

MUCH STILL TO DO

ELECTIONS PRESENT OPPORTUNITIES FOR PROGRESS



Members of the Wisconsin State Association with Rob Zerban, who ran against Rep. Paul Ryan (R-WI).

The NALC congratulates President Barack Obama and all the candidates elected to Congress on Tuesday, Nov. 6. The election results provide a starting point for the work ahead of resolving the financial problems facing the United States Postal Service. We set certain goals for the election, and the work of thousands of off-duty and retired letter carriers helped re-elect President Obama and elect or re-elect senators and House members who support our efforts to strengthen the Postal Service and support hard-working letter carriers.

“The election offers the prospect that the financial problems facing the United States Postal Service can be resolved in a fair and reasonable manner that benefits the public,” NALC President Fredric Rolando said.

Rolando made clear that while a victory by forces that seek to dismantle the Postal Service and attack public employees would have been bad for the USPS and for the country, the NALC’s work has just begun. The election provides an opportunity for progress but guarantees nothing.

“We intend to speak with members of the administration and with lawmakers in the weeks and months ahead about how best to assure that the Postal Service can continue to serve its vital function in the life of this country,” he said. “Its role today is every bit as important as it has been ever since our founders had the wisdom to enshrine it in the Constitution.”

Rather than hasty action on existing flawed bills by a lame-duck Congress, Rolando called on lawmakers to allow the new Congress to draft legislation that would improve the Postal Service’s situation, not worsen it as some current bills would. He called on NALC members to remain vigilant over the next couple of

months. However, the results of many legislative races promise to improve our prospects on postal issues, Rolando said.

“Addressing in a responsible manner the future of the Postal Service would, indeed, be a good place for all sides to demonstrate a commitment to effective governing,” Rolando said. “Legislation currently before Congress in both chambers fails to make the grade, because it would dismantle the universal network that provides Americans with the world’s most efficient delivery service, while degrading those very services and hence driving mail and revenue out of the system.”

Eliminating six-day delivery, for example, would impose new costs on small businesses that are open on weekends and need to send and receive financial documents—small businesses that provide two-thirds of all new jobs. And driving mail out of the system would reduce revenue and further imperil the Postal Service. Ending house-to-house delivery for tens of millions of residents and businesses would have similarly negative impacts.

Rolando urged lawmakers to begin from scratch and focus on repairing the damage caused by the 2006 congressional mandate that required the Postal Service, alone among all agencies and companies, to pre-fund future retiree health benefits. That accounts for 80 percent of all the red ink. Fixing this wouldn’t solve all of the agency’s problems, but it would end the crisis atmosphere and allow issues such as the decline in first-class mail to be addressed. The Postal Service needs to devise a business plan that addresses the serious challenges it faces while also recognizing opportunities such as the explosion in Internet-ordered packages that need to be delivered. ☒

WHEN POSTAL REFORM?

As this edition of *The Postal Record* was being prepared, it seemed increasingly unlikely that Congress would take up any of the postal reform bills in each of its chambers before the end of the year.

“The complex problems facing the USPS deserve Congress’ full attention,” NALC President Fredric Rolando said, “but our lawmakers have a full plate to handle between now and the end of the year as they deal with the so-called ‘fiscal cliff’”—the massive spending cuts called for by the 2011 debt-ceiling deal coupled with the scheduled return of income tax rates to Clinton-era levels.

“The last thing we need,” the president said, “is for a lame-duck Congress to hastily ram through any reform legislation that fails to take into account the unfair mandate to fully pre-fund 75 years’ worth of future retiree health benefits within just 10 years—the real reason the Postal Service faces its own ‘financial cliff.’”

And since the congressional makeup did not change dramatically following the Nov. 6 elections, Rolando said, “most of the lawmakers who will be sworn in on January 3 should have a good understanding of what worked in the previous session—and what did not. We will have a real opportunity come January to lobby our friends in both the House and Senate to consider fresh approaches to saving the Postal Service that take into account all stakeholders’ viewpoints.” (For a more detailed analysis of election results, see page 14.)

