

National Business Agent's Report
Mike Weir
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Over the past several weeks, I have had extensive discussions with the Western and the Great Lakes Areas regarding the implementation of the Modified Interim Alternate Route Adjustment Process (MIARAP). The District Teams are in place, the process is moving forward; and, if you have not already been contacted, you will be soon. The goal is to evaluate and adjust some 60,000 routes nationwide which were not involved in the first process as well as revisit and review the 90,000 routes which were. This is, obviously, a major undertaking. I want to thank the members of the District Lead Teams and the District Evaluation and Adjustment Teams for their commitment to ensuring a fair and balanced approach to adjusting letter carrier routes to as close to eight hours as possible. Theirs is a very difficult task, but an extremely important one in the current environment of declining mail volume. And, as I have detailed in previous articles, local union officers and rank and file letter carriers have an important role to play as well. Accurate data is essential, as is professionalism in the daily performance of our duties and the use of the appropriate forms to document auxiliary assistance, curtailed/delayed mail, etc. It may be time to roll out the Letter Carrier Perfect training module again. In the regional office, we are currently looking at updating the program and taking it into the field to ensure that letter carriers understand their rights and responsibilities in accordance with the National Agreement and the Postal Service handbooks and manuals, and that they apply this knowledge to the handling of their routes on a daily basis.

Several months ago, I wrote about the Memorandum of Understanding Re: Assignment of City Delivery (M-01694). I wanted to draw everyone's attention to the important provisions of that MOU, particularly with regard to the opportunity for us to capture new growth for city delivery. At the state conventions, I have been reiterating that position. Several branches

have been completing the NALC Assignment of New Deliveries Alert form and sending it to my office for review and referral. I want to remind all branches to carefully monitor the assignment of new deliveries in light of this MOU. Unless there is an agreement on established boundaries, or the new deliveries in question are in-growth on an existing route assigned to another form of delivery, you should be making the argument that new growth should be assigned to city delivery. If management does not agree, complete the aforementioned form and mail it to the regional office along with a map of the disputed territory. If you have any questions, contact us at the regional office.

Over the last two months, a number of branches and state associations have hosted luncheons and dinners to recognize and honor their retired members. It is always a privilege for Danny, Nicole and me to be invited to such functions, and we make the effort to attend as many as possible. The jobs, wages and benefits that we, as active letter carriers, enjoy were not simply bestowed upon us by management because they recognized the importance of our contributions. When they were active carriers and union leaders, the retirees fought for and won the wages and benefits that we too often take for granted. They laid a strong foundation that we have been building upon for the betterment of current and future letter carriers. On a personal note, I am deeply grateful to the retirees in Branch 343 who taught me the importance of providing quality service to our customers and of being a professional letter carrier on a daily basis. They also inspired me to be a union activist, instilled in me the desire to serve my fellow letter carriers and set me on the path which has led me to where I am today. All of us owe a debt of gratitude to those who came before us. At your next branch meeting or function, take a moment to thank the retirees. Show them how much you appreciate their efforts on your behalf and assure them that you intend to help the union carry on the legacy of excellence that they bequeathed to us.



As I was writing this article, I was receiving the first updates on the results of the NALC Food Drive. If the initial tallies are any indication, this will be a banner year for food collection in Region 5. Even though we are experiencing difficult economic times, our customers opened up their hearts and their pantries to provide for those less fortunate. I truly believe that our food drive is the most successful in the country because of the respect and appreciation that the public has for their letter carrier. This is also the reason why Customer Connect has generated so much additional revenue for the Postal Service. Your customers know you, they trust you and they appreciate the fine service you provide for them. They listen to what you have to say, and they are more inclined to be involved in an event with which you are associated. For the fifth consecutive year, the Postal Service has been rated as the most trusted federal agency; and it ain't because of anything management has done! Keep up the good work, and keep the faith. Together, we will weather the current economic storm, ensure the survival of the Postal Service, and emerge stronger and more determined to make a better world for all working men and women.

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