

National Business Agent's Report
Mike Weir
July 2009

By now, I am sure you are aware that NALC President William H. Young has decided to retire on July 3, 2009 after 43 years as a letter carrier and more than 30 years as an officer of this union. He has served with distinction in numerous positions at the local, state and national levels. Throughout his career, President Young has been a passionate advocate for letter carriers. His innovative approaches to dealing with problems associated with such issues as automation and the grievance procedure were all designed to protect letter carriers' rights and promote better working conditions. But early on, President Young recognized that the fight to secure and strengthen our jobs and benefits could not be won simply in the contractual arena. To that end, he developed the NALC Field Plan which has gained letter carriers more clout in the legislative and political arenas as well. This, in turn, has resulted in more members of Congress supporting our issues and interests, and more favorable legislation being considered and passed into law. This is especially important at this time as we work to ensure that the Postal Service emerges from the current economic downturn as a viable and vibrant business. Over the years, President Young's efforts on behalf of letter carriers, the NALC and the Postal Service have served all of us well. We wish him all the best for a well-deserved long, healthy and happy retirement!

There are a lot of rumors circulating about the Postal Service's imminent demise. Unfortunately, many of them are being spread on the workroom floor by supervisors and managers. While there is no question that we are in serious trouble, as are so many other businesses in this recessionary cycle, we are not on the verge of failing to make payroll, there are no lay-offs on the horizon and we are not going to five day delivery next week. We must not give in to the panic that such rumors tend to generate. Instead, we must continue to channel our energies into positive solutions to deal with the current crisis. NALC is leading the charge on H. R. 22; we have taken a leadership role in developing such joint ventures as MIARAP, Customer Connect, DRP and Safety Initiatives, all of which are either

reducing expenses or raising new revenues to help shore up our bottom-line. Additionally, on the legislative front, we are drumming up support among our representatives to retain universal service and to work with us to maintain USPS as the cornerstone of the mailing industry in this country. As a general rule, a company does not increase its revenue base by reducing services. Five-day delivery will only open the door for our competitors to raise additional revenue at our expense and provide customers with an alternative for their mailing needs. Such an outcome could truly sound the death knell for the Postal Service.

NALC has weathered many storms during its 120 year history. I am convinced that we will be successful in this fight as well, but all of us must work together toward this common goal. On the most basic level, each of us, everyday, can use the Postal Service for our mailing needs. Do not pay your bills online, insist that catalog orders are sent via the Postal Service, send your packages through the mail, order a magazine subscription, etc. Be an ambassador for our business. Promote our products and services with your family, friends, neighbors and customers. After all, USPS is the greatest postal system in the world. We should be proud of that fact and proud of our role in making it so.

I am pleased to announce the recipients of the 2009 Charles J. Coyle Scholarship Awards. They are: Maggie Murphy, daughter of Branch 8 member Michael Murphy from Lincoln, NE; Heather Stegman, daughter of Branch 485 member Robert Stegman from Hutchinson, KS; Rose Daugherty, daughter of Branch 314 member Timothy Daugherty from Council Bluffs, IA; and Cierra Thurman, daughter of Branch 343 member Richard Thurman from St. Louis, MO. Additionally, the NALC Central Region winner of the William C. Doherty Scholarship Award is Melanie Sowadski, daughter of Branch 343 member Patricia Sowadski from St. Louis, MO. As usual, we were very impressed by the academic credentials and community involvement of the winning students. Their knowledge and understanding of the importance of unions, as reflected in their essays, rivals that of many of our own members. We wish them all the best in their academic endeavors and beyond!



**To all members, friends and those who knew Sharon L. Pittman (1946-2009)
from Dan Pittman**

On behalf of Sharon Pittman and her family, I want to thank all those who have expressed condolences, sent cards and made donations in her name to Crossroads Hospice. Sharon was a very special lady to the Region, to the NALC Auxiliary, to her clients whom she worked for as a nurse and to all who met the lady who had a smile, a hug and a kind word for everyone. Sharon was my angel, and I will miss her dearly. Our daughters, Marcella and Cecilia, and our son, Philip, who was born on Mother's Day, have been a source of strength for me since Sharon passed away on May 27, 2009. We have all suffered a great loss, but we were fortunate to know such a special person. She is now at peace and no longer suffering; and for that, her family is eternally grateful. We are finding the strength that is needed at this time from each other. The flowers, thoughts and prayers that we received from Region 5 will always be remembered. Thank you.

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