



WAKE UP!

President/ Editor
Daniel P. Wheeler

Publisher
Joseph E. Stearns

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Acton , Amesbury , Andover , Bedford , Beverly , Billerica , Burlington , Chelmsford , Concord , Danvers, Dracut , Gloucester, Haverhill, Holliston, Ipswich, Lawrence, Lowell, Lynnfield, Manchester, Marblehead, Maynard, Merrimac, Newburyport, North Chelmsford, North Reading , Peabody, Reading, Rockport, Salem , South Hamilton, Sudbury , Tewksbury , Topsfield, Wakefield , Wayland , Wilmington , Winchester



Branch 25 delegates at the 2026 NALC convention in Los Angeles.

President's Message

"If you think you're being watched, it's because you are!"

There is no doubt that our jobs as letter carriers have changed tremendously over the years. One of the most apparent changes is how management can see what we are doing out there on the street. When I started my career 31 years ago, we didn't have barcodes or scanners. If management wanted to know what a letter carrier was doing out there on their route, they had to go out and see it with their own eyes. That has slowly changed over the years. Carriers who have been around for a bit will remember the first few generations of scanners we had, which were fairly primitive compared to the technology we use today. The first scanners we used had to be docked into a docking station at the end of the day to transmit the data they collected. At one point, we had scanners paired with a flip-style cell phone. We had to carry both, and the scanner transmitted data via the cell phone, which usually died before the end of the day if you were working overtime.

It's been about 10 years since we've been using a version of what the Postal Service refers to as the Mobile Delivery Device (MDD). These devices transmit real-time scanning data and provide the user's exact location via GPS data. In the last few years, we have seen the Geotab devices that transmit all kinds of vehicle data, including the Driver Seatbelt Exceptions Report, which shows management when the vehicle's seatbelt isn't connected while the vehicle is moving. Management loves these things because they let them watch us with less effort on their part. We have been successful in winning grievances based on management relying solely on these, but there are more eyes on us than ever.

This additional surveillance we face on the job mirrors the additional eyes on us in the real world, too. You used to expect that businesses would have some sort of camera system, either outside or inside. With the advances in technology over the last few years, homeowners and individuals can easily set up a wireless camera pretty much anywhere now. There is no solid data on how many of these cameras, often referred to as Ring cameras, are out there. Ring sells millions of cameras every year, so whatever the number is, it's big.

Many of you have also heard a lot in the news lately about Flock cameras. Like Ring cameras, Flock cameras are Automatic License Plate Recognition (ALPR) cameras, and Flock happens to be the largest and most popular brand by far. There were about 500 of these in the country in 2023, and now, in 2026, there are an estimated 120'000 of these cameras nationwide. I won't get too far into my personal thoughts on the usage of these cameras here. I will say that when I hear of towns or cities canceling their contracts or turning off these cameras, it doesn't make me sad.

I talk about all of this to show just how much we are being watched out there, both by our employer and in general. As I said earlier, it's a different postal world than the one I entered when I started. Back then, management mostly operated on the idea that if you got the job done and didn't give management any reason to need to come looking for you, they would most likely leave you alone. That couldn't be further from the truth now. We are at the point now where carriers are called in and questioned about why they didn't move for minutes or even seconds in some instances. If management alleges a carrier misdelivered a parcel, they have pictures and GPS data printed out. We have had discipline issued based on the seatbelt report without management ever laying eyes on the carrier.

Assume you are not only being watched, but probably recorded out there on your route or while you are in public because you probably are! In the last few months, we have had multiple instances of carriers in the branch caught doing things they shouldn't be doing on camera. I hope everyone out there is doing the right thing every day, whether or not they think they are being watched. A stupid or careless thing a carrier may have done years ago that went unnoticed is now likely to show up on a recording somewhere.

Management has more tools than ever, making their supervision of us easier than ever. A supervisor nowadays doesn't even need to leave their chair at their desk to know where we are or what we're doing. We have to fight management's ridiculous attacks on our "standing time" because they fail to follow their contractual obligations for street supervision. Please don't give them opportunities to issue discipline because you're clearly shown in a recording doing something wrong. Remember, as George Orwell said in his novel *Nineteen Eighty-Four*, "Big Brother is watching you"

I hope everyone had a great summer, and I look forward to seeing you at the branch meetings again!

