



# COLORADO STATE NALC'ER

The Official Publication of the Colorado State Association of Letter Carriers

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## President's Report

Greetings Sisters and Brothers,

I want to thank you for all you have done to promote the United States Postal Service. You have done this by being a professional letter carrier. You have done this by delivering America's mail to your customers in a safe and professional manner each and every day. There is no better feeling than knowing that you are appreciated for what and who you are, a Letter Carrier.

In the coming month many of us will be involved in at least one election. Many municipalities will be holding elections. Whether school board, city council, or mayor these elections have probably the greatest impact on your lives. We all need to be educating ourselves on their stance on issues that you care about. Candidates that put labor, our children, and jobs first, need to be considered as viable elected representatives. One of the reasons that electing these candidates is so important is that many of these offices serve as a spring board to higher offices. Offices that one day could be our boss in Congress. Please take this election as serious as you would as a Presidential election, the results could be as influential as one.

Other carriers, active and retired, will be looking at branch elections. We need to look at the Sisters and Brothers who are willing to put themselves out there to represent us and thank each one of them. President to shop steward, trustees to treasurer every position in the union has a role in our work lives. We must participate in how our branches are run. You must vote for those who you believe will guide your branch in the direction that will be best for now and into the future. The decisions that are made today might just affect you later in your career and possibly in your retirement. Take this election serious and vote.



Next month there will be an open season for health insurance. Plans in the Federal Employee Health Benefit Plan (FEHBP) will have the benefits explained and prices set. A booklet will be available for you to peruse. Take the time to compare all the plans but make sure you check out the NALC plans. I think that you will be pleasantly surprised by the coverage and the premiums. You still need to do what is best for your family, but only in a very few cases will the NALC health benefit plan not cover your needs. And CCAs, remember that you no longer will get \$125 to help offset the premiums. The Postal Service will pay 65% if you are in your first year, 75% if you are in the second year. A thank you goes to the negotiating team for our newly ratified National Agreement for this benefit.

Beginning October 16th every branch will be able to open their Local Memorandum of Understanding (LMOU). This document controls 22 aspects of your work day. Article 30 of the National Agreement spells out what these are, parking spaces to rotating or fixed days off, bidding vacations to T-6 assignments, and CCAs being part of the compliance. Your branch officers only have 30 days to get these issues negotiated with a not always willing partner. Please support your negotiating team and thank them for their hard work on your behalf. The days are long and every detail is important, but know that the training that they have received will produce the desired outcome, a benefit for you.

As we all have heard, the items that were found in both the president's and House's budget did not make it into the budget extension. While this is a good thing for the next couple of months, nothing has been settled. Come December we will be worried again that Congress will come after Federal employees, both active and retirees. For those who aren't aware of the threats, here they are:

- Raising federal employees' pension contributions by up to 6.45 percent of pay over the next six years, costing active letter carriers up to \$3,600 per year.
- Eliminating cost-of-living adjustments (COLAs) for current and future retirees under the Federal Employees Retirement System (FERS).
- Reducing COLAs for the Civil Service Retirement System (CSRS) annuitants by one-half of 1 percent (that is, 0.5 percent) each year.
- Reducing CSRS and FERS pension benefits for new retirees by basing annuities on employees' highest average pay over five years (high-5) instead of over three years (high-3).
- Eliminating the annuity supplement that covers the gap for employees who retire under FERS before they qualify for Social Security benefits at age 62.
- Slashing the rate of interest paid on assets invested in the Thrift Savings Plan Government Securities Fund (G Fund), costing active and retired letter carriers alike \$32 billion over 10 years.

## ***President's Report Continued***

- \$46 billion in vaguely defined cuts and revenue changes to the Postal Service, most likely through reducing the frequency of delivery (eliminating Saturday delivery) and scaling back door delivery.

Making the financially independent U.S. Postal Service part of the federal budget—moving it from an “off-budget” status to an “on-budget” status—and potentially opening the agency to across-the-board spending cuts (sequestration) and service disruptions should the federal government shut down during budget conflicts.

These issues do nothing to help balance the budget, only break the backs of Federal workers. And this is from the party that claims it supports America's veterans. While I will be the first to admit that neither party is wholly golden or damning there are some things that should not be subject to partisan politics. Playing with the lives of Federal employees, who have given their life's work to serve our country whether in the armed forces or in civilian services, these “budgetary items” are wrong for America. Please contact your Representatives and tell them to vote no on any bill that harms Federal employees.

Unfortunately we still hear of CCAs being harassed, put down, and unfairly criticized for doing the job. Let us remember that they learned from us, all of us. If they aren't doing the job to our expectations let us look at ourselves and ask what we could do better. Let us remember that carriers taught us, sometimes a very frustrating process. Have patience with them and with each other as we continue the tradition that has been laid out by those who came before us: a tradition of delivering America's mail, in a safe and professional manner.

Take the time to enjoy your family and those things that bring you joy. But also take the time to improve your life, attend a branch meeting, select the right health care, and VOTE!

In Unionity,  
Doug Jaynes

## ***Vice President's Report***

Brothers and sisters

I had the honor to have been nominated and award the position of Vice President for the State Association by acclamation during our state convention in May. I am excited to learn and participate in our State Association and what I can do for our members. I want to continue to provide help to those who need it, and by the same token learn my role in our great Union.



I have had a lot of questions regarding the Conversion Memo; Converting CCAs, and Regulars wanting to transfer. I wanted to touch on both of those here. One of the three MOU's that were renewed on May 28, 2016 included M-01876:

The biggest update to this memo is that residual vacancies are

no longer posted on E-Reassign. This change has sped up the process of CCAs being converted into jobs that went unbid and are now a residual vacancy. There have been thousands of conversions of CCAs under the MOU, there were 7500 CCAs converted from September 2013 to June 2014. That has tripled from June 2014 to now just based on this memo. In addition thousands of transfers were approved, and PTF's were converted leaving roughly 400 or so PTF's nationwide. This is obviously before the new tentative national agreement, which could add more PTF's. Any regular wanting to transfer can and should place their name on E-Reassign which is accessible through Lite Blue.

