President’s Report

Richard P. O’Connell, Jr.

On June 9-10, 2014, letter carriers from throughout the state of New Jersey were walking the halls on Capitol Hill. I am pleased to report that the annual NJ State Congressional Conference was a successful event. I would like to thank Charles Connell, Chairman and his entire committee (Pete Bednarz, Ed Decker, Don Hill and Gary Lange) for a job well done. I want to express my gratitude to all legislative liaisons, active volunteers and letter carriers throughout the state, both active and retired, for their efforts during our stay in Washington.

Representatives from New Jersey were overwhelmed by the well organized lobbying conducted by letter carriers. Some of our delegates even brought members of their families, hoping to educate our congressional representatives not to vote for legislation that would be harmful to letter carriers and their families such as, but not limited to retaining six day delivery. Although some representatives were non-committal on some of the issues put forth to them by our delegation, other congressmen did share our concerns and stated their support.

At the Rap Session on Monday evening President Rolando informed the delegates of the current status on Capitol Hill and some of the obstacles we will be facing in the future. President Rolando cautioned everyone that any legislation which is harmful to postal workers can only be defeated by being vigilant and working together as we have over the past years. No one can stand on the sidelines anymore. We have too much to lose.

In closing, remember that contributions from COL-CPE help re-elect our friends to congress and defeat those who oppose letter carriers. COL-CPE gives the NALC and all active and retired letter carriers a voice in congress to counter the anti-worker groups who want to take away the benefits we have earned. When asked, give what you can, it all helps.

Keep in mind, “Voter Registration” is a must. You cannot make changes if you do not VOTE!!! Have a Safe and enjoyable summer.
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VIEWPOINT
Jeff Fox

Postmaster General (PMG) Patrick Donahoe is not our
friend. I have been reluctant to criticize the PMG in
the past; frankly, I have always followed Tony
Massa’s direction and refrained from attacking management,
local or otherwise, in the Garden State Letter Carrier.
Unfortunately, recent events cannot be ignored and besides,
the name of this column is “Viewpoint”.

On June 9, 2014, the Washington Post reported the following headline, “USPS sup-
ports five-day delivery swap with highway fund boost”. Here is the essence of that
ridiculous legislation. The Postal Service would be allowed to eliminate Saturday mail
delivery and then the imaginary savings of 2.5 billion would be deposited in the high-
way trust fund. Huh?

The PMG responded to this GOP initiated legislation by stating, “We not only need
five-day delivery; but I would say, if this was able to help take the angst out of the
[broader postal] legislation for some lawmakers, that would help us out.” No, it
would not help US out; it would only hasten HIS plan for five-day delivery at all cost
or expense. Now, I’m not an economist; but I fail to see how taking the alleged savings
and depositing it into a fund, which has nothing to do with the USPS, saves the Service.
Buy a stamp, save a road? Thankfully, not many other Congressmen could understand
this plan either and it failed to gain traction. Then, Rep. Eric Cantor, the maker of the
bill, lost his reelection primary bid and the bill died a quick death.

What remains is the memory of the PMG agreeing to such a ridiculous piece of leg-
islation. He has shown his true intentions and they are to destroy the Postal Service at
all cost. At a time when the USPS has picked up enough business to sustain seven-day
delivery, it is madness to eliminate Saturday delivery.

In late June, the annual bill, which contains the six-day delivery mandate, was being
readied for a vote without the six-day delivery language. In a bipartisan effort, an
(R) IA passed and was added to the fiscal year 2015 Financial Services and General
Government appropriations bill.

We have survived another fiscal year but with friends like the PMG … we must
remain vigilant and keep up the fight.
I would like to thank all of the NALC members from the Garden State who took the time to travel to Washington, DC on June 8, 9, and 10 to lobby their Congressman and Senators about all of the legislative issues facing our union. I would also like to thank the New Jersey State Association of Letter Carriers and the Branches who sponsored their members to travel to D.C. Personally visiting New Jersey Congressman’s offices and speaking to them or their aides, sends a powerful message to our elected officials.

The NALC activists, who I was privileged to be with when we made the rounds in the congressional office buildings, were very respectful and very knowledgeable about the legislation that we support and do not support. All of the members in every New Jersey NALC Branch, who sent carriers to Washington to lobby on their behalf, should be proud of their brother and sister activists.

We now have to be ready to answer any e-activist message we receive from President Rolando or our Legislative Department about pending legislation. The attacks on the future of the Postal Service will not stop until we get bipartisan support for the correct legislation to put the USPS on the proper financial path.

Now that schools are dismissed for the summer, please be extra careful as you deliver the mail to watch out for children playing. Children are attracted to our postal vehicles. Be very careful as you enter and leave a park point.