In Solidarity,

Dan Wheeler

Calendar of Events

Sept 7	Labor Day
Sept 8	Regular Branch Meeting
	K of C Wilmington 8:00PM
	Food served at 7:15 PM
Sept 12	Rosh Hashanah
Sept 13	Grandparents' Day
Sept 21	Yom Kippur
Sept 22	First Day of Autumn

Executive Vice-President's Message

Exec VP Wakeup September 2026

As I write this, we are getting close to the end of August. Prime time vacation is still going on in most stations throughout September and October so we will still be busy covering vacant routes. If you are eligible to bid on a hold-down, continue to look for what is available in your office. Hold-downs are not limited to prime time only. As for this writing, we have not been notified of any upcoming route inspections in the branch, although that could change but it is not anticipated for the Fall. There have been a lot of managers performing 3999s for the last couple of months throughout the branch. I reviewed one recently that was not even close to being done correctly, but don't think these will be used for anything other than management following instructions of their superiors. The only function of Form 3999 is to make territorial adjustments from a route inspection. There is no other actual contractual use of this document, although it does help to show if the route is not aligned properly. Always request a copy of any 3999 performed with you on the route.

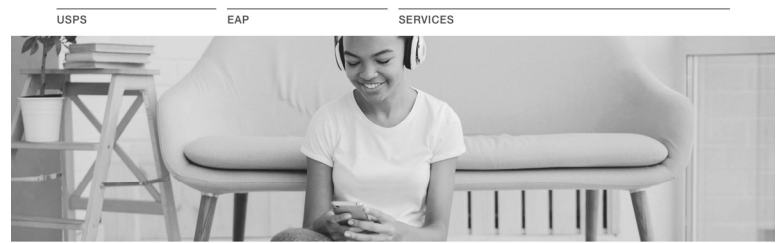
I know it is early to think of this but Open Season for health benefits is coming up in a couple months, and if you are thinking about changing some coverage this is the time to start. Nothing can be changed yet, but you can look on the NALC website to check out the brochures or any other plan's website also. You won't find premiums yet for 2027, that will come later along with the updated highlights of each plan. The OPM website has a link to PSHB plans also. There is a comparison tool on OPM's site also where you can compare three plans at once. I say this now because we get a lot of calls at the last minute every Open Season looking for information. At the end of Open Season, OPM is usually extremely busy, and it is difficult to contact them, so start early. The NALC Plan remains a good plan and the premiums are considerably less than some other plans.

Very often when I go to a station I get approached by a carrier that wants information on filing an application for retirement, and how long before the intended retirement date they should begin the process. The general rule is you should start the process by requesting an application 6 months ahead of time. You will need to give a retirement date, but you can change this date to an earlier one if you complete the application prior to the original

date. This gives you time to gather any information needed to complete the application. It is now done online but you still will have a consultation through HRSSC (Shared Services). The process is not as difficult as some think.

Keep the date of Sunday October 18th in mind, that is the date of the MDA cornhole tournament. We had a great turnout last year, raising a lot of money for MDA and should be able to exceed that this year. Branch Vice-President Gilbert Paredes has secured a bigger venue for this year's tournament and a long list of raffle prizes. I hope to see a good crowd at the next branch meeting on September 8th. There should be some updates from the national convention in Los Angeles. Enjoy the rest of the summer and keep your head up!

Paul Desmond



Resource Spotlight: **Learn to Live**

Learn to Live is an online wellness platform that uses **evidence-based, digital Cognitive Behavioral Therapy (CBT)** to help build practical skills for improving your emotional well-being. Programs are **self-paced, interactive**, and tailored to your needs.

Learn to Live offers multiple topic-specific programs:

Stress and Anxiety: Build tools to reduce worry, reset thoughts, and take control of time and energy.
Depression: Learn strategies to improve mood, enhance motivation, and support daily functioning.
Insomnia: Improve sleep patterns and overcome barriers that interfere with meaningful rest.
Social Anxiety: Build confidence, manage fear, and navigate interactions more comfortably.
Panic: Understand panic symptoms and develop techniques to reduce attacks and regain control.
Substance Use: Access support for reducing cravings and building healthy habits.
Trauma: Understand trauma responses, reduce distress, and build a sense of safety and stability.
Resilience: Build skills to handle challenges more effectively and strengthen emotional well-being.

How to Get Started:

- Visit **EAP4YOU.com**
- Locate the **Digital Wellness Program** section on the homepage
- Click **"Get Started"** to be redirected to the Learn to Live website
- Enter the USPS Access Code: **USPS**
- Follow the prompts to **complete enrollment**
- Begin **using the program** online or
- Download the **Learn to Live App** and
- **Log in** using the credentials created during registration



EAP4YOU.com
800-327-4968 (800-EAP-4YOU)
TTY: 711

Branch 25 Directory of Officers

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Your "Wake-Up!" is produced in-house at the Branch 25 Union office each and every month.