In some offices, it has been a challenge to get local management to abide by this memo. It is important to file a grievance any time management fails to convert a CCA into a residual vacancy route (no later than the first day of the third full pay period) or take a transfer based on this memo. Filing a grievance currently when it is appealed to step b automatically gets reviewed by the alternate dispute resolution (adr). This is in an attempt to speed up the process of resolving these grievances. What is equally important is if a regular carrier puts in a request to transfer, that management is abiding by the transfer memo in Article 12.6. If a carrier is denied a transfer ensure that they were denied pursuant to the provisions in the transfer memo.

What I have seen is that our local supervisors are denying carriers a transfer based solely on attendance or safety, but yet have do documentary evidence to show these are an actual problem. Management has denied a transfer based solely on a carrier having a low sick leave balance, and a carrier is harmed because they desperately need that transfer. Many don't understand this is an easy grievance to win as the work, attendance and safety records must be considered. The word “and” is what makes the difference. Management fails to read this in most circumstances.

I will continue to work hard to benefit the members of our great state of Colorado. Please don't hesitate to call or ask if you have any questions. As always, it is important to stay informed. Please download the NALC App on your phone and become an E-Activist to get the notifications. With the current budget proposals and bills that are a detriment to us as Federal employees and Postal Workers it is important to take action when we are called upon. Thousands of voices can have a bigger impact over one. Everyone plays an important role in supporting our jobs and benefits.

In Unity  
Danielle Fake-Moorman

## ***Secretary's Report***

Hello Brothers and Sisters,

I would like to first thank the State body for electing me for the Secretary position for the State of Colorado. I will do my best to repay that courtesy by doing my utmost to fulfill the duties of the position to the best of my abilities. The position comes with many responsibilities including typing so bear with me if I make a mistake.

I would like to speak with you all about volunteerism and what we do in our spare time within our own lives. We all have a little free time don't we? A little time to rest, relax, pursue a hobby or expand on a personal skill. It's those personal skills that I would like to speak on. Are you good at a certain thing? For example bowling, computer skills, writing, researching, or math. Skilled people are always needed within our union, but in outside organizations as well. I would encourage everyone to seek these interests out and volunteer. There are so many



worthy causes that can use your help including this union! Whether it's on a station level, branch level, state or national level, we need YOUR help! There are so many things that you can help with, just ask your Branch officers for things that might be in your wheel house. We thrive on the help we get from our brothers and sisters in getting things accomplished! Things like branch functions (picnics, fund raisers, parties, etc.) to being political advocates, to just helping out at your union halls with filing or cleaning or setting up for a function. We love volunteers!

I think personally about the things I do in life every day. Whether its work, home life or hobbies and I always have a little free time. This union has done many things for me in my career, and to give back some time seems a small repayment for the comradery and information I have gleaned from it! Volunteer!

Oh you may have asked why I said Bowling as a skill earlier; well we have our Branch 47 Bowl A Thon October 28th in Denver. Come and Volunteer some time, and yes a little money to help us support MDA. Any questions, please feel free to contact the Branch 47 union hall!

In unity,  
John Woolley

### ***Treasurer's Report***

Greetings Colorado Carriers,

Happy fall everyone! I hope everyone had a great summer and had time to do something fun and exciting. Today I'm going to cover parts of Branch Officers Duties. If you are not a Branch Officer I feel you have a responsibility to know what is going on within the branch. One way to keep informed is to attend the meetings and ask questions.



There are three sections within the Duties that I will try to cover briefly today.

One area is Responsibility. A branch financial officer must have a strong sense of responsibility. He or she is entrusted by the membership with the faithful performance of vital duties: Safeguarding the property of the branch and its members, collecting and disbursing branch funds, accurately recording all financial transactions,

reporting to federal government agencies just to name a few.

There are "fiduciary duties" imposed on union officers by law which are set forth in the LMRDA which provides that union officers must:

1. Hold money and property solely for the benefit of their union and its members;
2. Manage, invest, and disburse funds and property only as authorized by the union's constitution and by-laws or proper resolution of its governing body;
3. Refrain from financial or personal interests which conflict with those of their union; and
4. Account to their union for any profits received from transaction union business.

Another area is Knowledge of Requirements. The business side of leadership is governed by many rules, regulations, and requirements. Branch officers cannot be expected to be an expert on all of these requirements; however, many of them are mandatory.

**The NALC Constitution** - Branch officers are responsible for knowing and following the NALC National Constitution and the NALC Constitution for the Government of Subordinate and federal branches. These documents set forth rules and regulations covering many aspects of the financial officer's functions: Branch membership; collection and expenditure of branch funds; financial reporting to the membership and to the U. S. Department of Labor; bonding of branch officers, and so forth.

**Branch By-laws** - They may specify additional guidelines and duties for branch financial officers and must provide for the branch's dues structure.

**Federal laws** - LMRDA: Requires branches to file certain reports, including annual financial reports with the Department of Labor. Also covers bonding and record keeping requirements.

**Internal Revenue Code** - We are tax exempt but branches must pay employment taxes on salary and lost time payments.

The last area is a careful approach to the job. Branch leaders need both a broad grasp of branch goals and an accountant's eye for accurate detail to manage branch finances and administration successfully. More can be found in the Branch Officer's Guide to Finance and Administration.

On a personal note, if I may. The two recent hurricanes down south created a lot of destruction so please think of your Brothers and Sister and help them if and when you can through PERF. Thanks.