Please make sure you are properly hydrated as you work in the heat that is sure to come this summer. Everyone should tell themselves every day that they are going to work safely as they perform their duties. Please review your park points and ask to change any park point on heavily traveled streets when a safer alternative is possible.

I am looking forward to seeing all the NALC delegates from New Jersey that will be attending our National Convention during the week of July 21 through July 25 in my hometown of Philadelphia, PA. If you are not an elected delegate and you have a day off that week, you can visit the convention, get a guest pass and see democracy in action as we discuss the many issues we will be facing in the coming months and years. The Pennsylvania Convention Center is located at 1101 Arch Street, Philadelphia, PA 19107. Stay safe and enjoy any time off that you may be having this summer.

As you know, things are tough in the Postal Service. Things are tough all over. It seems to be one fire after another and there is no catching up. The worst part is the NALC was in it all alone. Well, I am happy to report that is no longer the case.

The presidents of the four postal employee unions, the NALC, APWU, NRLCA and NPMHU have formed an alliance to battle the issues before us. The APWU and the NALC used to negotiate contracts together but all four unions battling common enemies and issues has not been done in recent memory. I can tell you the level of cooperation and working together has never been higher.

One of their first actions of this new Alliance was to send a letter to the House committee leaders to outline our opposition to the so called proposals to save the USPS. None of which would do so and in all likelihood, make things much worse. Congress just doesn’t get it, or gets it and has an agenda, that the USPS is making money (1.1 billion dollars at last report). The red ink is coming from the congressional requirement that we pre-fund retiree health benefits. We already have $50 billion for decades of future retirees. It is time to get rid of this burdensome requirement.

This Alliance was also on view on April 24 when we stood fast with the APWU on contracting out postal jobs to Staples. The USPS seems to be saying that taking the mail to Staples is the same as taking it to the Post Office. We all know that is not the case. All postal workers are highly trained, skilled employees who are sworn to safeguard the mail. Are our patrons going to get this service from minimum wage workers at Staples? You know the answer.

This just another attack on good-paying jobs and the middle class families. It’s a bad deal for workers and consumers. I was happy to be at the demonstration in NYC on that Thursday. We were more than a hundred strong with numerous letter carriers in attendance, and that is tough to do on a working Thursday.

Working together is how we are going to get through this. Unions working together. All the carriers on the work floor, together. Retirees, actives, patrons, families and others working together to save our job and a great American institution, the United States Postal Service. Let’s get working.
2014 NJSALC Congressional Conference

President O’Connell presents a plaque to Rep. Rush Holt

Rep. Bill Pascrell (CD-9) addressing the delegates

Rep Rush Holt (CD-12) addresses the delegates

President Rolando providing the members with an update

Rep. Pascrell speaking on Postal issues to the delegates

President Rolando helps pick the 50/50 winner
The City Carrier Assistant (CCA) Corner of the GSLC newsletter is dedicated to our brother and sister CCAs and the issues that directly affect them. In this issue, I would first like to update you all on the CCA conversions to career full-time city letter carrier positions that have been taking place since the beginning of the year. The number of conversions of CCAs is as follows; in the Northern New Jersey District the number of CCAs converted to full time regular as of May 31, 2014 were 240. The numbers of CCAs in the South Jersey District converted to full time regular as of May 31, 2014 was 41. Unfortunately, the number of CCAs converted in the month of June was unavailable at the time this article went to print.

Secondly, I would like to address an issue that these newly converted employees are facing in regard to using their annual leave during the first 90 days of their conversion to career full-time regular. The union has recently received reports that supervisors are approving annual leave for CCAs who are newly converted to regular and Eagan isn't paying them. The below ELM language is the reason why:

The ELM 512.313 MANDATES a 90 day qualifying period before new appointees can use Annual Leave.

512.313 Appointees
The following provisions concern appointees:

b. Ninety-Day Qualifying Period.
(1) Requirement. New employees are not credited with and may not take annual leave until they complete 90 days of continuous employment under one or more appointments without a break in service.

But what if a newly converted employee already has an approved PS Form 3971 for annual leave? The answer (which is the problem) is that the computer system at Eagan will not recognize it and the newly appointed career employee will not get paid the approved annual leave. As this article was being written, talks between the union and management were on going at the headquarter level to resolve this problem. In the meantime, until this issue is resolved, if you are a newly converted employee who has not been paid for approved annual leave you must notify the union so we can file a grievance on your behalf. Please watch for an update on this issue. We are attempting to get this issue resolved as soon as possible whether it is through negotiations or the grievance process.