One such approach was introduced by Sen. Bernie Sanders (I-VT) and was included in the otherwise flawed bill that passed the Senate back in April. Sanders’ amendment to S. 1789 called for creation of a “blue-ribbon” commission composed of business leaders and legislators whose goal would be to brainstorm specific strategies to allow the Postal Service to behave more like a business.

“We feel this commission idea is a sound one,” Rolando said, “with two conditions: that it include a place at the table for postal employees, and that Congress agree to hold off on taking up any postal reform legislation

until after it hears from the commission.”

In the media

On Oct. 25, *The News Journal* in Wilmington, DE—the state’s largest paper—published a letter to the editor written by Wilmington Branch 191 President Bob Wilkerson. The letter ran the same day that Sen. Tom Carper (D-DE) held a rally in support of getting the House to consider S. 1789, the deeply flawed postal reform bill that he co-sponsored and that passed the Senate in April. “Lawmakers serious about improving things would start over and fix the artificial crisis they created,” Wilkerson wrote, “alleviating the sense of panic and the financial hemorrhaging.”

On Oct. 26, the *Hunterdon County [NJ] Democrat* published an editorial supportive of preserving the USPS. The piece did an excellent job of extolling the value of the Postal Service, although it neglected to cite pre-funding as the chief source of USPS’ financial woes. An editorial three days later in the *Pittsburgh Post-Gazette*, however, did state that the starting point for any legislation to preserve the Postal Service should be the repeal of the pre-funding mandate.

In late October, news media coverage of Hurricane Sandy’s assault on the East Coast often included mention of who was still out doing their jobs despite the storm—including, in many cases, letter carriers. *U.S. News & World Report* political and foreign affairs writer Susan Milligan, for example, posted one such piece on her publication’s website, with Elizabeth Dwoskin writing a similar item for *Bloomberg Businessweek*’s web page.

And a letter carrier-led food drive on Nov. 10, conducted in upstate New York to help those still reeling from the effects of Hurricane Sandy, received a great deal of positive coverage in news media outlets throughout the region, such as in Albany, Syracuse and Binghamton. (For more about our efforts to help those affected by the storm, see story on page 4.) ☒



NALC President Fredric Rolando (c) canvasses with Las Vegas Branch 2502 member Paul Peterman (l) and congressional candidate John Ocegüera.

NALC endorsed 291 candidates this election. Of those, 247 of our candidates won and 43 lost, and one election is still being contested at press time. So, 85 percent of our endorsed candidates won their elections. We endorsed two Independents, 31 Republicans and 258 Democrats.



NALC RELEASED MEMBERS

California

Ismael Michael Poblano, Br. 24
 Johnny Lee Harris, Br. 24
 Joseph Robert Gibson, Br. 52
 David Micheal Hoffman, Br. 70
 Jose Franco, Br. 70
 Carla Jo Bartlett, Br. 133
 David Lawson, Br. 133
 Jeffrey Barton Parr, Br. 183
 Richard E. Arranaga, Br. 193
 Justin Neil Wilson, Br. 213
 John Beaumont, Br. 214
 Eric James Ellis, Br. 231
 Jose Santos Garcia, Br. 231
 Diana T. Herrera, Br. 782
 Charles L. Tyma, Br. 1100
 Derek James Simpson, Br. 1100
 Sandra LeMoine, Br. 1100
 George R. Heim, Br. 1100
 Verle G. Craven, Br. 1111
 Darchelle Turner, Br. 1111
 Ronald Jones, Br. 1111
 Elizabeth Corriea, Br. 1111
 Harold Kelso, Br. 1439
 Carolyn M. Zorn, Br. 2200
 Leroy Collier, Br. 2200
 William H. Smith, Br. 2901
 David Alan Hyman, Br. 2902
 Ernestine L. Hernandez, Br. 2902
 Jill Lemons, Br. 4006
 Jose Leopoldo Villasenor, Br. 4006
 Linda Ann Duran, Br. 4494
 Walter L. Butler III, Br. 4850