In Unity,  
Leon "Irv" Irvin

### ***Director of Education Report***

Brothers and sisters

It has been a busy summer of training for the state. After our state convention, Fort Collins, Greeley and Longmont jointly held a retirement seminar to educate our members

## Director of Education Report Continued



on preparing for retirement. For a long time, my opinion of the retirement preparation/training provided by the USPS had been low, well, it still is. I am proud of the NALC for seeing the need to provide this valuable information to our members. In August, the COSALC also hosted a retirement seminar. Colorado Springs will be hosting a seminar in October as well.

Formal route inspections are on the rise. One can never have enough information or training on how to prepare for an inspection. Vitally important is the fact that every day you are on your route, treat it as if you are being followed and inspected. By establishing good habits, and yes following safety rules is a good habit, you will have consistency in performing your duties. If you don't have one, request a copy of The 2012 NALC Guide to Route Inspections. If you know route inspections have been scheduled for your office, training is available from the NBA's office.

I have had many carriers say to me "if I turn it off, curb my wheels, use my seat belt and take my keys out, I will never get done." Sadly, these carriers don't understand they are in control of their own safety; safety is a part of our route time. I was once told, "You get paid to follow safety rules."

This is true. I established these habits so long ago they are second nature to me. Along with safety, we must also know how to do our jobs. The M-41 outlines the aspects of everything we do on a daily basis from vehicle checks to depositing our outgoing mail upon returning to the office in the PM. Every day, I read questions on various Facebook pages concerning the basics of how to do our job. Many times, the wrong answer is given. If you are waiting for mail in the morning, take a few minutes to read a couple of pages of the M41.

We must also pass on this valuable information to our CCAs. As new carriers, they depend on us to guide them. Of course, there will be a few who seem to believe all we do is "put the mail in the box." I have found that by being persistent with them, they will eventually start asking more questions. I enjoy seeing CCAs who have been guided by regular carriers do the same with new CCAs. We must continue to provide guidance!

I had the pleasure of attending the Region 4 Rap Session in Sheridan Wyoming in September. The energy and information garnered from these trainings are essential for our members. Of course, one of the highlights will always be the fundraising activities for MDA. Please don't forget our chosen charity and when a coworker approaches you for a donation, please give. Make the time to educate yourself about your job and the legislation that may affect your job. Donate to the Letter Carrier Political Fund and become an e-activist.

In unity  
Jo Schuetz

## Director of Retirees Report

Greetings Brothers and Sisters:

The package to raise the debt ceiling until December 8, 2017 was approved on Capitol Hill. How does this



affect letter carriers? The fiscal year 2018 budget will be hashed out between now and then. Here are some provisions that affect letter carriers and retirees.

1. By reducing CSRS and FERS pension benefits for new retirees by basing annuities on employees highest average pay over five years (high 5) instead of over three years (high 3) which would reduce our monthly income when we retire.

2. By eliminating the annuity supplement that covers the gap for employees who retire under FERS before they qualify for Social Security benefits at the age of 62 which would force us to work longer, so we will be older.

3. By reducing COLA's for CSRS annuitants by 0.5 % each year which would reduce your monthly income when you are retired.

4. By eliminating COLA's for current and future retirees under FERS which would reduce our monthly income when we retire.

5. By slashing the rate of interest paid on assets invested in the TSP, the G Fund to 0% which would reduce our income from the G Fund, costing active and retired letter carriers alike \$32 billion over 10 years.

6. By raising federal employees' pension contributions by up to 6.45% of pay over the next 6 years, costing active letter carriers up to \$3,600/year. Pay cut for working carriers.

7. By cuts to the USPS of \$46 billion in revenue changes, most likely through eliminating Saturday delivery and door to door delivery. This affects 1/2 of the letter carriers.

8. By making the financially independent USPS part of the federal budget-moving it from an "off-budget" status to an "on-budget" status and potentially opening the agency to across the board spending cut and service disruptions should the federal government shut down during budget conflicts.

Please be advised, the proposed budget is NOT good for letter carriers or the future of the USPS. There are three resolutions that are good for letter carriers and the future of the USPS.

1. HRES 31-115: Expressing the sense of the House of Representatives that the USPS should take all appropriate measures to restore service standards in effect as of July 1, 2012. (has 199 co-sponsors)

2 . HRES 28-115: Expressing the sense of the House of Representatives that the USPS should take all appro-

appropriate measures to ensure the continuation of door delivery for all business and residential customers. (has 240 co-sponsors).  
3. HRES 15-115: Expressing the sense of the House of Representatives that the USPS should take all appropriate measures to ensure the continuation of its 6-day mail delivery service. (Has 232 co-sponsors). The magic number of co-sponsors is 218 for the bill to pass.

So brothers and sisters what can we do to help our futures?

1. Donate to the Letter Carrier Political Fund (LCPF) to help save our jobs and retirement.
2. Download the NALC app on your cellphone or device to keep up with what is going on.
3. Call your elected representatives when alerted by NALC to do so, from app.
4. Volunteer when possible for phone banks/precinct walks.

In solidarity:  
DeeAnn Lowry

### **Executive Board Reports**

Brothers and Sisters

Have you been injured on the job?

CCAs and on-the-job injuries.

Who cares for injured carriers .....The NALC does!

Getting injured on the job is no picnic. The complex procedures for filing a claim, getting it accepted and receiving treatment needed to return to work leaves many workers frustrated. The



system is slow, tedious and often dispiriting. City carrier assistants (CCAs), may have the most difficulties in getting the right information to help with OWCP claims. The nature of on-the-job injuries often separates injured workers from the workplace.

CCAs should not feel intimidated in exercising their rights when injured on the job. Report any injury immediately to your supervisor and request a CA-1, COP (continuation of pay) and CA-16, (authorization for Examination and/or Treatment) if you need medical attention. Shop stewards and branch officers can assist injured CCAs or call your National Business Agent's office. The Postal Service has no obligation to inform you about your rights until after a job-related injury. As a CCA, you are protected under the Federal Employees' Compensation Act (FECA), which provides benefits for federal employees who are injured on duty.

