easily watch for drones and follow. They’re going to need a box...can’t use the yard because of the sprinkler and the dog...can’t use the driveway because it will be too easy to see and steal. Back yard...same as the front and who’s going to check for a parcel, oh did I mention trees and bushes? Did the drone just kill Fido? 2 – The weather. Hot air decreases lift which will affect what a drone can carry. Cold decreases battery life. Snow, fog and wind will certainly ground them and of course lightening could put their whole system down. So, when inclement weather arrives, I guess they’ll be relying on us. 3 – Range. Range will be dictated by daily variables (weather), packages (weight) and battery power. What may be deliverable one day may not be deliverable the next. 4 – Abuse. Who would want to abuse a drone 😊 Well pirates for one - anyone wanting its cargo...anyone up to a little mischief...target practice...rock throwers and anyone just annoyed by the damn things. 5 – Power lines. They are difficult to see by people...helicopters, kites, hot air balloons and even planes hit them all the time. Drones will have to have some type of optical sensors or down they’ll go. The issues above don’t even consider terrorism or air traffic issues when the sky is darkened by 1000’s of them. What we do know is that letter carriers will be relied upon for the foreseeable future to deliver, every house, every day.

Michael J. Birkett
National Business Agent
NALC Region 5 (St. Louis)