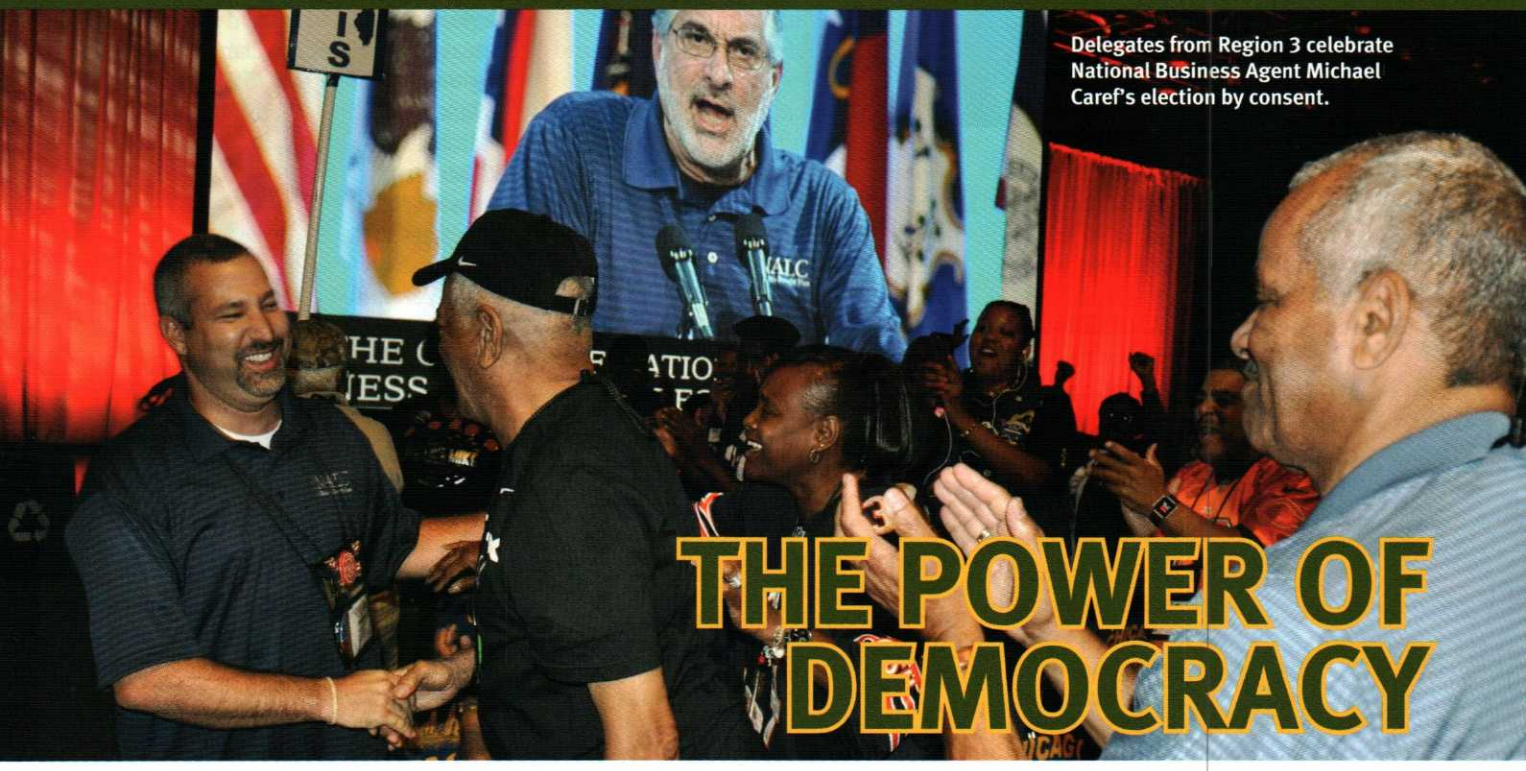
NALC 71ST BIENNIAL CONVENTION
JULY 16-20, 2018 • DETROIT, MI

NALC CONVENTION
CHRONICLE

Covering the **third session**: Wednesday, July 18, 2018



Delegates from Region 3 celebrate National Business Agent Michael Caref's election by consent.

THE POWER OF DEMOCRACY

On the third day of NALC's 71st biennial convention, delegates demonstrated that when union members use the democratic process to forge a common goal, they fulfill the promise of solidarity. With strength in numbers, they can effect positive change in their workplaces, for their families and for the whole country by unleashing the power of democracy.