The NALC is committed to helping injured members with their on the job injuries. If you don't know who your steward is, ask a fellow carrier or you can contact your local branch or NBA's (national business agents) office. The NALC is committed to ensuring that every injured letter carrier receives his or her rights when injured on the job.

In some offices, there is an unfortunate but pervasive sentiment that probationary employees should never report on-the-job injuries because it will lead to immediate separation without recourse. While it is true

that employees in a probationary period of 90 or 120 days have no standing to file grievances protesting separations, employees who are intimidated, discouraged, denied, or separated after reporting an on-the-job injury have the right to file an Occupational Safety and Health Act (OSHA) complaint within 30 days.

The Postal Service is required to tell the injured worker that they have the right to choose their doctor. Some postal districts have contracts with medical clinics to provide initial evaluations of injured workers. If the Postal Service sends you to a contract doctor for your initial evaluation, you should request a CA-16 to see your own doctor. As there is only one CA-16 issued per claim, a CA-16 should not be issued to a

postal contract doctor. While an injured worker must allow the contract doctor to evaluate them, the contract doctor is not allowed to treat the injured worker without the injured worker's approval. There is no obligation to return to the contract doctor after the initial visit. Injured workers usually receive better treatment when they see their own doctor for job-related injuries. For more info:

[www.nalc.org/workplace-issues/injured-on-the-job](http://www.nalc.org/workplace-issues/injured-on-the-job)  
OSHA hotline at 202-693-2199, [www.dol.gov/owcp/](http://www.dol.gov/owcp/)

NBA, Region 4 Office 1018 Airport Road, Suite 116  
Hot Springs, AR 71913-4626  
501-760-6566

In Unity,  
Jeffrey Frey

Brothers and Sisters

The Occupational Safety and Health Act of 1970 is a US labor law governing the federal law of occupational health and safety that was brought on by the federal government to ensure workplace health and safety because the standards were minimal until the passage of OSHA. The American system of mass production encouraged the use of machinery, while the statutory regime did nothing



to protect workplace safety. For most employers, it was cheaper to replace a dead or injured worker than it was to introduce safety measures. The USPS employees were brought under OSHA jurisdiction in September 1998 when the President signed the Postal Employees Safety Enhancement Act. Under the act, Congress allowed states to either assert jurisdiction over USPS sites or allow OSHA to cover the facilities. Why the USPS?

The answer is simple, because the USPS employs many postal workers and the workers are at risk of injury in a variety of capacities. Your safety is important and knowing some of the places to find information on the who, what, when, where,

## Executive Board Reports Continued

and why is just as important. Here are some of the books to look in: ELM Section 8 Safety, Health, and Environment; Postal Employee's Guide to Safety Handbook EL-814; Handbook EL-801 Supervisor's Safety Handbook; M- 41; M-39, JCAM. And speaking of the JCAM, section 14.2 The Employer and the Union insist on the observance of safe rules and safe procedures by employees and insist on correction of unsafe conditions. Mechanization, vehicles and vehicle equipment, and the work place must be maintained in a safe and sanitary condition, including adequate occupational health and environmental conditions.

The Employer shall make available at each installation forms to be used by employees in reporting unsafe and unhealthful conditions. That form is the PS Form 1767 and it requires management to answer the problem. Finally, I'll leave you with this from JCAM 41.3.i: Although there have been no significant Step 4 settlements or arbitration awards interpreting Article 41.3.I, it is wise to bear in mind how arbitrators have generally approached the question of whether employees are justified for refusing to work in a particular place or in a particular fashion because of what the employee believes are unsafe conditions.

First, there is the "iron rule" stating that an employee must "obey now and grieve later." Second, there is a narrow exception to that rule which permits an employee to disobey where he or she has a reasonable or good-faith belief that to obey would cause imminent danger to life or limb. A mere belief that a safety hazard exists is usually insufficient reason to disobey an order.

Stay union strong and "OB" is out

### Brothers and Sisters

Summer is over and the shorter days are already here. It's getting dark earlier and earlier, it will be a welcome change and we will be complaining about winter soon. Carriers will need more time to deliver in the dark; those times are not included in DOIS. Stand your ground and don't let management push you into an unrealistic commitment or to go at an unsafe speed. It takes what it takes, make sure you take that extra time to avoid an accident.



More than a quarter of the accidents in Colorado involve carriers with less than 2 years on the job. Safety captains at each station are supposed to be holding weekly mentor meetings with our less than 2-year carriers. This should take place off the workroom floor where you would be able to speak freely and have any concerns addressed with local management. Each of the stations have a volunteer or maybe a voluntold safety captain. There's a few places that haven't had anyone step up to the plate. If you are interested in becoming a safety captain, talk to your steward.

Recently I had a carrier come to me after having an accident. They went to management to inform them of the incident

and management asked, "that's a lot of paperwork, you sure you want to report that?" Yer Darn Tootin I Do, would probably have been my answer, well, maybe not exactly how I would phrase it, but you get the idea. Now the carrier has a letter of warning, one hundred percent unacceptable. Now that station manager has five grievances to contend with. Do your best not to have an accident, but never let management intimidate you into not reporting an accident. It is managements responsibility to provide a safe work environment. Please don't allow yourself or your fellow carriers to work in an unsafe manner.

I believe we've made huge progress in the safety area and I know we could always do better. One of my duties is to sit in on the quarterly safety meetings in Colorado Springs. Only a few years ago, there would be four or five pages of accidents just here, and now, we are down to one page for the entire city. Excellent job everyone. No one ever says, I think I'll roll my ankle or trip on the busted sidewalk today, accidents will and do happen. I don't want to sound like management here. At the end of the day, I would like to see all our Brothers and Sisters go home to their loved ones in one piece.

