



## **The Centennial Sentinel May / June Edition - 2023**

Sisters & Brothers of the COSALC,

Thank you to everyone who attended the COSALC State Convention in Black Hawk. With the election of the new officers and trying to get everything adjusted the May edition of the Sentinel was delayed. We decided to combine both May & June into one edition since the NALC'er will also be coming out in the next few weeks. Look forward to a new edition of the Sentinel in July.

We received more email responses over the past two months and there was a drawing as mentioned. The winner of the \$25 gift card was Fuatai Mataia from Aspen – Branch 6202. We will have a drawing for those that email in reference to this edition, but it will be a surprise on what the prize will be, but it will be worth it. So be sure to email with your responses.

### **How the NALC began..**

1889 -1901, The NALC is born letter carriers had tried to organize a national union at least three times - in 1870 in Washington, DC, in 1877 in New York City, and in 1880 again in New York City. Recognizing that these earlier attempts had failed in part due to the expense of regularly convening enough carriers to sustain a national organization, in 1889 the Milwaukee Letter Carriers Association decided to time their call for another national meeting of carriers to coincide with the annual reunion of the Grand Army of the Republic—an organization of Union Army veterans—so that letter carriers who were veterans could take advantage of reduced train fares.

In issuing the invitation sent to every city delivery post office in the United States, the Milwaukee carriers advised delegates without regulation postal uniforms “to bring a letter of introduction from the postmaster or superintendent” and to bring “credentials from superior officers.” The Milwaukee carriers also set forth a partial agenda for the meeting: “1. The formation of a national organization. 2. Petitioning Congress for an increase of carriers’ salary. 3. Organizing a U.S. Letter Carriers’ Mutual Ins. Co. 4. The pensioning of carriers after continued service of [number to be debated] years. 5. Providing substitute carriers with a fixed salary during their period of probation.” Ironically, **the 60 carriers who answered Milwaukee’s convention call—48 accredited delegates and at least 12 other participants**—were not from the large cities such as Philadelphia and New York that had worked so hard for the passage of the eight-hour law, but primarily from small and middle-sized cities. So, when August Dahlman of Milwaukee called the convention to order on Thursday, August 29, 1889, in the meeting hall above Schaefer’s Saloon at 244 West Water St., delegates elected John J. Goodwin of Providence, Rhode Island, as temporary chairman, perhaps in an effort to balance regional

concerns.

The Reaction - The Post Office Department was shocked when it found out the carriers had organized a union. Resistance followed the shock almost immediately. For example, in St. Louis, as in other cities, all the leaders of the local branch were summarily dismissed, and the branch temporarily disbanded. In some communities, members of the union were brutally forced to work eight hours on and off over a 24-hour period. In other communities, union supporters were given the least desirable routes. The initial response of many carriers when they heard that a national association had been organized was also one of resistance, coupled with suspicion. Generally speaking, carriers from the big cities had not taken part in the first, historic meeting in Milwaukee and they were unsure of how to respond to the so-called "national association." Initially, they remained apart, and, in fact, sent a legislative committee to lobby Congress during the 1889-90 legislative session - as did the new national association.

The battle lines are drawn - once organized, the NALC immediately represented its members in a major confrontation with the Post Office Department. This battle - over the still-controversial eight-hour day - was to be a decisive one for the NALC. The Post Office Department, extremely unhappy with passage in 1888 of the eight-hour law for carriers, openly ignored it for several months. Then the Department adopted a policy of deliberate evasion: It reinterpreted eight hours a day to mean eight hours a day for seven days a week - or 56 hours a week. For example, letter carriers who worked nine hours a day for six days still owed the Department two hours of work on Sunday. This deliberate misreading of the law was enforced throughout the country. But the NALC - with its feet barely on the ground - responded swiftly and forcefully.

To learn more read [Carriers in a Common Cause](#)

"information shared came from carriers in a common cause"

Solidary,  
Bryan Sanders "OB"



## Revolt of the Good Guys

- Newspaper editor asks, "What do we know about the guy in charge of the mailmen."
- Reporter answers, "It's a wildcat strike, workers are in charge."
- Editor questions, "20,000 postal workers don't just march in step. Somebody's leading them find out who."

**Vincent Sombrotto, that's who.** The movie was shown at the NALC National Convention in Chicago in 2022. Vince Sombrotto was a letter carrier at Grand Central Station in New York City, and the 16th president of the NALC between 1978 and 2002. He was born in Manhattan in 1923 to an Italian father and an Irish mother. He played a huge part in the U.S. postal strike of 1970, leading the wildcat strike that shut down post offices across the country and prompted President Richard M. Nixon to call out the National Guard. He helped to expand the union into more than 100 cities and involved more than 200,000 new members. He retired in 2002 and died in 2013 aged 89 at Port Washington, New York.

After watching the trailer and hearing that dialog to a movie "Revolt of the Good Guys" I was asked to watch the movie at the National Convention in Chicago last year. Since then, I've watched this over and over again. When I watch this movie, it burns a fire inside me and keeps me fighting for letter carriers' rights for collective bargaining rights that to this day can be taken away with the swipe of a pen.

I hope this movie helps motivate a new generation of rank-and-file Colorado letter carriers. We have strength as collective bargaining carriers. Please take some time and watch this movie. You can find "The Revolt of the Good Guys" by searching on YouTube. You can search the title itself or search the various videos on the NALC Postal Record channel.

### **2023 Letter Carrier Resource Guide**

Have you logged into the NALC Member's Portal and click the box to get your resource guide mailed to you?



### **Coffee with COSALC**

Have you signed up for Coffee with COSALC yet? What are you waiting for? We have had great success over the past couple of months with great questions during these calls. If you are interested in joining us, we conduct the calls in the morning between 7:00am – 8:00am. If you'd like to participate, please email [coffee@cosalc.org](mailto:coffee@cosalc.org) and you will be added to the list to receive the link and additional updates that are distributed. We've already been addressed on the calls by Region 4 RAA John Robles on several different regional updates and hope to have national officers on future calls. This format is a great way for all of us to be involved from the comfort of our own homes while getting educated and staying updated on information.



Don't forget to check out the website and get more information if you need assistance.

[www.cosalc.org](http://www.cosalc.org)