At Wednesday's session, delegates meeting in Detroit put democracy into action, nominating candidates for election to the Executive Council. As a result, NALC members across the country will elect 10 national officers, three national trustees and national business agents for three regions by mail-in ballot this fall; 12 candidates for uncontested NBA seats were elected by consent.

In the same spirit of openness, the delegates debated the pros and cons before voting on resolutions guiding the future of their union and spoke their minds on a range of issues. Together, they engaged in the democratic process that has kept the union strong and united since 1889.

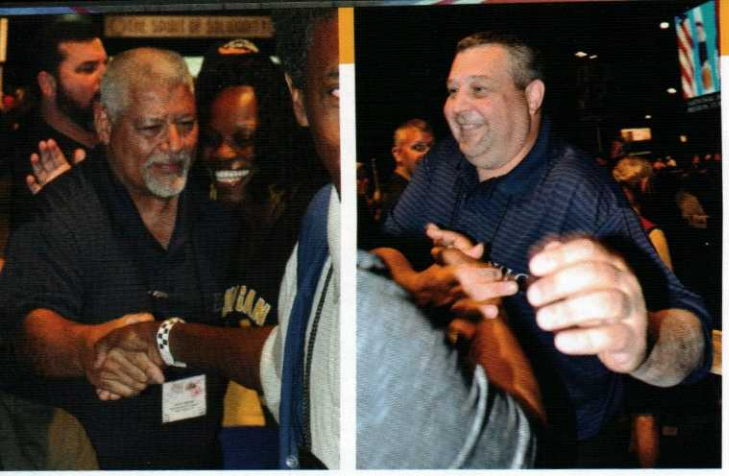
Several speakers also brought inspiration from nearby Flint, MI, from across the Detroit River in Canada and from the worldwide postal labor movement. They rallied delegates with stories about how everyday people, and rank-and-file union members, are standing up to protect the vulnerable against moneyed interests and neglectful governments—and preserving the blessings of democracy for all.

RESOLUTIONS

NALC President Fredric Rolando called the convention to order at 10 a.m. Performing the National Anthem was San Diego, CA Branch 70 member George Elias. He was followed by Detroit Branch 1 Recording Secretary Elaine Jones, who led the Pledge of Allegiance, and by Pastor Steve Bland of Liberty Temple Baptist Church in Detroit, who delivered the invocation.

Coming to the stage at Rolando's invitation was NALC Director of Life Insurance Myra Warren, who read five resolutions to the National Agreement, which were all approved by the convention delegates. These were emergency suspensions being given priority consideration by the dispute resolutions teams, GPS data not being used for discipline, adding dry-fit and UV-protected fabric as well as cold wear gear clothing to the uniform program, and providing that street communications between letter carriers and supervisors

Director of Life Insurance Myra Warren



Region 10 NBA Javier Bernal (l) and Region 14 NBA Richard DiCecca celebrate their elections.

be conducted via the Mobile Delivery Device (MDD).

Rolando next asked NALC Secretary-Treasurer Nicole Rhine to come to the stage to begin the convention's considerations of general resolutions. One was approved, one disapproved and another was withdrawn.

The one that was approved, General Resolution 3, called for NALC members to participate in legislative and grassroots efforts with postal allies to oppose Trump administration policies. Letter carriers are encouraged to download the NALC Member App, contribute to the Letter Carrier Political Fund, and to perform get-out-the-vote actions such as phone and text banking and canvassing.

A delegate makes a point of privilege.

NOMINATIONS

President Rolando turned to the next order of business, as required by the *NALC Constitution:* calling for nominations for national office. President Rolando ceded the chair to Executive Vice President Brian Renfroe, because the first nomination was for the office of president. Renfroe called for nominations, and two were forthcoming from the floor—for Fredric V. Rolando of Sarasota, FL Branch 2148, and for David Noble of Washington, DC Branch 142.