Winning and losing. Winning is always great. Losing, well that just really kinda sucks, especially when it comes to filing grievances. We get a lot of whining from management about how we always win everything, I wish we did, that would be awesome. We lose one here and there and well, it still sucks. Really, it's not about we won, or they lost. It's about correcting a wrong whether it's a violation of hours worked, not worked, minimizing or expunging discipline. Whatever the issue is, doesn't matter. It's about making the carrier whole, what the carrier should have gotten if things were done right in the first place. "Winning"

### Keep fighting the good fight

Mark Robbins

### Hello Brothers and Sisters

My name is Stephanie LaFave-Kiel and I am a relatively new employee of the Postal Service having less than four years of service to the Postal Service. I was hired by the Post Office on June 14th 2014 as a City Carrier Assistant at the Old Town Station in Fort Collins. I was very lucky as I had joined the Post Office at a time when there were many regular carriers retiring and I was hired on as an Unassigned Regular City Carrier on June 21st 2015. Though I was already a dues paying union member from day one, I already knew



I wanted to take on a bigger role in the National Association of Letter Carriers and was granted the opportunity to be an Informal A Shop Steward for the Fort Collins Old Town Station.

My mentor is NALC Branch 849 President Danielle Fake-Moorman to whom I am very grateful. In October of 2015 I was awarded a Carrier Technician Position that was split between both the Old Town and Main Fort Collins Offices which then allowed me to become the Informal A Shop

Steward for the entire Fort Collins installation. Shortly after that I was nominated and voted in as NALC Branch 849's Vice President. At the State Convention earlier this year I was nominated and voted in as an Executive Board Member as Branch Liason to Fort Collins Branch 849 and Longmont Branch 1105.

Having been a City Carrier Assistant I take a particular interest in the new CCA's hired on at the Post Office. Each and every carrier whether they are regular carriers who have been with us for 30 plus years or are a brand new CCA just coming through the door for their first day of work has great potential and value and are a brother or sister to each one of us. This is a trying time to be working at the post office. Preparing to meet the continuing challenges by presenting a unified front, educating ourselves and donating to the Letter Carrier Political Fund are essential. I urge every Letter Carrier to look around and think of how they can help each other. Do not be discouraged if you are a CCA, there are plenty of projects and activities you can be a part of. It is never too early or late to take a more active role. MDA, Safety and officer positions are available and there is no shortage of excellent training to do these jobs right.

If you have not done so yet, download the NALC phone app. This is an excellent source of information and you can tailor it to your particular needs or interests. Keeping a close eye on what is happening legislatively is a must. These are real issues that can and will affect your life and career. Many bills are harmful to you and the post office such as the elimination of door to door delivery and eliminating Saturday delivery etc. Each and every one of us has the ability to fight these bills and make a difference. It's as simple as donating to the Letter Carrier Political Fund.

In unity  
Stephanie LaFave

#### Brothers and Sisters

First things first, I would like to thank those who nominated me as well as all of you who elected me to the Executive Board at the State Convention back in May. I will assure you that I will do my best to represent you, all of you as well as bringing in my abilities, ideas, and experiences in order to create a stronger, more unified front.

Please allow me to give everyone a little background about myself. I'm currently a proud member of Branch 204 located in Colorado Springs area where I'm a Shop Steward at Antares Station (80909). I started my career in 1998 where I was hired as a PTF in Wheatridge Colorado, it also happens to be where my grandfather once had held the position of Union President at that location many years prior. I come from a very strong union family where fighting for others that may not fight for themselves is just something we do. Growing up my mother was an Organizer Director for United Food and Commercial Worker Local 7 (UFCW) which many of you may recognize have partnered with the NALC during our



Stamp Out Hunger Food Drive.

In 2000 I transferred to Colorado Springs and the world of politics was opened up for me. Beginning as a Street Level Activist I quickly learned that politics controls all of our lives whether we're involved or not, challenge accepted. I had the good fortune of meeting some of the right people who knew the ins and outs, the procedures and protocols of politics. Once I understood the rules of the game I found myself as a Registered Lobbyist, teaching classes at the State Capital on how to lobby effectively. In doing so I started speaking to groups from the Occupy Movement to the Tea Partiers which believe it or not have more similarities then one might think.

Being on the Executive Board and speaking with many around the south and south west side of our state I've found that there seems to be a commonality amongst many of us regardless of the different locations we're all from, a frustration with managements selective enforcement of the contract, MOU's, handbooks and manuals. I would like to thank all the stewards out there for the job they do, the time they spend and the effort they put in helping to educate others as well as maintaining a functional office. As we all know, there are some areas that are easier than others, yet the stewards are working tirelessly to do their part. Those that aren't in the trenches fighting for what is right may not understand how frustrating and un-motivating it can be to not feel supported. Many are out there speaking up about multiple decisions that have come back from the Step B team and let me say we're much more effective when we're all on the same page. Having the ultimate goal of a strong, effective union statewide all members and representatives must stand up for what is right regardless of how hard it maybe.

I personally want to make it my mission to ensure our members feel like we here at the State Association of Letter Carriers are doing our part. If any member at any level aren't feeling the support or getting the answers they're looking for please feel free to contact me and I'll see what I can do in the interest of unifying all our brothers and sisters.

Together we stand,  
Chris Nixon  
Executive Board ChrisNixon@Cosalc.org  
719-421-9669 (preferably text)

#### Brothers & Sisters,

While I was doing a research project, I came across an article from one of our previous branch presidents. Val Sewald wrote this article in 2006 for our local branch newsletter and it still fits to what we are dealing with today. Thank you for all of your hard work through the years. She still continues to work at the Greeley Downtown Station and works every day to strengthen our union. "Would you please write a statement for me?"