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Treasurer James Metilinos **jmetbr25@gmail.com**

Wake Up Items **wakeupbranch25@gmail.com**

Branch 25 Email **nalcbranch25@gmail.com**

Welcome New Members

Bedford	Michael Pafume
Beverly	Jackson Knight, Perez Soto
Concord	Aiden Gordon
Gloucester	Alan Hanger, Salvatore Ciolino, Marrissa Cote, Ortiz Torres
Lawrence	Francis Grullon, Ogando Ramirez, Emmanuel Reynoso, Carlos Contreras, Jaquez Cruz, Shana Flores-Powell, Taylor Hamlen
Manchester	Alexandra Sullivan
Merrimac	Adriana Perrone
Newburyport	Ethan Kimball
Salem	Bonnie Baca
S Hamilton	Geoffrey Harm

DUES? Never Heard of 'Em!

Every union has those who want the benefits of solidarity without contributing to it. A union is only as strong as the solidarity and investment of its members. To all our brothers and sisters vested, we thank you! If the following scabs are in your office, urge them to step up and pay their fair share!

Acton
Andover
Beverly

Billerica
Concord
Haverhill

Merrimac
Newburyport
Peabody
Tewksbury

Spencer Straus
Dymaurys Duran, Stephen Terris
Sherry Oakes, Brian Gagnon,
Scott McCarthy
Brent Torigian, Lehonnan Sousa
Romen Harper III
Thomas Ruth, Wendell Russell,
Marius Visenescu
Russell Reed, Michael Puzzo
Michael Boiselle
Thomas Kolodziej, Braedon Alves
Raymond Noel Jr.

To any reader still not in the union, we urge you to step up and join Branch 25 today!
¡Hasta la Victoria! Wesley Tugman

The opinions expressed in the Wake Up! are those of the authors. They do not reflect the opinions or views of Branch 25 or the National Association of Letter Carriers.



BRANCH 25 RETIREE GRATUITY VOUCHER

Name: _____
(as it will appear on plaque)

P.O. Retiring from: _____

Phone number: _____

Retirement date: _____

Please note: Retiree must be a member in good standing at date of retirement. Retiree has 4 months from retirement date to remit this voucher to the branch office. Please mail to: NALC Branch 25
2500 Main St, Suite 201, Tewksbury Ma, 01876



From the Secretary's Desk

I hope everyone had a great summer this year. I was lucky enough to be able to attend the NALC's 74th Bienial Convention in Los Angeles this August. You will hear a lot of detail from others here, so I won't get too into that part. What I will say is it was a wild week to say the least. There was a lot accomplished, but unfortunately there were a good number of items that will have to be postponed to the next convention. This is unfortunate for those that worked so hard to get these items put together. To be honest there was a good amount of excellent debate on many issues, but there was also a lot of time wasting as well. Every delegate has the right to get up and speak their mind, and I completely agree with this. However, an example of the issues in our union right now is before the Boston convention two years ago there were usually about 3-4 teller votes at a convention. In Boston we had 10 and in Los Angeles we had 19! Now some of these were close votes and deservedly needed a teller vote. There were also ones that were as much as a 2 to 1 margin. Just to give an idea of the time value of a teller vote. It takes at least 20-30 mins to conduct the count. That is anywhere from 6.3 to 9.5 hours to count the hall. Hopefully in the future the NALC can figure out a way to make these votes go in a timelier manner.

Branch 25 was recognized again this convention when we won 1st place for our branch website. Which is WWW.NALCBRANCH25.com, so go on by and give it a look to be informed. Also, our resident cartoonist Ken Bonin won again with a second-place finish for best cartoon or photo. It's always good to see our branch recognized on a national level at the convention. I have put some pictures from the convention in this issue for you to enjoy. I tried to get as many as I could, but there were a lot. I will try to get more of them on the website when I can. It was a busy week on the convention floor, but we were able to have some fun as well. The Sunday night meet and greet is always fun to see faces you haven't seen for a while. Monday night we got together for a branch dinner to enjoy some good food and adult beverages. One night Dan Wheeler and I went to a restaurant we had been to years ago while attending a branch officer training. It did not disappoint either, I even went back the next week with my wife and daughter when they came out, and I took a vacation week. Also, Dan and I got our steps in on Friday night with a very impromptu and unex-

pected walk we took. I will leave that as a "you had to be there" story. But I will say thank God for "Fatburger" and we found an actual working payphone.