Returning to the microphone, President Rolando sought nominations for all remaining offices, which were offered from the floor as follows (uncontested nominees were elected by consent; contested nominees are listed in nominating order):

Executive Vice President (contested)
—Brian Renfroe, Hattiesburg, MS Br. 938
—Rachael Elmore, Freehold, NJ Br. 924

Vice President (contested)
—Lew Drass, Huntsville, AL Br. 462
—Sara Gresham, Newport News, VA Br. 609

Secretary-Treasurer (contested)
—Nicole Rhine, Lincoln, NE Br. 8
—Jerry Kerner Jr., Baltimore, MD Br. 176

Assistant Secretary-Treasurer (contested)
—Paul Barner, Roswell, GA Br. 4862
—Kathryn R. Myers, Billings, MT Br. 815

Director of City Delivery (contested)
—Christopher Jackson, Garden Grove, CA Br. 1100
—Thomas A. Houff, Richmond, VA Br. 496

Director, Safety and Health (contested)
—Manuel L. Peralta Jr., Garden Grove, CA Br. 1100
—Douglas L. Peters II, Lansing, MI Br. 122

Director of Life Insurance (contested)
—James W. Yates, Long Island Merged, NY Br. 6000
—Alan Nagata, Salt Lake City, UT Br. 111

Director, Health Benefit Plan (contested)
—Stephanie Stewart, Central Iowa Merged Br. 352
—Robert R. Brunette, Sheboygan, WI Br.102

Director, Retired Members (contested)
—Daniel Toth, Lorain, OH Br. 583
—Thomas E. Fath, Decatur, IL Br. 317

National Trustees (three positions; contested)
—Lawrence D. Brown Jr., Los Angeles, CA Br. 24
—Michael Gill, South Florida Br. 1071
—Mack I. Julion, Chicago Br. 11
—Carol E. Paxton, New Orleans, LA Br. 124
—Rolando Rodriguez, Anderson, IN Br. 489

Region 1 NBA
—Bryant Almario, Santa Clara, CA Br. 1427

Region 2 NBA (contested)
—Nick Vafiades, Longview, WA Br. 2214
—Michael Wahlquist, Salt Lake City, UT Br. 111

Region 3 NBA
—Michael B. Caref, Chicago, IL Br. 11

Region 4 NBA (contested)
—Dan Versluis, Tucson, AZ Br. 704
—Anita Lewallen, Conway, AR Br. 1592

Region 5 NBA
—Michael Birkett, Dubuque, IA Br 257

Region 6 NBA
—Charles Troy Clark, Lexington, KY Br. 361

Region 7 NBA
—Troy D. Fredenburg, Minneapolis Br. 9

Region 8 NBA
—Steve Lassan, Nashville, TN Br. 4

Region 9 NBA (contested)
—Kenneth R. Gibbs Jr., Brunswick, GA Br. 313
—Lynne Pendleton, Central Florida Br. 1091

Region 10 NBA
—Javier Bernal, Houston Br. 283

Region 11 NBA
—Mark Camilli, Northeastern New York Br. 358

Region 12 NBA
—David J. Napadano, New Castle, PA Br. 22

Region 13 NBA
—Vada E. Preston, Tidewater Virginia Br. 247

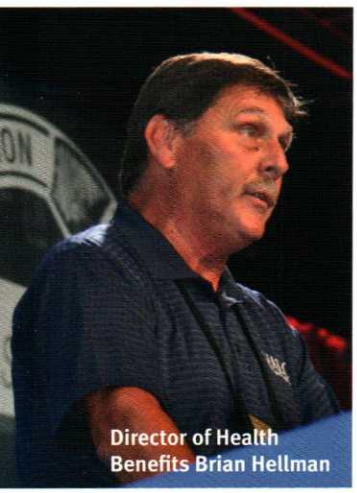
Region 14 NBA
—Richard J. DiCecca, Massachusetts Northeast Merged Br. 25

Region 15 NBA
—Larry Cirelli, New Jersey Merged Br. 38

CREDENTIALS COMMITTEE

Rolando turned the microphone over to Credentials Committee Chairman Delano Wilson of Silver Spring, MD Branch 2611, who introduced the other committee members: Marc Ashmon of Linden, NJ Branch 2876; Linda Boroughs of Dallas Branch 132; Jon Calloway of Springfield, IL Branch 80; BaLynda Croy of Appleton, WI Branch 822; Chris Crutchfield of Anchorage, AK Branch 4319; John Dyce

