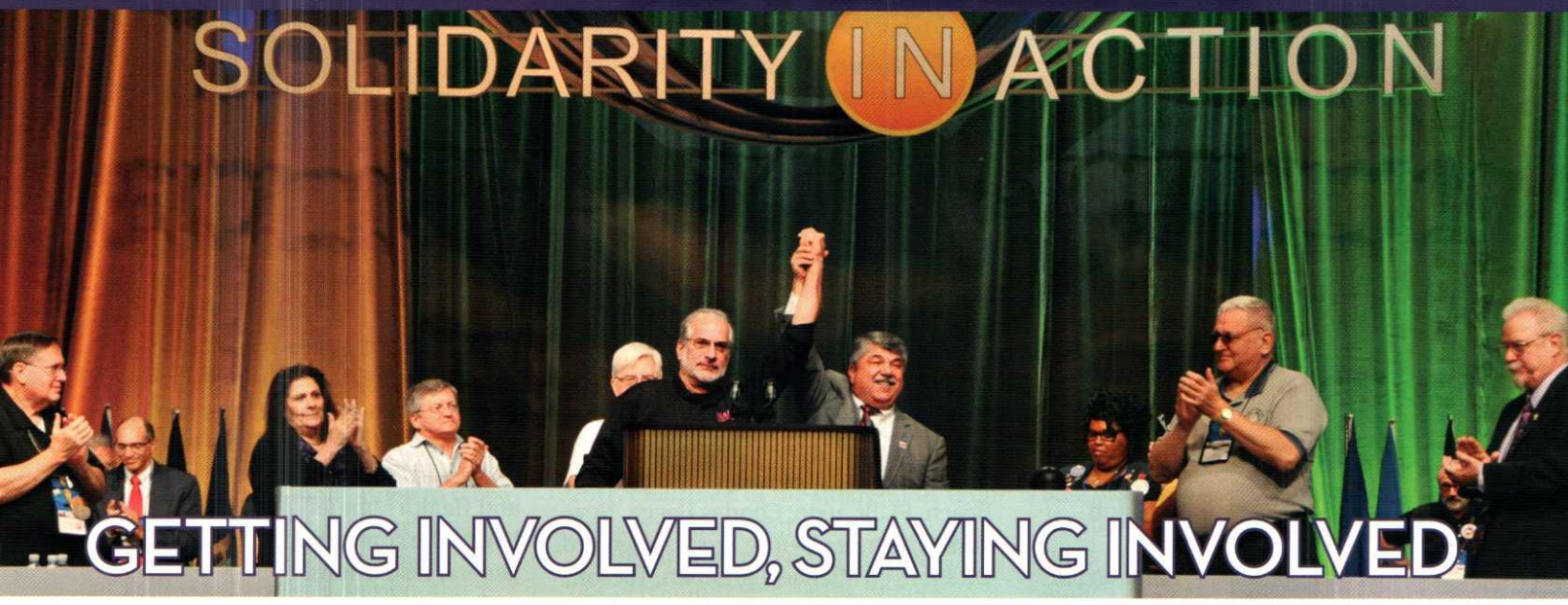
NALC CONVENTION
CHRONICLE
COVERING THE THIRD SESSION: WEDNESDAY, AUG. 17, 2016

SOLIDARITY IN ACTION

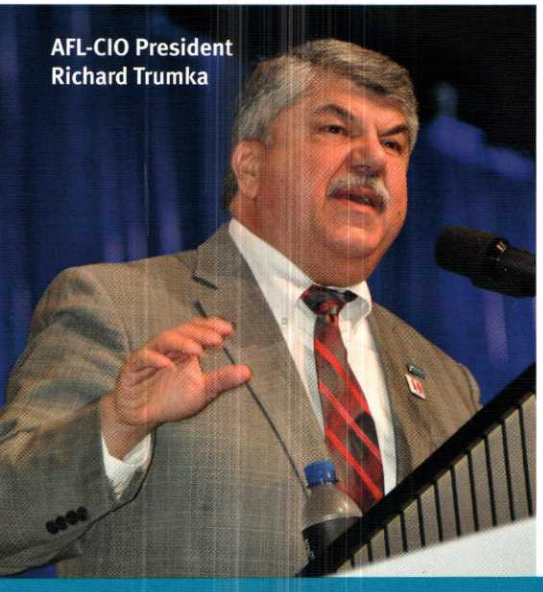


GETTING INVOLVED, STAYING INVOLVED

Sister unions, business allies and partners in our struggle to support the Postal Service, to protect middle-class jobs and to work for justice implored delegates to NALC's 70th biennial convention to redouble their efforts and to encourage letter carriers in their branches back home to get involved and stay involved.