Lastly I want to talk about our Thursday night dinner. It was the NALC retirement dinner they do every four years. This one was much closer to the heart than in the past. One of the honorees was our own NBA and Branch 25 member Rick DiCecca who is retiring at the end of his term this year. It was a bittersweet moment. I am sad to see him go but thrilled for the next chapter of his life with his beautiful wife Cathy, his kids, and grandkids. Rick has helped me and guided me through the years, and I thank him for it. He also honored me this year at the convention by nominating me for the election committee for the national elections this year. I am hoping to get a copy of the pictures and the video of his speech that he gave from the NALC. It was as heart-felt and meaningful as you could get. Listening to him talk about his wife and family and seeing the look on her face as he did was priceless. Thank you Rick!!!! For all you have done for this branch, this region, and the NALC as a whole. Congratulations and well wishes on everything to come your way. To the "Cofather" himself, he knows what that means.

As I always end this, if you have moved, please update your address with the branch. You can call, write, or email me at JESBR25@gmail.com. See you at the next branch meeting September 8, 2026.

Snapple Fact # 302 – Ketchup was once sold as a medicine.

Joe Stearns, Secretary

AFL-CIO DELEGATE ELECTION RESULTS

ELECTED DELEGATES

#	DELEGATE NAME	BRANCH / LOCATION
1	Cindy Connors	Staunton, VA Br. 513
2	Paul Rozzi	Pittsburgh, PA Br. 84
3	Michael J. O'Neill	New Jersey Merged Br. 38
4	Trevor Haas	Dallas, TX Br. 132
5	Elaine Jones	Detroit, MI Br. 1
6	Jamie Drayton-Bey	Virginia Beach, VA Br. 2819
7	Pascual Ortiz	New York, NY Br. 36

Convention Items and Photos

NALC NATIONAL OFFICER & NBA NOMINATIONS FULL LIST OF 2026 NOMINATIONS

NATIONAL OFFICERS		NATIONAL BUSINESS AGENT (NBA) NOMINATIONS	
	PRESIDENT	REGION 1	REGION 9
	- Nicole Rhine - James Henry - Lew Drass - Mike Caref	- Allen Rios - Chris Reed	- Eddie Davidson - Caroline Jones
	EXECUTIVE VICE PRESIDENT	REGION 2	REGION 10
	- Corey Walton - Manny Peralta	- Nick Vafiades - Debbie Dixon	- Karrie Blough - Bill Moody
	VICE PRESIDENT	REGION 3	REGION 11
	- Mark Camilli - Kimetra Simpson-Lewis	- Ronny Morgan (ELECTED BY ACCLAMATION)	- Michael Brim - Mike Hayden
	SECRETARY-TREASURER	REGION 4	REGION 12
	- Rocky Acasio - Mack Julian	- John Robles (WON BY ACCLAMATION)	- Brian Thompson - Bill Kriebel
	ASSISTANT SECRETARY-TREASURER	REGION 5	REGION 13
	- Larissa Parde - Estabon Ramirez	- David Teegarden (WON BY ACCLAMATION)	- Jerry Kerner Jr. - Vada Preston
	DIRECTOR OF CITY DELIVERY	REGION 6	REGION 14
	- Chris Jackson - David Mudd	- Walt McGregory - Kyle Inosencio	- Kenny Janulewicz - Tom Rooney
	DIRECTOR OF SAFETY & HEALTH	REGION 7	REGION 15
	- Shawn Boyd - Robert Kosier	- Patrick Johnson - Elliot Simmons	- Roy Jancio - Orlando Gonzalez
	DIRECTOR OF RETIRED MEMBERS	REGION 8	
	- Anita Gusik - Dan Toth	- Steve Lassan - Danna Ullrich Chambliss - Chris Strickland	
	DIRECTOR OF LIFE INSURANCE		
	- Phillip Rodriguez - Jim Yates		
	DIRECTOR OF HEALTH BENEFITS		
	- Stephanie Stewart - Henry Cadaro - Kevin Summers		
	TRUSTEES		
	- Charlie Heedge - Bill Heller - John Cruz - Sandy Laemmel - Elise Foster - Howard Komine - Jeffery Wagner - David Grosskopf Jr.		



