



December 2020

Business Agent's Report

NALC

Christmas 2020 – On behalf of the entire Region 5 office, Regional Administrative Assistants Charles Sexton and David Teegarden, Regional Workers Compensation Assistant, Larrissa Parde and Office Secretary, Mary DeCelle, I want to wish each and every one of you a Merry Christmas and Happy Holiday Season. On the verge of turning the calendar over to 2021, I can only hope that the New Year brings closure to the ongoing pandemic, prosperity and good health to each of you and that we all can get back to life as normal.

Open Season – Letter Carriers will have the option to change Health Insurance Providers between November 9th and December 14th this year. I would urge each of you to look at the NALC HBP, which is owned and operated by letter carriers. The plan pays particular attention to letter carrier needs. The plan is also a not-for-profit organization which allows it to focus on its members as opposed to profits. For more information about the plan go to: www.nalchbp.org Remember, you still have time to register for one of the NALC Health Benefit Plan Virtual Events which will run through the open season. You can register through the same website mentioned above.

Election 2020 – Well, the election is over, but our work is not. Letter Carriers delivered 3.1 billion pieces of election mail and over 88.7 million ballots (some not returned). Pat yourself on the back and get ready to make some phone calls. It's time to move forward legislation that will help ensure the postal service for many years, to provide Covid-relief and to repeal the mandate to prefund retiree health care. Other legislation would call for the continuation of six-day delivery; that the USPS remains an independent establishment and not subject to privatization; that the USPS ensures continuation of door delivery for all business and residential customers; and that the service restore service standards to those in place on July 1, 2012.

Rap Session – I've received several calls from branches requesting the dates for the 2021 Region 5 Rap Session for vacation scheduling purposes. The dates are February 20 & 21st for you optimists. However, at this point, I can see no possible way for us to hold the Rap Session safely. I've attended every Region 5 Rap Session since 1985 and I will surely miss the opportunity to meet with the leadership of this region, but I can assure you that the NALC has no intention of holding a super spreader event. We are already in discussions with state and branch leaders on how to do some remote training in place of the Rap Session. We have too many small offices with no contact information.

If you are a branch president or leader in a small office and don't get email notifications concerning remote meetings, contact us immediately with your information.



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National Interest Arbitration – As I write this article, there is still one week of hearings scheduled and still a chance that a settlement can be reached. I've been very privileged to watch the proceedings remotely over the past month. Members should be very proud of the work that has gone into this Arbitration. The NALC lead Attorney Peter DiChiara (Cohen, Simon and Weiss) has done a magnificent job of making sure the NALC positions were made clear to Arbitrator Dennis Nolan, through testimony and evidence. President Rolando, EVP Renfroe, Chief of Staff Jim Sauber all testified on behalf of the NALC, but most compelling was the testimony of a panel of letter carriers who spoke about their jobs and how it has changed over the past 20 years. This panel was led off by our own Region 5 member and Kansas State President, Andy Tuttle. When you see Andy, make sure to congratulate him on a job well done. Lastly, another panel of carriers, former TE's and CCA's testified as to the plight of non-career members and how and why the job was so difficult, not only physically & mentally, but financially as they worked without benefits like healthcare. The NALC has made a compelling argument that letter carriers should receive an "outside" premium as well as for the difficulty of the work.

Covid Update – Before reporting the positive letter carrier cases within Region 5, it should be noted that there have been well over 4,000 postal employees within the Region that either tested positive or been quarantined by local health officials, the postal service, their own physicians, or on their own because of exposure.

Within Region 5, three hundred and one letter carriers have tested positive and one thousand one hundred seventy-seven postal employees, including management. For Letter Carriers within the region: Central Plains – 76; Gateway – 91; Hawkeye – 56; Mid America – 78. Of those carriers who have tested positive, the majority have returned to work at this time. I've seen a large increase in positives in smaller offices over the past month. Be safe and be careful.

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