*How many times have you heard this*

## **Executive Board Reports Continued**

question? How many times did you write one? This is one of our biggest weapons against management. It is also turning out to be one of the hardest things to get. Why is this? Is it because everyone gets along with management? Is it because everyone is treated respectfully by management? If the answer to either one of these questions is no, then where are the statements. I have been asking everyone to keep your eyes and ears open. If management is talking DOIS numbers with your case neighbor and trying to tell them how much their route is under today, try to listen to what is being said. Be a witness. If you see someone having a disagreement with management, stop and be a witness. I can almost guarantee you that sometime within your postal career, you will need a fellow carrier to stand up for you because of some disagreement with management. Are you willing to do that for your fellow carrier? If not, then don't expect it when you need it. Someone suggested to me that the reason carriers don't write statements is because they don't want management to think they are a bad employee. I don't believe that a carrier is a bad employee when they demand that management live by the contract that we have negotiated. I don't believe that a carrier is a bad employee when they demand to be treated with dignity and respect. If we don't stand up for ourselves, then management will continually walk right over us and right over the contract. The other reason that carriers don't write statements is that they just don't want to get involved. Well, if your job is carrying mail then you are involved, and you must be involved. Everything that happens on the workroom floor could eventually happen to you. Apathy is one of our worst enemies. We have to stand guard against it. We are going up against management that will test us, but I know that we will prevail. We must stick together and watch out for each other. Your union officers are busy working hard to see that your rights under our contract are not violated. They are the example that we should try to emulate. They are willing to stand up for you, are you willing to stand up for you, too?

Are you willing to be a witness? Are you willing to write a statement for something you observed that happened to a CCA who is still on probation? It's time to stand together, not off to the side observing the violation!

In solidarity,  
Richard Byrne  
Executive Board  
richardbyrne@cosalc.org

Dear Friends

It seems like the months have just flown by. I have had a very busy summer as I am sure, most of you have. The State President Doug Jaynes will be appointing a new LCCL for CD 6; Adam Fung is a 5996 Branch member. I am so proud to have such energetic talent in my branch. The Scholarship Fund gave out 4 Scholarships totaling \$5500.00. I feel blessed to be able to help our members and their families in this way. The State President and I have been working a message for a postcard writing campaign that we hope to kick off very soon. We will

try to visit as many branches as we can to hand deliver cards, and the rest we will mail off. It is imperative that we make our voices heard in Washington DC, so please participate in this activity. I have enjoyed serving the State Association of Letter Carriers as the Congressional Liaison, and Scholarship Chair; thank you all for your help  
Respectfully submitted

Jacqueline Skene

### **2017 COSALC Scholarship Winners**

Britt Wren University of Montana Branch 229 Pueblo  
Madison Lofthus Pikes Peak Community College Branch 204  
Colorado Springs  
Clayton Lowry Studying Abroad Branch 903 Grand Junction  
Christopher Spreng UNC Milehigh Branch 47

## **LCCL Reports**

### **CDI Diana Degette**

Jon Perkins, Br. 5996, and I met with Representative Diana DeGette's staffers Michele Hernandez and Mathew Mengesha on August 10 2017 to discuss the purposed 2018 budget and to ask Representative DeGette to ask Congress to reject the White House's FY2018 budget proposals and how harmful the purposed budget would be to letter carriers and all federal employees.

Key point discussed with Michele and Mathew:

- Raising federal employees' pension contributions by up to 6.45 percent of pay over the next six years, costing active letter carriers up to \$3,600 per year.
- Eliminating cost-of-living adjustments (COLAs) for current and future retirees under the Federal Employees Retirement System (FERS).
- Reducing COLAs for the Civil Service Retirement System (CSRS) annuitants by 0.5 percent each year.
- Reducing CSRS and FERS pension benefits for new retirees by basing annuities on employees' highest average pay over five years (high-5) instead of over three years (high-3).
- Eliminating the annuity supplement that covers the gap for employees who retire under FERS before they qualify for Social Security benefits at age 62.
- Slashing the rate of interest paid on assets invested in the Thrift Savings Plan Government Securities Fund (G Fund), costing active and retired letter carriers alike \$32 billion over 10 years.
- \$46 billion in revenue changes and vaguely defined cuts to the Postal Service, most likely through reducing the frequency of delivery (eliminating Saturday delivery) and scaling back door delivery.
- Making the financially independent U.S. Postal Service part of the federal budget moving it from an "off-budget" status to an "on-budget" status and potentially opening the agency to across-the-board spending cuts and service disruptions should the federal government shut down during budget conflicts.

Letter carriers must not let their guard down, these budget

threats are very real. All letter carriers as well as family members, friends and neighbors need to contact representatives in the House and Senate now and through Dec. 8. Your legislators need to know that their voters object to slashing the incomes of active and retired letter carriers (and all federal employees) and to gutting the services and vital networks of the U.S. Postal Service. Download the NALC Member app. enter your home ZIP code when asked. Go to "Gov't Affairs" at the bottom of the screen. Under "My congressional directory" are links to your House and Senate representatives.

Thank you, Brothers and Sisters,  
Jeffrey Frey, Br. 47

### ***CD2 Jared Polis***

The negotiations that will be happening over the next few months in Washington give us another example of how decisions made by our government have the potential to directly affect our members in the pocketbook and why we need to pay attention. Thanks to the hard work done by our union at the national level we now have a new contract, which among other things gives us the raises that we deserve and have earned.

When leaders from Congress and the White House sit down to come up with a budget for the coming year there are a variety of proposals being suggested that all have one thing in common. They come up with money to fund the government by taking it away from us. They all chip away at the raise we thought we had just bargained for. As one example, there is a proposal to increase the amount that that we contribute for our pension each pay period, which would reduce our take home pay by a corresponding amount. It could amount to up to \$3,600 a year. In exchange for that we would get nothing.