★ ★ ★ THANK YOU TO ALL WHO STEPPED UP TO SERVE! ★ ★ ★





TOM ROONEY

— CURRENT PRESIDENT • NALC BRANCH 34 BOSTON —

FOR NATIONAL BUSINESS AGENT

REGION 14

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CONNECTICUT • MASSACHUSETTS • RHODE ISLAND • NEW HAMPSHIRE • MAINE • VERMONT

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- PROTECT CARRIERS
- STRENGTHEN REPRESENTATION
- IMPROVE COMMUNICATION
- FIGHT FOR ACCOUNTABILITY

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FOR REGION 14 NBA

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DONATE VIA VENMO



venmo

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Kenneth Janulewicz

Kenny J For NBA

KennyJforNBA@gmail.com

KennyJforNBA.com

Convention Items and photos



Branch 25 delegates worked hard played an important part in our unions process. Page 6 shows the candidates for the NALC as well as ads for the 2 candidates for Region 14.



Treasurer's Report

A week prior to the National Convention, a White Page report by the Office of the Inspector General (OIG) (RISC-WP-26-002) was released, posing fifteen scenarios the Postal Service should consider for its viable long-term financial health. This RISC Report is 70 pages long and addresses fifteen options the Service can explore to further benefit its long term financial health. Copenhagen Economics, the OIG's financial contractor, added fiscal estimates to assist in the paper, which applies three specific criteria when considering one of the options:

The option is likely to generate revenue or savings

The revenue gain or savings can be estimated with a reasonable degree of confidence

The revenue or savings would reduce losses by at least \$500M

Essentially, the options provided to the Service are aimed to reduce annual losses by at least half a million dollars based on reasonable consequences to the action.

One: Adjust the market dominant price cap model. USPS, under approval from the Postal Regulatory Commission (PRC), can only increase rates once per year, barring special circumstances. These increases also must be consistent with CPI-U. This would allow USPS to adjust rates to keep up with competitors and offset higher costs of fuel and overhead. However, this option requires both approval from the PRC and congress, making it incredibly unlikely to happen.

Two: Overhaul the Worker's Compensation program. Currently, the Federal Employee's Compensation Act (FECA) blankets injured postal workers. Under FECA, USPS cannot negotiate settlements or buyouts for injured employees, and they may receive benefits indefinitely under the current system. Compared to private sector costs, USPS spends about 41% more on average annually in compensation costs. Changing this would require legislative reform to FECA as well as a change in almost all collective bargaining agreements (CBA). It is imperative our unions do not solicit or endorse these changes, as private sector practices may warrant lump sum payments to members at the expense of continuing benefits over the life of the injury, which oftentimes amounts to much more.

Three: Receiving government funds for the universal service obligation (USO). Following the largest wildcat strike in American history, letter carriers received the rights to collective bargaining, as well as legislation requiring mail delivery to every address in the country. Many countries today across the globe still have USOs and ensure medication, mail, and important parcels get to the homes of their constituents. The Postal Service estimates each door delivery point costs the service \$267/year. As volumes drop, this number continues to

climb. By funding the USO with taxpayer dollars, the Postal Service becomes a true public service. However, appropriating any funds to the Service would require legislative changes and congressional approval.

Four: Restructure the workforce. Within the past five years, USPS's compensation and benefits expenditure grew by 14% and retirement compensation and expenses grew by 48%, which both outgrew revenue gain, which only grew 10%. In this model, USPS uses an increased share of pre-career employees (non-career, as you all are aware of), as their wages and benefits are fewer. However, USPS must consider its largest problem of all; its horrific retention rate. The New Employee Experience Retention and Mentoring Program (NEERMP) was designed to help mitigate work-life balance problems as well as the retention of newer employees. While it has helped to a degree, we still see a rough turnover estimate of about 67%. This will lead to larger staffing problems alongside the further public worry of stagnant mail transportation.

Five: Modify collective bargaining rights. In FY2024, USPS paid \$268M in grievances to organized employees, with both the APWU and MHU leading in overall grievance payments. This might shock some of us letter carriers, but USPS has been the subject of many national cross-craft grievances from these sister unions, paying employees an upwards of five figures in settlements at times. Instead of exploring the option to train management in the CBAs that are signed by the national leaders, OIG suggests removing contractual language restricting crossing crafts, as well as limiting the right to negotiate wages in collective bargaining, and even going as far to suggest an arbitrator be bound by the law to consider the abysmal finances of the Postal Service. The financial mismanagement of the service should not be the concern nor the problem of the union.