of Youngstown, OH Branch 385; Ethel Ford of Houston Branch 283; Rachael Freehauf of Fargo-West Fargo, ND Branch 205; Sonny Guadalupe of New York, NY Branch 36; Tina Hunt of St. Louis, MO Branch 343; Caroline Jones of High Point, NC Branch 936; Anthony Lauderdale of Nashville, TN Branch 4; John McPherson of Sacramento, CA Branch 133; Fran Meader of Newark, DE Branch 1977; Bobby Moore of Arizona Merged Branch 1902; John Oross of Dayton, OH Branch 182; Bill Phillips of Cherry Hill/Haddonfield, NJ Branch 769; Yesenia Robles of Garden Grove, CA Branch 1100; Brian Simmons of Southeast MA Merged Branch 18; Percy Smith of Emerald Coast, FL Branch 4559; Robert Sweerus of Camden, NJ Merged Branch 540; Michelle Szafran of Western Wayne County, MI Branch 2184; and Derlwyn Taylor of Detroit Branch 1.


Director of Health Benefits Brian Hellman

Wilson gave a committee report, stating that 5,552 delegates representing 605 branches from all 50 states, the District of Columbia, Guam, Puerto Rico and the Virgin Islands were in attendance.

Rolando then brought NALC Director of Safety and Health Manuel Peralta Jr. to the stage, who addressed the convention delegates on recent successes in the Customer Connect program, including several carriers who have made $1 million sales, which were displayed on the convention screens. Since the program's inception in 2002, letter carrier have secured sales leads totaling $2.60 billion in annual revenue.

CLEAN WATER AND JUSTICE

The delegates then viewed a video about the 1936-37 Flint, MI, autoworkers' strike against GM, a critical turning point in labor history.

Segueing from Flint's past to its present and future, President Rolando next welcomed Dr. Mona Hanna-Attisha, the pediatrician in Flint who revealed in 2015 that lead levels in the blood of children in the city had doubled after the city's water source changed.

A daughter of union workers, Hanna-Attisha told delegates that the Flint public health crisis involved far more than bad drinking water. It reflects a broader problem involving inequality, injustice and erosion of democracy—a connection that union members understand. "The union movement got it immediately," she said. "You understood what was happening in Flint and you understood that it was a symptom of a larger problem that is happening throughout our nation.

"To truly fix Flint, and the Flints everywhere, it will take a rebuilding of the American Dream—that grand bargain that was first born in Flint," she said. "As a pediatrician, the most important medication I can prescribe to our children is living-wage jobs for their parents."

Hanna-Attisha compared the Flint crisis to letter carriers' current struggle: "The fight against privatization of the post office—the public post office—is the same as our fight to preserve our public spaces and our public resources, and it is the same fights our struggle in Flint to fight for affordable and safe public water."

The delegates rewarded Hanna-Attisha with a letter carrier cheer. They also approved a motion to pass the hat to support the Flint Child Health and Development Fund.

After considering more resolutions, the delegates viewed a video highlighting carriers who work in the Florida Keys and how they responded to the impact of Hurricane Irma in September 2017, the second video in a series being shown this week about letter carriers responding to natural disasters.

INTERNATIONAL SOLIDARITY

President Rolando brought Christy Hoffman, General Secretary of UNI Global Union, to the podium. Hoffman told the delegates that her organization strives to fulfill solidarity on a global scale.

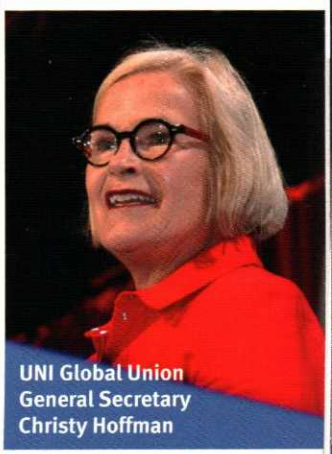
"All of our problems," she said, "are bigger than one union, one town, one state—or even one country."

She pledged to support the struggle against postal privatization in the United States using her experience with similar fights elsewhere, including European Union (EU) members, pointing to the failure of privatization schemes in some EU countries.

"Here's the bottom line—it's not a positive experience for postal workers in the EU. It has not improved service. It has not cut costs for the public. On every level, it does not work—except for the opportunity for private companies to make profits." Some countries outside the EU that privatized their postal services, she added, have already gone back to a public system.

Hoffman urged letter carriers to stand in solidarity with workers worldwide and promised to join our struggles in the United States. "It is on all of our shoulders, our collective shoulders, to safeguard dignity at work, to hold big employers accountable, to win our fair share and to make the world a better place," she said. "We can do this together!"