Colorado

Cindy Kirby, Br. 47
 Brenda Willis, Br. 47
 Ami Michelle Nawrocki, Br. 229
 Jacqueline Skene, Br. 5996

Connecticut

Joseph Mahon, Br. 19
 Carol A. Emmer, Br. 32
 Daniel Nacin, Br. 86

Florida

Michael P. Boyle, Br. 53
 Dennis A. Bonilla, Br. 53
 Anthony J. Loconto, Br. 1071
 Deidre Beal, Br. 1071
 Sandalio Lleo, Br. 1071
 Frank Ramirez, Br. 1071
 Shane Ulbin, Br. 1091

James F. Brown, Br. 1091
 Orville Elliott, Br. 1477
 Lori Bell, Br. 1477
 Kevin J. Byrne, Br. 1690
 Gerard Lonergan, Br. 2008
 James Cox, Br. 3367
 Jesse Costin, Br. 4716

Hawaii

Cynthia Ann Ishizaki, Br. 860
 Glen Takara, Br. 4454
 Terry Ann K. Kaolulo, Br. 4682
 Michelle Luke, Br. 4837

Illinois

Steven A. Bilzing, Br. 155
 Melissa Dyan Kinworthy, Br. 209
 Anthony Bultinck, Br. 292
 Mark Leasure, Br. 305
 Christopher E. Bragg, Br. 317
 Mark Dowdle, Br. 825
 Gregory W. Ferritto, Br. 825
 Luis Rivas, Jr., Br. 2076

Iowa

Thomas J. Reisdorf, Br. 257
 Jeff Erickson, Br. 352
 Mark Fallis, Br. 352
 Kelly E. Steinke, Br. 373
 James Beach, Br. 644

Massachusetts

Kenneth Janulewicz, Br. 12
 Paul E. Mulcahy, Br. 18
 Scott Doughty, Br. 18
 Van C. Heffernan, Br. 18
 Kenneth W. Mooney, Br. 18
 Barry N. Doherty, Br. 25
 Kenneth F. Dusombre Jr., Br. 25
 Richard F. Donlon, Br. 33
 James J. Bursey, Br. 33
 Maureen Marinelli, Br. 34
 Joseph DeMambro, Br. 34
 Robert H. Damatin, Br. 34
 Patricia Rogers, Br. 46
 Lilliana Franco-Melo, Br. 51
 Kevin D. Poe, Br. 212

Michigan

Jered Scott Andrus, Br. 56
 Peter Summit, Br. 56
 Robin P. Randall, Br. 438
 Patricia Linna, Br. 2184
 Scott Watts, Br. 2184
 Mike Sheridan, Br. 4374

Minnesota

Catherine Burton, Br. 9
 Lisa O'Neil, Br. 9
 Kevin J. Dorff, Br. 28
 Shawn Raymond Hansen, Br. 114

Missouri

Kevin T. Boyer, Br. 203
 Ronnie D. Lewis, Br. 763
 Thomas Bolen, Br. 1015
 Patrick Flora, Br. 1264
 Kevin Holmes, Br. 5050

Montana

Bruce E. George, Br. 220
 Rebecca Nylund, Br. 621
 Stephen H. Swanstrom, Br. 701
 Randall S. Rabas, Br. 815

Nevada

Cindy Groves, Br. 709
 Kenneth Groves, Br. 709
 Daniel Bettridge, Br. 709
 Paul Peterman, Br. 2502
 Lloyd Bell Jr., Br. 2502
 Alberto Leon, Br. 2502
 Colleen M. James, Br. 2502
 Cynthia F. Lindemon, Br. 2502
 Lucy James, Br. 2502
 Lisa Contos, Br. 2778
 Leon M. Grizzle, Br. 2778

New Hampshire

Cheryl Acker, Br. 44
 Bill Brickley, Br. 44
 Stephen B. Phillips, Br. 44
 Wayne G. Alterisio, Br. 44