Six: Invest CSRS and FERS into a diversified portfolio. If you've read any of the financial analysis or legislative updates any of our council has put out in the past couple of years, you'll be very familiar with where this is heading. Federal law requires USPS to invest all pension assets in U.S. Treasury securities, which has historically underperformed stocks or corporate bonds. The OIG estimates if USPS had invested in a 60/40 stock bond portfolio, the Service would have over \$864B in combined assets. This one cannot be stressed enough, as USPS continues to default on payments to CSRS and FERS today, which will mean substantially larger amortization payments in the future. This option, which I would consider to be one of the best and most important options, requires legislative approval from congress to pass.

Seven: Invest the Postal Service Retiree Health Benefits Fund into a diversified portfolio. USPS is currently on track to have their PSRHBF depleted by 2032. Just like

Treasurer's Report

federal retirement portfolios, USPS must invest in U.S. Treasury securities. Low yield. And once again, congress would need to pass further legislation for this to be possible.

Eight: Change CSRS obligations of the Postal Service. In 1971, the Postal Service was established and thousands of employees from the Post Office Department became Postal Service employees. Along with them came their retirement, the Civil Service Retirement System. This defined pension is paid for by both the employer and the federal government. The methodology used to determine the government's portion is simple: From 1971 onward, they pretend you never received a wage increase and they pay their portion, and USPS will pay their portion, including wage increases, cost-of-living adjustments, and any other sort of benefit increase the employee receives. Because of this, the OIG estimates USPS has been on the hook for between \$80-\$111B the federal government likely would have shared. Changing the methodology of allocation would free up capital for the Service but like previous suggestions, requires legislation.

Nine: Adopt a new pension model. We saw legislation earlier this year from lawmakers that proposed a high-five model, taking hundreds of dollars out of your retirement monthly. At one point, the legislation was written to allow employees to opt out of FERS, and even to exclude employees hired after a certain date from FERS. This suggestion by the OIG is to simply stop the bleeding from the Service suspending its contributions to its pension plans. As it continues to default, payments get larger. Not providing a retirement plan to an employee should not be an explored business model by the Postal Service. Additionally, for this to happen, congress would need to pass legislation, and labor unions would likely need to agree to this change, or lose in interest arbitration.

Ten: Amend funding retiree health benefits. As previously mentioned, the fund is running out of money and will be empty by 2032. The OIG suggests in this option closing retiree health benefits to new or non-vested employees. Alternatively, congressional appropriations could assist in maintaining the fund. However, both options would require legislative approval from congress. It is also important to note, in this model, we divide letter carriers. Excluding brothers and sisters today from retirement benefits further drives us apart, as a two table wage system and proportional cost-of-living adjustments already has demonstrated.

Eleven: Outsource the "middle mile". This option would remove the entirety of the Postal Service's middle network; pick-up, transportation, processing, and local transport. In this model, retail and collection networks still exist, with letter carriers delivering as the "last mile delivery", but would see a massive reduction in labor

costs, seeing large excessing and sweeping layoffs for postal employees in plants and distribution centers, vehicle maintenance facilities, and more. Unlike prior options, this one allows the Postal Service to make that decision on its own, albeit potentially violating sister union contracts. Additionally, it would benefit the service to seek advisory on this action prior to electing to do so. We should also not encourage this model, regardless of the impact to our sister unions, as the service will continue to outsource its work for cheaper labor, eventually leading to adverse effects on letter carriers.

Twelve: Outsource the retail network. Same as above.

Thirteen: Convert door delivery to curbside or clusterbox. USPS also claims an annual centralized delivery unit cost is only \$109/year. By converting door delivery to clusterbox delivery, USPS can save \$156/door each year, a savings of at least \$825M annually. While this poses no contractual issues, the Service will see pushback from its constituents as well as hurdles like HOA's and business delivery.

Fourteen: Reduce delivery days. USPS currently is required to deliver six days a week, excluding Sunday. However, estimates from the OIG argue a savings of \$3.4B annually by reducing mail days down to five. This does not consider lost revenue from a day of closure. It should also be stated that this reduction in days would also be a downsize in employment, as it reduces the need for carrier technicians and non-career employees. This also requires legislative approval for it to pass.
Fifteen: Stop providing USO services. This suggestion would cripple rural delivery across the country as well as a few remote deliveries many of us aren't aware of. For instance, the Post Office operates something called the Alaska Bypass Service, which is a service that authorized shippers may use to send palletized goods directly to rural off-road communities in Alaska. By ending these USO services, Americans across the country will likely be disenfranchised. To further this movement, USPS would need to further seek legislation.