Dr. Mona Hanna-Attisha


UNI Global Union General Secretary Christy Hoffman

The delegates gave Hoffman a letter carrier cheer.

President Rolando then welcomed Mike Palacek, national president of the Canadian Union of Postal Workers, to the stage. Palacek shared his union's recent success in saving his country's postal system, Canada Post, from a proposal by the Canadian government to make severe cutbacks in service.

Pointing to the pending recommendations by the White House task force on the U.S. Postal Service, Palacek

NALC

Canadian Union of Postal Workers President Mike Palacek led delegates in a union chant.

said, "That's how they started in Canada—when they released a report about the post office where they predicted the sky was going to fall and the stars wouldn't shine. They used that to justify their attacks on working people in public services."

Canadian postal workers mounted an aggressive campaign against the cuts. "Everywhere we went, people told us it was a done deal," Palacek said. "We refused to believe that."

"Together, we are more powerful than any government," Palacek said, but not without the help of the public. "We knew we couldn't do it ourselves. We had to reach out to the communities we serve because we know that at the end of the day, people care about their postal service.

"We fought them on every plane we could think of," he said, including at the ballot box. Activists made postal cuts one of the top five issues on voters' minds. In the 2015 election, Canadian voters overturned a conservative majority in Parliament, and the new government suspended the postal cuts.

"No matter how bad it looks, no matter how dark it gets, even when everybody tells you it can't be done," Palacek said, "don't believe it, brothers and sisters."

Palacek led the delegates in a Canadian union chant: "So-so-so-solidarity!" The delegates then responded with a letter carrier cheer.

COMMITTEE REPORTS

President Rolando invited the NALC trustees, Larry Brown of Los Angeles Branch 24 (chairman), Mike Gill of South Florida Branch 1071 and Mack Julion of Chicago Branch 11, to the stage. The three trustees delivered their Board of Trustees report.

Next, President Rolando brought Health Benefit Plan Director Brian Hellman to the stage for the Health Benefit Committee report. Hellman introduced the members of the committee: Pete Bednarz of New Jersey Merged Branch 38 (chairman); Robert Murphy of Cleveland, OH Branch 40; and Tom Nelson of New York, NY Branch 36. The committee reported that the NALC Health Benefit Plan currently has 253,711 enrollees, 7,106 of whom enrolled during the last Open Season.

President Rolando summoned the Scholarship Committee to the stage, introducing committee members Jacqueline White of Los Angeles Branch 24 (chairman), Sandra Laemmel of Detroit Branch 1 and Larry Kania of Western New York Branch 3. The committee members delivered their report.

Throughout the day, the delegates honored several NALC members and family members who had lost their lives or been injured.

After consideration of a few more resolutions, the session adjourned at 3 p.m.

NALC AUXILIARY

WEDNESDAY, JULY 18

The meeting were reconvened at 9:33 a.m. by President Cythensis Lang.

The Pledge of Allegiance and collect was recited by the members. Assistant Secretary Linda Davis gave the thought for the day.

The Credentials Committee gave an updated report. There are 26 auxiliaries present, with 14 states represented, four national officers, five state presidents and one past national president, for a total of 48 delegates.

The Bylaws Committee returned to address the last tabled motion. The bylaw was not adopted.

President Lang gave a door prize. She also gave a gift to Legion Cresswell of Dallas, TX Aux. #28 for all his hard work at our Country Store. He is also our youngest member in attendance.

Vice President Cynthia Martinez gave as door prizes two convention pins donated by Laurie MacLemore, the state president of Tennessee.

President Lang then called for the election process to begin. After the voting, members attended our Wednesday luncheon at Andiamo on the Detroit Riverfront.

We were very pleased to have 44 members and guests in attendance. A blessing was given by Jim Dornan of Aux. #1248 in Oklahoma. Guests were treated to an awesome meal and a Chinese auction.

Auction items were two beautiful handbags, a pretty dress and two bottles of excellent wine. The winner of the red MK handbag was Teré Petrey of Aux. #1064 in Texas. The winner of the green-and-white cross-body bag was Tessy Fisher of Aux. #698 in New Mexico. The winner of the beautiful dress was Beatrice Fuentes of Aux. #233 in Texas. The winner of the rosé wine was Selina Dornan of Aux. #1248 in Oklahoma. The winner of the white wine was Sharon Ward of Aux. #47 in Maryland.

After the auction, the luncheon was concluded.

—Submitted by George Anna Myers, NALCA Secretary