



National Association
of Letter Carriers

William H. Young, President
March 22, 2007 No. 07-04

NALC Bulletin

100 Indiana Ave. NW Washington, DC 20001-2144 202.393.4695 www.nalc.org

Young, Potter Reach Agreement To Resume Contract Bargaining April 6 Deadline Set for Settlement NALC Protests 'Contracting Out' Moves; Takes Issue to Lawmakers in Congress

NALC President William H. Young and Postmaster General John E. Potter reached agreement March 20 to resume bargaining for a new National Agreement. They set April 6 as a deadline to reach settlement.

Young and Potter also agreed that, in the event talks fail and an impasse remains, mediation would be waived and the impasse would go directly to binding arbitration.



President Young tells New Jersey legislative activists that NALC will do everything necessary to block plans of the Postal Service to contract out city carrier jobs.
(Photos by Mike Shea)

"I believe it would be in the best interest of both the city letter carriers we represent and the Postal Service if we can reach a contract agreement," Young said. "But it has now been four months since the expiration of the last National Agreement and this process must come to a conclusion."

Young added, however, that while he accepts PMG Potter's interest in continuing contract talks, he rejects unequivocally the Postmaster General's outrageous position on contracting out letter carrier jobs.

Young said he had received official notice of the USPS's intent to contract out the work of 10 full-time regular carrier positions in Reno, Nevada.

"The Postmaster General said he was going to do nothing to stop the outsourcing of the 10 city carrier jobs in Reno," Young said. "As a result, the NALC will initiate a national-level grievance to block the Reno move."

Young added that it is startling that the first place postal management would attempt to contract out existing letter carrier positions would be in the home state of Senate Majority

Leader Harry Reid. NALC immediately sent a copy of the notice to Senator Reid.

Contracting out city carrier work has started to creep across the nation. Other recent reports have been received from Oregon, New York, Florida, and California.

Congressional Backing

NALC has received a positive and strong bipartisan response from members of Congress when they were advised of the USPS contracting out action: "We're going to be with you."

In meetings with New Jersey House members during their annual lobbying excursion, NALC legislative officials from that state received unanimous backing to stop this ill-advised and destructive practice in the bud.

Young noted that every single member of Congress contacted to date has expressed their support of NALC's position against contracting out.

"The NALC's number one legislative priority is preventing outsourcing of our jobs," Young said. "We've had enough. We're going to stop it right dead where it is. 'No further' is the name of this game."

"We're going to end up with everyone working for the lowest pay, no benefits," said Rep. Donald Payne (D-NJ) at the state's annual congressional breakfast March 15. "This trend has got to stop. We're going to be with you."

Rep. Scott Garrett (R-NJ), bluntly explained his position on outsourcing letter carrier jobs: "My commitment is to be with you, to work with you."

"I don't believe in outsourcing," said Rep. Albio Sires (D-NJ). "I don't believe in privatization."

"I support whatever you want to do," said Rep. Rodney P. Frelinghuysen (R-NJ). "I don't think we need to privatize (city carrier jobs) to contract routes."

Two other New Jersey Democrats, Rush Holt and Bill Pascrell, warned of the dire consequences of the policy.

Holt said contracting it "is a genuine threat" to the Postal Service, and Pascrell added that outsourcing is part of a "conspiracy to undermine the middle-class workforce" and cut benefits to workers.

Look at Walter Reed Medical Center

Young pointed to the experiences at the Army Medical Center in Washington, which has evolved into a national scandal and brought several resignations as an example of what happens when government jobs are contracted out.

"The shocking revelations of how contractors have mis-managed Walter Reed should have alerted those who see contracting out as the correct path for the Postal Service to step back and reassess this decision," Young said. "I see no evidence that is occurring and that troubles me greatly."

Young also met with leaders from the mailing industry and said he believes they do not favor this action.

"One of them confided to me: 'We always undervalue the skills of the positions that we look to contract out, and it is never as easy a solution as it might appear,'" Young said.

Mailers Involved

Young said these mailers believe, as he does, that future letter carriers must be well motivated and possess even greater—not lesser—skills than today's letter carrier if the USPS is to survive.

"Neither of us believes that necessary level of dedication and skill will be found among unscreened, non-motivated, poorly compensated workers," he said. "It took just a couple of years to ruin Walter Reed hospital. How long do they think they will need to destroy the Postal Service that so many of us rely upon for the efficient, secure and safe delivery of our mail?"

Young pointed to a situation recently in Orange, California, where a contractor was hired to deliver mail. He decided the job was too tough and started stacking the mail up in his house. When complaints over non-delivery were received, the postmaster responded that the problem was a contractor and there was little, if anything, he could do to resolve this issue.

How long will America tolerate that kind of response?