I want to emphasize that no specific option listed has been seriously considered by the Postal Service today, although it's evident that a handful could certainly benefit their financial sustainability. Ones that would provide relief while benefiting the employee, like seeking legislation to alter how the service invests its retirement health benefit funds or pensions funds, or even congressional appropriations to fund the USO, would benefit us long term. Personally, I see little issue in appropriating congressional funds to the Postal Service for what it does for Americans, considering the trillions of dollars funneled into the pentagon that continues to go unaccounted for.

James Metilinos

Vice President's Report

Los Angeles Convention Experience

I recently had the privilege of attending my second NALC National Convention. This convention was quite interesting and, in many ways, very different from what I experienced at the Boston Convention in 2024. Before I dig in, I want to make clear that this article reflects my own personal views and opinions. They do not represent the views of the National Association of Letter Carriers or Branch 25.

Who Do the Delegates Represent? - Having now attended two national conventions, it has been interesting for me to see and hear how certain things are handled. One practice that has stood out to me is the idea that delegates should vote with their Branch President: if the President sits, you sit, and if the President stands, you stand. I recognize that I am still relatively new when it comes to national conventions, and I also understand that every branch operates differently. Personally, that practice concerns me. When I am selected as a delegate to the convention, I am there to represent the members of my branch, including my brothers and sisters in Salem, where I carry mail. At the top of my list will always be my responsibility to the membership. I believe every delegate should listen to the debate, consider the issue, and ultimately cast the vote they believe best represents the members who sent them there. I also appreciate that our Branch President, Dan Wheeler, has never told me how to vote and has allowed me to make my own decisions. I am sure that is true for many others as well, but I can only speak from my own experience.

Tradition vs. Change.— Another thing I heard several times during this convention was that we have been doing certain things a particular way for 50 years, and therefore we should continue doing them that way. I respect our union's traditions and history. There is often a good reason why practices developed in the first place. At the same time, I don't believe tradition by itself should prevent us from asking whether there might be a better way. As a union, we should never be afraid to consider change. Some ideas may initially seem radical or unrealistic, but throughout our history, significant changes have occurred because members were willing to challenge the status quo. The Great Postal Strike and the time the membership rejected a tentative agreement for the first time in 1978 are examples of moments when letter carriers chose a different path.

Is There a Better Way? - That brings me to one of my biggest concerns from this convention: time. We had a tremendous number of resolutions to consider. Workshops were canceled on Wednesday and Thursday so that more time could be devoted to the general sessions. We began at 8 a.m. and continued until at least 4:30 p.m. On Friday, we met from 8 a.m. until

approximately 3 p.m. Even after all of that, we were unable to finish considering all of the resolutions submitted to the convention. Those resolutions will now have to be resubmitted for consideration at the 2028 convention in Minnesota. I found that disappointing, not because I blame any one person or group, but because members and branches took the time to submit those resolutions for consideration by the supreme body. I understand that Robert's Rules of Order provides an orderly process for debating and deciding on resolutions, and there are good reasons for having those procedures. However, I believe it is worth asking whether there are ways to make our convention process more efficient while still protecting every delegate's right to debate, participate, and be heard. I don't pretend to have the perfect answer. I'm not sure there is one. Maybe workshops could be scheduled differently, with workshops primarily in the morning or afternoon and additional time dedicated to general sessions. That could mean longer days for delegates, but I believe conducting the business our members sent us there to address should remain our priority. Another possibility worth exploring is some form of secure electronic voting instead of relying on the teller process. I understand that any change to voting procedures would need to be carefully considered to ensure accuracy, security, transparency, and every delegate's right to have their vote counted. I don't know which of these ideas would work, and there may be better ideas that I have not considered. My point is that we should keep an open mind about how to improve the convention to make it more efficient and avoid what happened in Los Angeles.

Debate Does Not Have to Mean We Are Divided.— I also don't view increased debate as evidence that the NALC is divided. To me, it reflects an engaged membership with different ideas about how our union can become stronger. We have a growing number of NALC activists who want to participate, ask questions, offer ideas, and bring change. Others may believe that some of our existing practices continue to serve us well. There should be room in our union for both perspectives. Disagreement does not have to mean division. Healthy debate is part of democracy, and ultimately we are all members of the same union. Unfortunately, disagreement is sometimes treated as though if you are not with me, you are against me. I don't believe that makes our union stronger. That same principle applies to our upcoming national election. I put together a page listing the nominations for the upcoming NALC National Officers Election and the AFL-CIO delegates elected at the National Convention.

As many of you may have heard, current National President Brian Renfroe is not seeking reelection, nor is Executive Vice President Paul Barner. I won't tell anyone

how to vote. Instead, I encourage every member to do their own research, learn about the candidates, listen to the different perspectives, and make their own decision.