Lastly I would like to address the issue of CCAs completing their first 360-day term appointments. Reports have come out that in some offices management is mistakenly under the false assumption that when a CCA’s 360 day term is over, local management has the option of arbitrarily not reappointing that CCA to another term. This is not true; management cannot arbitrarily refuse to reappoint a CCA to another 360-day term. The 2011 National Agreement is very clear on a CCA’s reappointment terms. Specifically on pages 134 and 135 of the 2011 National Agreement, Appendix B Section I.1.b and I.1.i states the following:

b. CCA employees shall be hired for a term of 360 calendar days and will have a break in service of 5 days between appointments.

i. CCA employees are separated for 5 days between appointments. When operational circumstances indicate that reappointment for a CCA(s) is not needed and the installation employs a CCA(s) with lower relative standing, the CCA(s) will be reappointed and the CCA(s) with the lower standing in the installation will be separated instead. Such separation of a CCA(s) with the lowest relative standing is not grievable except where the separation is pretextual. These CCAs separated for lack of work during or upon completion of their term of appointment will be given a preference for reappointment ahead of other CCAs with less relative standing in the installation provided the need for hiring arises within 18 months of separation.

The National Agreement clearly states that the only circumstances that would justify not reappointing the CCA to another 360-day term would be for a lack of work in the installation. If a CCA had to be legitimately let go due to a lack of work in the installation, it must be the CCA with the shortest amount of relative standing. If at the end of a CCA’s 360 term, the CCA is not reappointed to another term, the union should be notified immediately.
New Jersey State Association of Letter Carriers
36th Annual Softball Tournament
Bruce Stallworth – Chairman

The New Jersey State Association’s 36th Annual Softball Tournament will be held on one Sunday, September 7th. Beginning at 9:00 AM at Lakewood’s Pine Park (off of County Line Road in Lakewood.) The deadline for entries is August 31st. The entry fee is $150.00 per team. This is a slow pitch tournament and USSSA rules will apply with some modifications:

☑ All roster and fees must be handed in by August 31st.
☑ Rosters must be certified by the branch President or Secretary and should include the manager’s phone number.
☑ The Tournament is open to all Postal employees who belong to a Postal Union.
☑ Catcher’s mask will be optional for this tournament and must be supplied by the team.

☑ Branches that cannot field a team may join with another that is not already participating in the Tournament. Call Bruce at (732) 822-5297 if you have a partial team.

Start times and schedules will be posted online at http://www.njsalc.com. It is crucial that we get the team manager’s phone number so we can notify you of any weather cancellations. As a reminder to all teams; your start time is your forfeit time. The only exception to this rule will be a 15 minute grace period for the first set of games on Sunday. Please arrive at least one half hour prior to your scheduled start time and check in with the committee.

Send the entry form below as well as your roster and entry fee checks made payable to:

Bruce Stallworth
PO BOX 7001
Freehold, NJ 07778

NJSALC Softball Tournament Entry Form

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*** CAPTAIN’S CELL PHONE NUMBER NECESSARY IN CASE OF SAME DAY CANCELLATION ***
The Annual Joseph Esposito Bowling Tournament was held on June 1, 2014. I want to thank all those branches who participated in this event; without your support this would not be the success it has become year after year. Union activism also has a social aspect which occurs at events such as this and creates a bond amongst us all.

Although attendance has decreased over the years, we continue to hold this annual tournament with the support of those who attend. Thanks again and I look forward to seeing everyone at next year’s tournament. Below you will find the results from this year:

**Team High Games Scratch**
East Orange 2 969

**Team High Game Handicap**
Willingboro 1113

**Team High Series Scratch**
E. Orange 1 2942

**Team High Series Handicap**
New Brunswick 3200

**Individual High Game Scratch Men and Women**
Mike Buldowski 278 New Brunswick
Rosie Miller 181 Jersey City

**Individual High Game Handicap Men and Women**
Al Guzsaly 268 Willingboro
Michele Desir 220 East Orange 2

**Individual High Series Scratch Men and Women**
Mark Senatore 677 Brick
Evonne Rojas 436 Old Bridge 2

**Individual High Series Handicap Men and Women**
John Mamrosh 699 Brick
Aida Rodrigues 564 East Brunswick
New Jersey Manufacturer’s Insurance
Available for NJSALC Members

The New Jersey State Association of Letter Carriers (NJSALC) is associated with New Jersey Manufacturer’s Insurance Company (NJM). As a member of the NJSALC you are eligible for discounted auto and homeowner’s insurance through NJM, you must be an active letter carrier and an NALC member.

Unfortunately, this union benefit is not available for retirees, due to NJM company policy. However, if you’re an active carrier and obtain a policy prior to retirement, you can carry it over when you retire. For more details, contact any NJSALC Officer or Executive Board Member.

Remember, this benefit is available for NALC union members only, membership in the NALC will be verified.

Active letter carriers: Contribute to COLCPE using PostalEASE