The delegates heard from the president of the AFL-CIO and from a major, active sister union about the importance of activism in trying times. Delegates were greeted by the leader of a mailing business that stands firmly with us. There were awards for letter carriers who helped bring billions of dollars in new revenue to the Postal Service just by keeping an eye out for ways the agency can serve its customers better than competitors. Delegates also took pride in backing civil rights in an effort spearheaded by carriers from both coasts.

And they discussed, and voted on, resolutions as part of the union's democratic process—a process that involves more than 5,000 delegates hailing from 600-plus branches in all 50 states, the District of Columbia and three U.S. territories.



AFL-CIO President Richard Trumka

LABOR LEADS THE WAY

NALC President Fredric Rolando called the convention to order at 10 a.m. on Wednesday and asked Los Angeles Branch 24 member Juanetta McKissick to come the stage to perform "The Star-Spangled Banner." She was followed by Branch 24's Doile Banks, who led the Pledge of Allegiance, and by Rabbi Jonathon Klein of Los Angeles' Clergy and Laity United, who delivered the invocation.

NALC President Fredric Rolando and AFL-CIO President Richard Trumka stand together after Trumka's rousing speech.

Getting the business of the day underway, Rolando introduced AFL-CIO President Richard Trumka, recalling how the federation's leader had asked delegates to NALC's 2010 convention in Anaheim, CA, to travel to Los Angeles and join a massive jobs rally AFL-CIO had organized for that same week at city hall.

"While pushing for a huge infrastructure program," Rolando said, "Rich also defended our jobs at that rally and helped us mobilize the labor movement and the American people to defeat the Postal Service's plan to eliminate 100,000 full- and part-time jobs by ending Saturday mail delivery.

"We won that fight, thanks to folks in this room, and thanks to Rich Trumka," Rolando added.

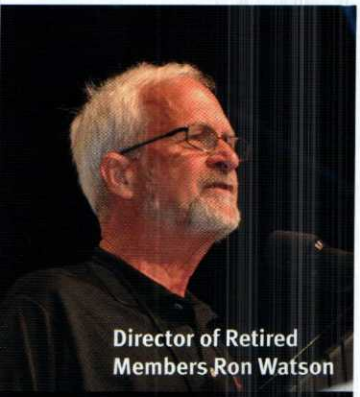
An enthusiastic Trumka noted that the efforts of letter carriers—through a variety of means such as writing letters to the editor and engaging one-on-one with congressional representatives—have changed the national conversation about USPS.

"Most Americans know that the Postal Service is absolutely critical for

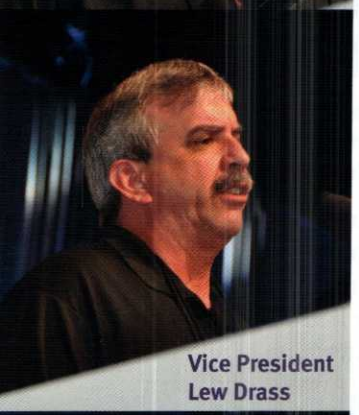
AFL-CIO Delegate Anita Guzik explained the importance of the labor federation.

America," Trumka said. "Nobody's talking about cutting Saturday delivery any more. I love that they're talking about Sunday delivery now, because they know that they need you.

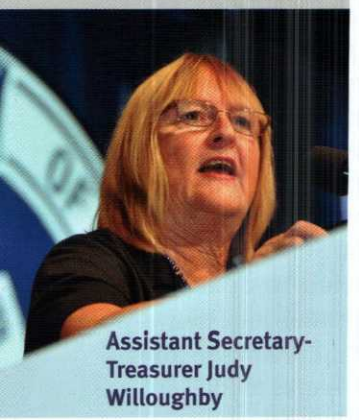
"You're there every time America calls," he said. "You always, always get the job done."



Director of Retired Members Ron Watson



Vice President Lew Drass



Assistant Secretary-Treasurer Judy Willoughby

Rolando led a letter carrier cheer for Trumka, then called to the microphone Los Angeles Branch 24's Anita Guzik, one of NALC's delegates to the AFL-CIO convention, to deliver the delegates' convention report. Guzik noted that the presidents of 56 unions comprise AFL-CIO's executive council and that Rolando serves as a vice president on it.