Most importantly, please vote!

Please make sure your address is up to date so that you receive your ballot. If you are receiving the Postal Record at your current address, you should be all set. If you are not receiving the Postal Record, make sure you update your address with the NALC.

Recognition.— I want to take some time to recognize the delegates who volunteered at the convention to help at the Letter Carrier Political Fund booth. I had the privilege of volunteering alongside the following Branch 25 delegates:

James Metilinos, Sandi Menas, Bruce Johnson, Joe Stearns, and Rich Donlon

Also, shoutout to our Branch President, **Dan Wheeler**, who was extremely busy during the convention as part of the Board of Tellers, conducting teller votes and staying late to count votes for the AFL-CIO delegates election. Finally, congratulations to our Secretary, **Joe Stearns**, who was elected to serve on the National Election Committee, which will oversee the conduct of the 2026 election of national officers.

Final Thoughts— I know this was a long article, but after leaving Los Angeles, I felt the need to share some of my thoughts. I do not expect everyone reading this to agree with everything I've written. In fact, that would go against much of the point I've tried to make. We should be able to disagree, debate, ask difficult questions, and still stand together as union brothers and sisters. I am here to represent the membership, and my loyalty to our members will always come first because our union belongs to the members. Our union was built by letter carriers who were willing to speak up, challenge ideas, debate one another, and demand better. As we look forward, I hope we continue doing exactly that.

For the membership, Gilbert Paredes

The LA Convention to the Ballot Box

From the LA Convention Floor to the Ballot Box: Why Your Vote Matters This October. — Whether you just took the redeye back from LAX this weekend or followed the daily updates between loops here in Massachusetts, the message from the 74th NALC Biennial Convention is loud and clear: **our union's strength starts and ends with the membership.** For the past week, thousands of delegates gathered at the Los Angeles Convention Center to debate the future of our craft. But while the convention sets the agenda, the

execution of that agenda comes down to the leaders we elect. This October, the power shifts from the convention floor in California directly to your mailbox for the 2026 NALC National Officer election.

What We Fought For in Los Angeles.— The 2026 convention wasn't a vacation; it was a battleground for the survival and dignity of the city letter carrier craft. On the floor in LA, delegates didn't hold back, the following are a few highlights I picked out: **Ranked Choice Voting Voted Down:** A proposal for Ranked Choice Voting (RCV) was defeated on the floor. The general membership felt it was simply too close to an upcoming election cycle to chance changing the system and attempting to educate the entire membership in time.

Lobbying for Locality Pay: Delegates passed a targeted resolution directing the union to fight for federal wage standards. Specifically, the NALC Letter Carrier Political Fund (LCPF) shall lobby to add the United States Postal Service to the Federal Locality Pay provisions— extending the same benefits federal employees receive across 54 areas to city letter carriers. **Executive Council Oversight Mandate:** To guarantee stronger representation and accountability during contract negotiations, delegates passed a major new standard: *"Any tentative agreement reached by the Union must be presented to the Executive Council for review, and be accepted by a majority vote of such, prior to submission to the membership for ratification."*

Your Ballot is Your Loudest Voice.— In many unions, national leaders are picked in back rooms or exclusively by convention delegates. The NALC is different. We operate on a strict one-member, one-vote system. Every single active and retired member gets a say. The officers we elect this October will serve a four-year term. They will negotiate our next contracts, manage our dues, and represent us in Washington. Complaining about management in the breakroom doesn't change policy— voting does. If you leave your ballot sitting on the kitchen counter, you are handing over your voice to someone else.

The Assignment for October

As letter carriers, we pride ourselves on delivering every piece of mail accurately. Treat your own ballot with that exact same dedication. **Get Informed:** Read up on the candidates' platforms in upcoming issues of *The Postal Record* and online. Choose who best represents what you agree with. **Mark Your Ballot:** Follow the instructions carefully so your vote isn't voided. **Mail It Back:** Don't wait. The moment it hits your mailbox, fill it out and get it back into the mailstream. The debates in Los Angeles proved that letter carriers are ready to fight for what we deserve. Let's bring that same energy to the ballot box. **Vote this October—because our routes, our paychecks, and our future depend on it.**

Mike Pinto

WAKE UP

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at the next meeting
September 8, 2026
K of C Wilmington
8:00 PM



Our branch events out in LA. The left was our branch dinner. Tony Bossi and Rick DiCecca along with his wife Cathy joined us as well. All members of branch 25 were in attendance. The pictures on the right were our table pictures from the retirement dinner Rick was honored at.