New York

Douglas Fordyce, Br. 3
 Thomas J. Dlugolenski, Br. 134
 Richard H. Hansen, Br. 137
 Kevin Montgomery, Br. 210
 John J. Duffy, Br. 358
 Robert R. Riley Jr., Br. 358
 James R. Tuthill, Br. 6000

North Carolina

James Charlet, Br. 464

Ohio

Regina Williams, Br. 40
 Mary Campbell-Stack, Br. 40

Bill Devore, Br. 40
 Alesha Ann Chappell, Br. 43
 Kevin Grabel, Br. 43
 Jennifer L. Linz, Br. 43
 Jacquelyn Mitchell, Br. 78
 Charles Sanders, Br. 78
 Herbert E. Renfer Jr., Br. 100
 Patricia M. Haupricht, Br. 100
 Jeffery M. Kranz, Br. 143
 Tim Heitic, Br. 148
 Ron Green, Br. 164
 Daniel L. Wolff, Br. 182
 Patricia A. Drews, Br. 196
 Gary Arthur Scherer, Br. 238
 Scott Howell, Br. 297

Pennsylvania

Charles A. Hamilton, Br. 84
 Howard W. Brandt, Br. 84
 Edward J. Morgan II, Br. 157
 Clay Smith, Br. 157
 Roger Douglas Jenkins, Br. 284
 Paul A. Rozzi, Br. 332
 Joseph G. Antal, Br. 451
 Darrel Vance, Br. 500
 Andrea Goodwin, Br. 2572

Texas

Homer G. Hernandez, Br. 421

Washington

Paul Garrett Scott, Br. 79
 James Andrews Hubbard, Br. 130
 Robert James, Br. 791

Wisconsin

Allen Jelinek, Br. 2
 Robert John Borowski, Br. 2
 Bonnie Alsup, Br. 125
 Keith Steffan, Br. 507
 William Rogers, Br. 507
 JoAnn Hertel, Br. 700
 BaLynda Schweitzer, Br. 822
 Sallie A. Wylie, Br. 1083

The full list of silver- and gold-level Carrier Corps members will be run in next issue of *The Postal Record*.

WHAT ELECTION MEANS FOR COUNTRY, LABOR

Right up to Election Day on Nov. 6, pollsters and pundits were warning that the country faced the prospect of an extremely close presidential vote, with the results possibly coming down to a battleground state such as Ohio or Florida—raising the specter of another 2000 with recounted ballots and delays, lawyers and courts.

In the weeks leading up to the election, there even seemed to be a chance of a split between the popular vote and the Electoral College. That would have reinforced the political divisions and polarization that have roiled the nation's politics for years, while also weakening the new president's mandate.

Some analysts spoke of a possible tie—269 to 269—in the electoral vote, meaning the House would choose the president while the Senate would choose the vice president, likely resulting in the bizarre situation of a Republican president, Mitt Romney, and a Democratic vice president, Joe Biden.

But in the end, of course, none of this materialized. The results came in early, they were unambiguous, and they were unexpectedly one-sided.

President Barack Obama retained his job by more than 3 million votes. He won the majority of the states. He swept the Midwestern battleground states his aides had designated as his “firewall”—and even captured Florida and Virginia, which the Republicans had counted on.

So what does it mean? What is the significance of the results for the country, for labor, and for letter carriers?

Some would depict this as a status-quo election, and in a literal sense it was. The White House remained Democratic, the Senate remained Democratic, and the House remained Republican. But that is a superficial analysis that overlooks what actually happened.



Despite a still-weak economy, President Obama easily bested a challenger who promised to use his business background to improve the economy. In re-electing Obama, Americans said—by their votes and by their responses in exit polls—that they felt the country is on the track to economic recovery. They voted for the candidate who promised to rebuild the middle class while asking the wealthiest among us to pay their fair share in taxes, and against the challenger who wanted to provide tax relief to millionaires. They voted for the candidate who had provided national health care and against the candidate who said his first order of business would be to repeal “Obamacare.”