After her report, Rolando took a few comments from delegates at microphones before reviewing the voting process for AFL-CIO delegates and asking for nominations from the floor.

NALC's membership size means that the union can send nine delegates to the federation's convention. Rolando and NALC Secretary-Treasurer Nicole Rhine serve as delegates by virtue of their offices; election of the remaining seven will take place on Thursday.

The nominees are (in ballot order): Anita Guzik, Los Angeles Br. 24; David Hyman, Tri-Valley, CA Br. 2902; Ingrid Armada, Providence, RI Br. 15; Elise Foster, Chicago Br. 11; Jeffrey Cushner, Wilmington, DE Br. 191; James "Fred" Brown, Orlando Br. 1091; Everett Wyllie, Waco, TX Br. 404; Derrick Jones, Tallahassee, FL Br. 1172; Ernestine Hernandez, Tri-Valley, CA Br. 2902; Kevin Byrne, West Palm Beach, FL Br. 1690; Charles Heege, New York City Br. 36; Denise Brooks, Medford, OR Br. 1433; Michael Carnahan, Tucson, AZ Br. 704; Jeffrey Parr, Santa Rosa, CA Br. 183; Lloyd Doucet, New Orleans Br. 124; Ronney Harper, Atlanta Br. 73; Stephen Hanna, York, PA Br. 509.

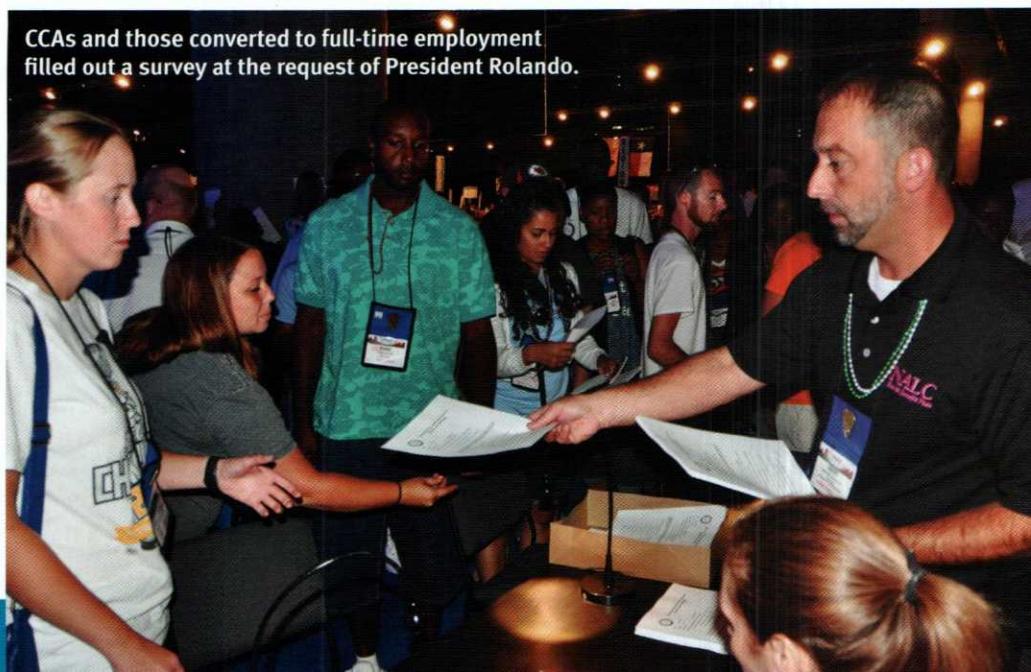
Following the nominations, the president took more comments and questions from the floor, and then invited to the stage NALC Director of Retired Members Ron Watson to continue consideration of national agreement resolutions. Watson was followed by Vice President Lew Drass and by Assistant Secretary-Treasurer Judy Willoughby, who wrapped up consideration of this set of resolutions.

YOUR CONTRACT, YOUR CONCERNS

Rolando announced that two surveys were being taken at the convention. One asks delegates who are current city carrier assistants, as well as those who have been converted to full-time employment, about their particular concerns regarding workplace issues and the National Agreement. The other survey asks for similar feedback from active city letter carriers.

Coming to the stage at Rolando's invitation next was NALC Director of Safety and Health Manuel L. Peralta Jr., who began the convention's consideration of general resolutions.