There are other proposals to reduce cost-of-living adjustments (COLAs) for some of the present retirees and to eliminate them entirely for future retirees. The people who will decide whether or not that happens are the ones we elect to serve in our government. Our union has set up the Letter Carrier Political Fund (LCPF) to allow members to choose to send a small portion of their pay to back candidates for office who understand and are supportive of our concerns.

I met shortly after Labor Day with the member of Congressman Polis's staff who deals with labor issues. I went over the issues mentioned above with her, as well as some other topics.

In unity  
Phil Wickman

### ***CD4 Ken Buck***

Brothers and Sisters of the COSALC,

The heat is on and so are the attacks on letter carriers from the current administration in Washington, D.C. President Trump has presented his fiscal budget resolution for FY 2018 and it isn't friendly towards our cause across the country as well as Colorado.

It is once again time for letter carriers across Colorado to

come together and continue to let their representatives in Congress know that we don't support the Trump budget resolution and they shouldn't either. We can't just sit on the sidelines and not take action on this proposed budget. How can you help? That is a great question.

Call the Capitol switchboard at 202-224-3121 and be ready to provide your ZIP code to get connected with your House representative and with both of your senators.

Say:

"As a voter from [your district/your state], I urge you to oppose any budget resolution or any spending bill that calls for pay and benefit cuts for letter carriers, postal employees and federal employees or that attacks the vital services provided by the Postal Service."

Mention how such cuts would affect you personally. Explain the potential harm a "yes" vote would mean for you, your family members, your co-workers and USPS.

We don't have time to rest. Just take a deep breath and come together as brothers and sisters to fight for the cause. If you have any questions or need information please contact me so we can get those materials to you.

In Unity,  
Richard Byrne  
CD4 Liaison

### ***CD 5 Doug Lamborn***

Greetings from Congressional District 5

Many of you know Congressman Doug Lamborn (R) has and coming election season in order to capture his 7th. It isn't much of a surprise that Congressman Lamborn has not been receptive to the efforts of the NALC in regards to backing and securing the longevity of the United States Postal Service and its employees, us. As someone who has been directly involved with politics for more than a decade I've learned a few things.

First, get involved! I know, I know "I hate politics" yeah well, welcome to the crowd because no one really likes politics but it is a necessary evil. If politicians (from both parties) had our best interest in mind everyone could safely find something else more enjoyable to do with their time. Second, if you find yourself with a politician that isn't a "friend" to your cause, that can't be reasoned with you may want to find yourself an "enemy" to your opposing politician.

Which bring me to my recent actions regarding Rep. Lamborn, I've reached out to those who are challenging Rep. Lamborn for his seat in the upcoming election. Given that this is a fairly safe district for Republicans (as of Sept. 1st 2017 registered Republicans outnumber registered Democrats 2 to 1 on the active voter rolls) and the NALC isn't likely to get a welcoming hand from any of them. A welcoming hand would be nice but in the world of politics a hand that isn't looking to do you harm can be just as beneficial. Abstaining from votes or making moves to amend legislation can be considered a success and in CD5 it truly would be. I will continue to search for our "cheerleader" but will be happy to find an enemy of our enemy.

For those of you who live in CD5, interested

## ***LCCL Reports Continued***

in or have questions regarding politics please feel free to contact me.

Chris Nixon

### ***CD 6 Mike Coffman***

My name is Adam Fung of NALC Branch 5996. I am very happy to be appointed by our State President Doug Jaynes to be the Letter Carrier Congressional Liaison for CD6. Originally, Jackie Skene was the Letter Carrier Congressional Liaison for CD6. I do have some big shoes to fill because I always admired Jackie Skene for her knowledge. I am currently the shop steward for USPS Hoffman Heights Station in Aurora, CO. I served the National Ballot Committee for the ratification of 2016-2019 National Agreement. I have been getting involved with a lot of volunteering dealing with government affairs outside the NALC with my fellow letter carrier and active NALC member John Perkins. Being appointed to be Letter Carrier Congressional Liaison gives me the opportunity to do more for my letter carriers. I will work closely with State President Doug Jaynes to discuss legislation issue with Mike Coffman and his staff that would affect letter carriers. It is a fantastic honor to be appointed this position and I am looking forward to my first meeting with Mike Coffman and/or staff.

Adam Fung  
CD6

### ***CD 7 Ed Perlmutter***

After being recently appointed the LCCL for district 7, I must admit that my nerves were on high when our State President Doug Jaynes called me to set up an initial meeting between the two of us and my representative, Ed Perlmutter. I just very recently have two years of experience as a career letter carrier, let alone as a "Congressional Liaison," and like most people who have little experience with politics, the whole concept was big, foreign, and scary.

Most of those feelings went away when we were met with a warm smile from Ed's office staff. I am extremely lucky that Ed is already very supportive of postal politics. I owe much of that to those who came before me, and for that I am very grateful. I had the opportunity to meet Ed that day and I introduced myself as a proud member of the NALC.

Since that time, Ed has announced his run for reelection of his congressional seat. I support him as he supports us wholeheartedly.

I have many, many years left in my postal career. That fact alone makes me very invested in the longevity and health of both our employer and our union. The midterm elections will be very important for all of us. I encourage all of you to step out of your comfort zone, as I did, and do a bit of homework. Seek out candidates who support your rights, wages, and benefits. This will in turn support you, your families, your future.

I look forward to doing more work with Ed, and to working for all of you!

Kati Brock

## ***2016-2019 Contract Ratification Report***

Brothers and Sisters of the COSALC

I was given a fantastic opportunity to be appointed to serve on the NALC Ballot Committee for the ratification of the 2016-2019 National Agreement. The Ballot Committee was made up of 15 NALC members from different branches and regions. I was chosen by NALC Headquarters to represent Branch 5996 out of Aurora, CO in Region 4. The reason for this Ballot Committee was to observe and monitor the dispatch, receipt, and tabulation of the 2016-2019 National Agreement between the USPS and NALC. All active NALC members received a ballot to accept or reject the 2016-2019 National Agreement (retirees did not receive a ballot).

