



April 2021

Business Agent's Report

NALC

National Agreement Ratified – The active members of the NALC have voted to ratify the tentative 2019-2023 National Agreement with the USPS. Ninety-four percent (94%) of participating eligible members voted to approve the agreement, with 60,111 voting to accept and 3,341 to reject. The NALC has notified the USPS. Information on back pay and implementation of the new contract will be posted on the NALC website as soon as possible. The new contract will expire on May 20, 2023.

Next Generation Delivery Vehicle – The Service has announced it has awarded a 10-year contract to Oshkosh Defense to manufacture the NGDV. The first of these new vehicles are tentatively scheduled to be delivered in the summer of 2023. The Service is planning on Oshkosh to produce between 50,000 and 165,000 NGDV's under the contract with the ability to order additional vehicles. They will be right hand drive, fuel efficient gas or gas-electric hybrid powertrains and air conditioning. They are also to have 360-degree cameras, advanced braking and traction control, air bags, front and rear-collision avoidance systems, and increased cargo capacity. As I write this article, there are lawmakers who are raising issues about the contract that was awarded as well as the percentage of electric versus gasoline powered engines. A bill has already been introduced which would award the Service 6 billion dollars for going completely electric...stay tuned! By the way, the front of the NGDV was inspired by a platypus.

Virtual Managed Service Points – While the new agreement will end the practice of letter carriers having to scan MSP's, that doesn't mean the service has given up on them. The USPS has notified the NALC of implementation of VMSP which will provide near real-time data of identified locations and the ability to observe when the locations have been serviced and will include documented time stamps. Scanners will automatically record the information when a carrier gets within 30 feet of the mapped geofence. Unfortunately, the service is hell-bent on watching carriers' every move. While the service has been tracking carriers with their scanners for a long time, this is just further documentation that they don't want humans; they want robots. Perhaps all management personnel should carry scanners and we can see where all the wasted time really is.

Covid Relief Package – The NALC successfully lobbied for two key provisions in the American Rescue Plan that are of critical importance to letter carriers. 1) It establishes an Emergency Federal Employee Leave Fund. It provides up to 600 hours of paid leave for full time (proportionally for part time) and carries forward the same Covid-related reasons for using leave that were included



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in the FFCRA which expired on December 31, 2020 but adds additional reasons such as getting vaccinated. It also contains no 2/3 reduction in pay that the FFCRA had for certain reasons for leave. 2) It contains Workers Compensation language that presumes a positive Covid diagnosis for postal and federal employees as work related. The presumption authorizes benefits for medical, disability and survivor benefits.

LMOU – Local negotiations will begin on April 29, 2021 and will last for thirty days. The Region 5 office will be conducting LMOU virtual training on March 28, 2021 for all branch presidents and their selected negotiators. If you are a branch president and have not received notification by email, please call the office.

Region 5 New Steward Training – Over 150 new stewards and grizzled veterans attended the remote training session on March 7th. While the first part of the training was geared toward new stewards, the second part was on ensuring that those carriers being disciplined for absenteeism are well represented and that stewards are preparing the best grievance files they can should the grievance leave the office.

Retirement Seminar – Repeating an item from last month's article, retired NBA Mike Weir has agreed to conduct a Virtual Seminar on April 11, 2021. In order to attend, you will need to receive an email invitation (normally sent out the week before). Please contact your branch president who will submit your name and email address to me. You may also call the Region 5 office and leave your name, branch, and email address.

Food Drive – The NALC annual food drive is delayed this year. The NALC is committed to holding the event as soon as it is safe to do so and is coordinating with the Postal Service on the possibility of conducting the food drive this fall.

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