Rep. Donald Payne

Rep. Scott Garrett

Rep. Albio Sires

Rep. Rush Holt

Rep. Bill Pascrell

Oregon Protest Against Outsourcing



Hundreds of members of Portland OR NALC Branch 82, postal customers and supporters from other craft unions, staged an informational picket March 15 at the Beaverton OR post office to protest plans by the Postal Service to contract out delivery for a new 374-unit development in the Portland suburb. Region 2 National Business Agent Paul Price, in front of vehicle with arms folded, said the Postal Service "needs to wake up before it's too late."

Nearly 1,400 Branches in Food Drive; Over 101 Million Postcards Ordered

Branch activity for the May 12 NALC National Food Drive is moving into a critical stage as the 15th annual effort to Stamp Out Hunger approaches.

Orders for 101.5 million Campbell Soup-Postal Service postcards were sent to the printer, Pace Press, to begin bulk shipments of the cards across the nation. Orders are also coming in for the Spanish-language cards and for full-color posters that are being sold to branches at cost.

The final total of postcard orders is expected to exceed last year's record of 118 million cards – one of the largest mailings in the United States during the year.

The drive received a strong endorsement from our brothers and sisters in the United Mine Workers of America.

UMWA President Cecil Roberts, in a memo to all locals, ask UMWA members, families and friends to participate in the drive.

"I ask that you post this memo on your job site bulletin boards and at the union hall and encourage everyone to participate in this very important endeavor," Roberts said.

Need to Register? Order Postcards?

Branches that need to register for the drive or order the free postcards, should immediately contact *Drew Von Bergen*, food drive National Coordinator, at (202) 662-2489 or by email at vonbergen@nalc.org.

For the latest information regarding the food drive, including a list of branches registered for the 2007 drive, log on to the food drive section of NALC's website at: www.nalc.org/commun/fooddrive.

Workers Memorial Day on April 28; Check on Safety in Your Facilities

Safety in the Postal Service should be the focus of NALC branches on April 28 as the labor movement observes Workers Memorial Day.

NALC Director of Safety and Health Brian Hellman said branches should use the observance to check that postal management is meeting all of its health and safety obligations at all facilities throughout their jurisdiction.

In addition, Hellman urged NALC branches to join in local observances by the AFL-CIO and other affiliated unions that commemorate the anniversary of enactment of the Occupational Safety and Health Act (OSHA) over three decades ago.

Nevertheless, every year thousands of workers are killed and millions more are injured or diseased because of their jobs.

Hellman said safety must be a top priority every day of the year at all job locations including those in the Postal Service.

"This is a good time to examine closely the safety and health activities in your postal stations and to make sure that management is meeting its obligation under the National Agreement and federal occupational safety and health laws," Hellman said.

Special AFL-CIO kits to help NALC branches in participating in Workers Memorial Day are available by contacting Hellman at NALC Headquarters – (202) 393-4695.



Over 250 NALC Branches Registered For Reinvigorated MDA Campaign

Over 250 NALC Branches have responded to the call from President Young and MDA Coordinator Jim Williams and registered to join in the 2007 campaign against muscular dystrophy.

Under the new policy instituted this year, branches must register with NALC headquarters and provide the name of a branch MDA coordinator in order to receive a special MDA packet to assist in conducting various events.

The packets will be mailed out to registered branches about April 1.

There is still time to register and receive a packet that will help branches raise funds during 2007 for the Muscular Dystrophy Association. Fill out and return the registration form that was mailed to all NALC branch presidents.

Help NALC return to a preeminent position among organizations that support this worthwhile effort. Remember, the MDA is NALC's official charity.

2008 FECA COLA at 0.7 Percent

The 2008 COLA for Federal Employees Compensation Act (FECA) participants has started accumulating based on the February report issued March 16 by the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics. There is no accumulation yet for active carriers or retirees COLAs.

The 2008 FECA COLA stands at 0.7 percent. It will be based on the increase in the Consumer Price Index for Urban Wage Earners and Clerical Workers (CPI-W) CPI-W between December 2006 and December 2007. It is applicable only in cases where death or disability occurred more than one year prior to the adjustment's effective date.

The last contract COLA under the National Agreement took effect last September. Without a new Agreement, there is no accrual toward a next COLA, but the CPI-W remains negative.

T-COLA Payment Set on Correction from Das Award

Through the persistent efforts of NALC, a final settlement has been reached on the Territorial COLA (T-COLA) and ABC lump sum payments. The Postal Service has advised NALC Headquarters that Phase One of the T-COLA payment correction — a one-time T-COLA based on the Das award (C-26334) — will be included in PP 6-07 paychecks.

Letter carriers in areas covered by T-COLA will receive the T-COLA correction in addition to the ABC Settlement payment they are already receiving. Phase Two will be the corrected retroactive payment for T-COLA over the past several years. USPS said the prospective date for these payments will be over the next two or three Pay Periods.