Before I went to Washington, D.C., I attended the 2017 National Rap Session in Atlantic City, New Jersey that was held for NALC Branch and State Leaders. I was there representing Branch 5996. The purpose of the Rap Session was to educate NALC Branch and State Leaders about the 2016-2019 National Agreement. While I read the language of the Agreement, attending the Rap Session enlightened me on some of the document's finer points. President Rolando answered many questions pertaining to the National Agreement. When this part of the session was drawing to a conclusion, he gave an inspiring speech about legislation that would hurt us as federal employees and encouraged us to stay involved which inspired me to go above and beyond as an active NALC member.

After the Rap Session I took a train to Washington, D.C., for week one of the process of mailing ballots for the 2016-2019 National Agreement. Day One took place at NALC Headquarters, where we all introduced ourselves to one another. The Ballot Committee for the new contract was a very diverse group. It was made up of branch leaders, state presidents, shop stewards, and a carrier who was not yet an active NALC member. We had a meeting at NALC Headquarters with President Rolando, along with others who were overseeing the ratification process of the new contract. Joe De Rossi, who represented Region 15, served as our ballot committee chair.

After the meeting we went to the station where the ballots were being assembled. Each envelope contained the 2016-2019 National Agreement booklet, a business reply envelope, a secret envelope, a tentative agreement summary, a letter from President Rolando, and most importantly the ballot which gave each union member the choice of accepting or rejecting the new language proposed in the new contract. The ballot committee was there to observe and make sure everything went according to plan. Every day it was 12 hours of hard work. The fact there were many items in one envelope did cause some malfunctions with the machines which were quickly corrected. It took over a week to get the ballots put together and mailed to all NALC members. Once we made sure the ballots were mailed properly, we all flew home and three weeks later we came back for tabulations of the ballots.

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### ***2016-2019 Contract Ratification Continued***

After arriving back in D.C., we were informed that we would be working 14 hours each day. We split the Ballot Committee into two groups and each group monitored the ballot tabulation for seven hours. The workers who were counting the ballots worked 7-8 hour shifts.

Concerns about the ballots involved how the business reply envelopes had a space on which everyone had to write their name, address, and branch number. So the members believed that everyone would find out how they voted, which was not the case because each worker opened the business reply envelope, took out the secret ballot, and put the business reply envelope aside. Then the workers opened the secret ballot envelopes, took out the ballots, and put them in a pile. The secret ballot envelope was discarded. For smaller branches the ballot is counted by hand but for bigger branches it was counted by a machine.

After arriving back in D.C., we exercised more discretion and critical thinking than the first time we were there. For example, if there was a ballot on which the union member marked both "I accept" or "I reject," we as a ballot committee would make a decision on whether to void it or not. If the ballot looked like a simple mistake, where it looked like the voter changed his or her mind from "I reject" to "I accept" - or vice versa - we as a ballot committee would make the decision on what the voter's intentions were at the time. Each branch has a large envelope; after the workers counted the ballots for a particular branch, the business reply envelopes and ballots were put in the envelope and the Ballot Committee sealed the deal by the signing the front of the envelope. I signed quite a few envelopes and on the last day of the count I signed off on the final few branches that were counted. In the end, it was a landslide victory for the proposed 2016-2019 National Agreement.

It was a great experience to serve in the National Ballot Committee for the 2016-2019 National Agreement. Watching the whole process was a great learning experience for me. I have met 14 other amazing letter carriers who served in the Ballot Committee. I learned a lot from all of them and I have kept in contact with them. I hope to see all of them again soon. Seeing the final numbers for votes of the 2016-2019 National Agreement was historical for me. I would like to say thank you to NALC Region 4 RAA John Robles and President Fredric Rolando for giving me this fantastic opportunity to serve in the Ballot Committee for 2016-2019 National Agreement.

In unity  
Adam Fung

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By making a contribution to the Letter Carrier Political Fund, you are doing so voluntarily with the understanding that your contribution is not a condition of membership in the National Association of Letter Carriers or of employment by the Postal Service, nor is it part of union dues. You have a right to refuse to contribute without any reprisal. The Letter Carrier Political Fund will use the money it receives to contribute to candidates for federal office and undertake other political spending as permitted by law. Your selection shall remain in full force and effect until cancelled. Contributions to the Letter Carrier Political Fund are not deductible for federal income tax purposes. Federal law prohibits the Letter Carrier Political Fund from soliciting contributions from individuals who are not NALC members, executive and administrative staff or their families. Any contribution received from such an individual will be refunded to that contributor. Federal law requires us to use our best efforts to collect and report the name, mailing address, occupation and name of employer of individuals whose contributions exceed \$200 per calendar year. Any guideline amount is merely a suggestion, and an individual is free to contribute more or less than the guideline suggests and the Union will not favor or disadvantage anyone by reason of the amount of their contribution or their decision not to contribute.

### A Note from the Editor

The mailing list for the NALC'er is updated several times a year from a list provided by the NALC or from returned copies of the NALC'er. If your address is incorrect or if you know a member who is not receiving (or a non-memer who shouldn't receive) the NALC'er, please contact me. The NALC'er is published 2-3 times yearly by the Colorado State Association of the NALC. The opinions expressed in this paper are not necessarily those of the Editor, the Colorado State NALC'er or the COSALC. In addition, I appreciate any input from the members of the COSALC concerning the quality and layout of the COSALC NALC'er. If anyone has photos or suggested content for future articles, please don't hesitate to contact me.

Respectfully,  
Jo Schuetz  
Editor, COSALC NALC'er