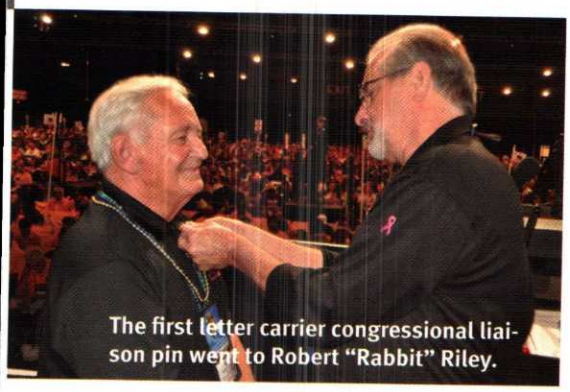
General Resolution 1 called for repeal of the Windfall Elimination Provision and the Government Pension Offset, two laws that hurt the retirement benefits of a large portion of NALC's members as well as many federal retirees. While the resolution was approved by the Executive Council, Rolando announced that he also was directing NALC's lawyers to explore the feasibility of filing a class-action lawsuit in an effort to help members adversely affected by the laws, since congressional action up to now has failed to do so.



CCAs and those converted to full-time employment filled out a survey at the request of President Rolando.

"If they will be able to develop a lawsuit that meets the appropriate standards," Rolando promised, "NALC will spare no resource in supporting this lawsuit."

The awarding of pins to NALC's letter carrier congressional liaisons was the focus of General Resolution 3, also approved by the Executive Council.



The first letter carrier congressional liaison pin went to Robert "Rabbit" Riley.

President Rolando called to the stage Northeastern New York Branch 358 retiree Robert "Rabbit" Riley to recognize his work in pushing for this pin, awarding the first one to Riley.

Following some discussion, the Executive Council's recommendation of disapproval for General Resolution 4, to amend the in-town expenses of NALC's national officers, was upheld by the convention on a voice vote.

LABOR ALLIANCES

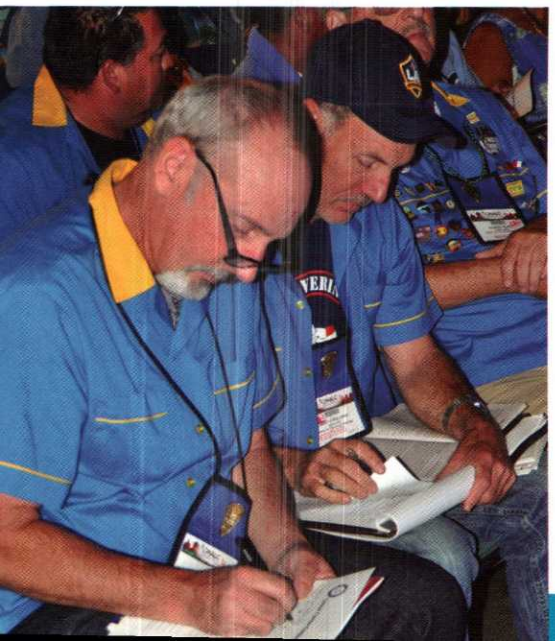
Next, President Rolando invited to the stage Maria Elena Durazo, UNITE HERE's vice president for civil rights and immigration. UNITE HERE represents 270,000 workers across the U.S. and Canada who work in such industries as hotel, gaming, food service and manufacturing.

"There's a place for the private sector," Durazo said, "but it's not in the Postal Service."

Durazo noted that UNITE HERE and NALC have in common a strong commitment to collective bargaining, since organizing is how workers gain power.

"Respect is more powerful than greed," she said.

Rolando led a letter carrier cheer for Durazo.



President Rolando asked active city carriers to fill out a survey, as well.

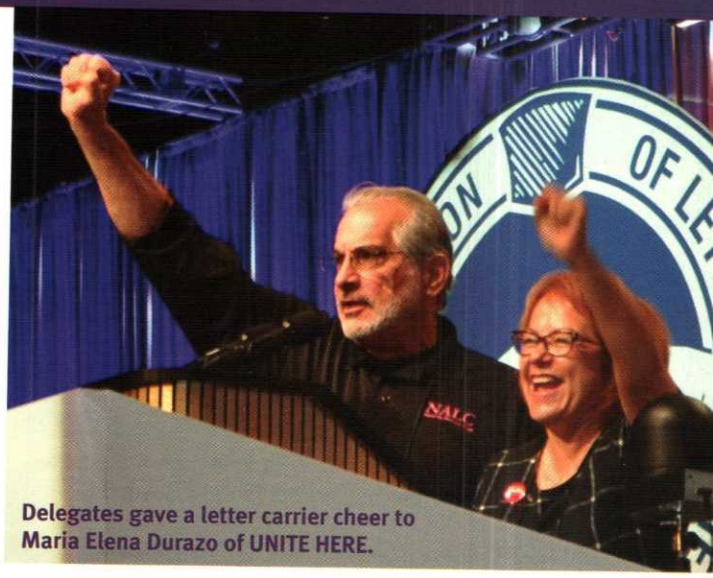
DELEGATES FROM ACROSS THE NATION

The president then brought Delano Wilson of Silver Spring, MD Branch 2611, chairman of the Credentials Committee, to the lectern.

Wilson introduced the members of the committee: Charles Balmos, Willingboro, NJ Br. 5801; Craig Bishop, Sacramento, CA Br. 133; BaLynda Croy, Appleton, WI Br. 822; John Dyce, Youngstown, OH Br. 385; Ethel Ford, Houston, TX Br. 283; Rachael Freehauf, Fargo-W. Fargo, ND Br. 205; Cindy Groves, Reno, NV Br. 709; Sonny Guadelupe, New York Br. 36; Scott Haney, Peoria, IL Br. 31; Servando Iglesias, South Florida Br. 1071; Caroline Jones, High Point, NC Br. 936; Don Karl, Grand Rapids, MI Br. 56; John McLaughlin, St. Louis Br. 343; Fran Meader, Newark, DE Br. 1977; John Oross, Dayton, OH Br. 182; Tony Perconte, Scotch Plains, NJ Br. 4102; Brian Simmons, Southeast Massachusetts Merged Br. 18; Chris Strickland, Tuscaloosa, AL Br. 1096; Robert Sweerus, Camden, NJ Merged Br. 540; Dan Versluis, Tucson, AZ Br. 704; Mike Wahlquist, Salt Lake City, UT Br. 111; Robyn Williams, North Oakland County, MI Br. 320; Traci Wyrick, Killeen, TX Br. 4217.

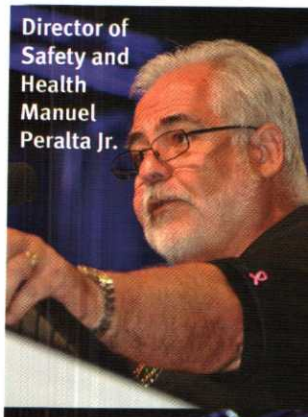
Wilson announced that the total number of delegates registered is 5,410, representing 612 branches.

The delegates then discussed and voted on several resolutions. By voice vote, the delegates disapproved a resolution that called for NALC not to support investing limited amounts of retiree health benefit funds in index funds.

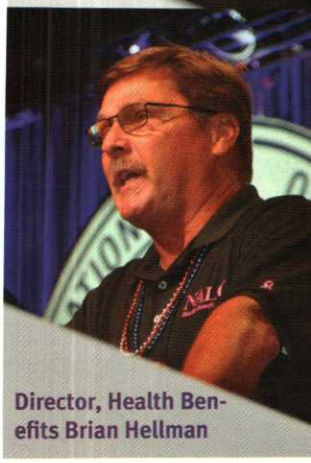


Delegates gave a letter carrier cheer to Maria Elena Durazo of UNITE HERE.

The delegates also discussed a pair of resolutions previously approved by the Executive Council declaring solidarity with the goals of the Black Lives Matter movement, one offered by the Oregon State Association and the other by Greensboro, NC Br. 630.



Director of Safety and Health Manuel Peralta Jr.



Director, Health Benefits Brian Hellman

GROWING IN THE 'NEW ECONOMY'

The delegates viewed a video titled "Delivering Innovation" about the ways letter carriers are helping mail customers succeed in the e-commerce economy.

Executive Vice President Timothy O'Malley recognized letter carriers who worked to bring in Customer Connect sales leads worth $1 million or more to the Postal Service over the last two years: Jose Quintero, Torrance, CA Br. 2207; Kerri Cimino, Las Vegas Br. 2502;

Sarah Moe Meyers, vice president for government affairs for Hallmark Cards, delivered a greeting to the delegates.

O'Malley said the Customer Connect program generates an average of $2 billion a year in new revenue for the Postal Service. "By finding the Postal Service new customers," O'Malley said, "Customer Connect serves to secure a better future for all fellow letter carriers."

STANDING TOGETHER

President Rolando welcomed Sarah Moe Meyers, vice president for government affairs for Hallmark Cards, to the stage.

Meyers told the delegates that her company is committed to working with NALC to ensure that the Postal Service remains strong and that high service standards, including six-day delivery, remain. The imperative to keep USPS healthy, she added, is about more than letter carrier jobs or Hallmark's bottom line—7.5 million Americans are employed by the mailing industry, which depends on a robust Postal Service.

"That is 6 percent of all U.S. jobs, and they support $1.4 trillion in revenue," Meyers said. "Now, you can't tell me that there is not a correlation between a viable Postal Service and a growing economy.

"And that is why it is so critical for mailers and unions to stand together for common sense postal reform," Meyers said.

Following Meyers' remarks, President Rolando introduced Board of Trustees Chairman Lawrence D. Brown Jr. of Los Angeles Branch 24 and trustees Randall Keller of Northeast Massachusetts Merged Branch 25 and Michael Gill of South Florida Branch 1071. Brown reported that an independent audit had found that the union's finances are sound.

The president introduced Band Committee Chairman Ernest Phillips of Cleveland Branch 40, who introduced committee members Barry Bode of Jonesboro, AR Branch 1131 and Rich Accord of Beckley, WV Branch 2420. The committee delivered its report to the convention.

After a few announcements, the convention adjourned just before 3 p.m.

CORRECTION

Yesterday's *Chronicle* reported that General Resolution 15 was withdrawn. The resolution withdrawn was actually National Agreement Resolution 15.

Lavonne Buening, Seattle Br. 79; Steven Haworth, Olympia, WA, Br. 351; Steven Rubino, South Macomb, MI Br. 4374; Jeff Bowser, Wilmington, DE Br. 191; Bruce Durda, Woonsocket, RI Br. 54; Paulo Vieira, Springfield, NJ Br. 38; Joseph Colella, Paterson, NJ Br. 120; Waitak Lam, Flushing, NY Br. 294; Chris Montano and Katrina Whitfield, Jamaica, NY Br. 562; Rontarin David, Br. 562; Kasim Campbell, Br. 562; Michael Sciallo and Justin Puglisi, Long Island Merged NY Br. 6000.

Director of City Delivery Brian Renfroe

Executive Vice President Timothy O'Malley

NALC AUXILIARY

WEDNESDAY, AUG. 17

The delegates were greeted with music from the Seattle Letter Carrier Band, led by band director Kenny Eline (Auxiliary 99, Seattle, WA).

President Cythensis Lang reconvened the meeting and the National Anthem was performed by the band. The Pledge of Allegiance was recited.

National Treasurer Pam Fore (Auxiliary 2621, Lakeland, FL) gave a brief history of the Seattle Letter Carrier Band. It was formed in 1892 and has continued through the years.

The corrected minutes from Monday were approved. The minutes for Tuesday were approved as read.

National Assistant Secretary Linda Davis (Auxiliary 194, Yakima, WA) gave the moment of grace.

National Secretary George Anna Myers (Auxiliary 4, Kansas City, MO) then explained to the membership that a per capita form should be filled out even if there is only one 50-year member, making that an active auxiliary.

The memorial service was conducted by National Vice President Cynthia Martinez (Auxiliary 377, Phoenix, AZ). Martinez read the 23rd Psalm and a poem titled "The Dash." She then read the names of the 40 deceased members as delegates placed flowers in a vase for each person.

The Seattle Letter Carrier Band played "Amazing Grace" while band member Tony McCarthy sang a beautiful rendition of the song. Martinez then read a closing poem and thanked Tony and the Seattle band. She had made a beautiful plaque for the members to take back to their states for the deceased members.

The Mileage and Per Diem Committee was introduced by President Lang. Gaye Meredith (Auxilary28, Dallas) and Andi Cooley (Auxiliary 1064, Lubbock, TX) gave the report on expenses and travel; all were approved. The travel for the 2018 convention in Detroit was also approved.

The Executive Board was ask to come over to the NALC general session on Tuesday afternoon. NALC Executive Vice President Timothy O'Malley introduced President Lang. She introduced the board members and brought greetings to the general session.

—Submitted by George Anna Myers, NALCA Secretary