They voted for the candidate who campaigned with labor, not against it; who spoke of the importance of the labor movement and of worker rights such as collective bargaining; and they rejected the candidate who spoke of “labor stooges” and who supported the various state initiatives that would have restricted collective-bargaining rights or introduced “right to work laws” that would erode the standing of living of working people.

And they voted against the candidate who spoke of privatizing the U.S. Postal Service and whose party platform stood

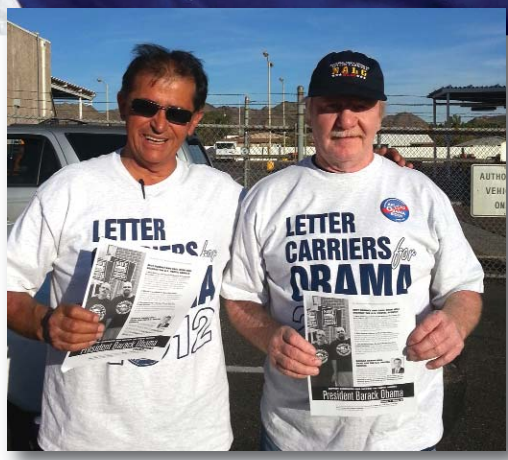


Top: NALC members with Rep. Jo Ann Emerson (R-MO).

Above: Members of West Palm Beach, FL Branch 1690 go door to door to increase voter turnout.

Below: Carriers took to the street to help re-elect Rep. Ed Perlmutter (D-CO).





Top: Florida carriers show their strong support for Rep. Debbie Wasserman Schultz (D-FL).

Above: Phoenix Branch 576 members pass out fliers.

Below: NALC teamed up with members of the United Teachers of New Orleans to turn out the vote in Louisiana.

Bottom: Workers in Illinois prepare for a rally to promote workers' issues.



reality on its head by talking about underfunded pensions for postal employees.

Perhaps most dramatically, they voted for the candidate who spoke of the need for a strong federal government to exert a positive influence in our society, and rejected the candidate who called for a reduced federal presence in our lives.

That philosophical contrast was brought into sharp relief by Mother Nature, when Hurricane Sandy ravaged parts of the Northeast the week before the election. Its political impact was so powerful that some analysts dubbed it this year's "October surprise."

The nation watched as President Obama rallied federal agencies, including the Federal Emergency Management Agency, to help victims in hard-hit New Jersey and New York. There was an inescapable comparison to the hapless workings of FEMA when Hurricane Katrina hit the Gulf states in 2005 and the administration of George W. Bush had devalued the agency. And Romney was put on the defensive by his prior comments about FEMA representing an improper federal usurpation of responsibilities that properly belonged to the states.

The political impact of this was magnified when New Jersey Gov. Chris Christie—who had been a keynote speaker at the Republican National Convention—lavished praise on President Obama for quickly providing federal assistance to the state's flood-ravaged coastal areas.

While voters were clearly concerned about the lingering high unemployment rates and the deficits, they also made clear that the answers do not lie in tax cuts for the wealthy, a repeal of the new healthcare law, wholesale cuts in social programs, a shrinking of the federal government and the vilification of unions.

Rather, they favored a balanced approach that includes investment in the country, a fair share of taxes from millionaires and billionaires, investment in

education and infrastructure and public services, an effective federal government and positive policies toward the middle class and working families.

This analysis is only reinforced when one looks at the legislative races. Given the tough economy, for months many commentators had posited that anti-government forces might take over the Senate or at least make inroads. Not only didn't that happen, in a number of states—Massachusetts, Ohio, Montana, Hawaii Missouri among them—ardent defenders of working people and of the federal government were elected or re-elected.

While changes were less dramatic in the House, several of the shrillest voices against government and unions were defeated.

"We have several new pro-worker allies and welcome key returning ones," NALC President Fredric Rolando said. "Elizabeth Warren, elected from Massachusetts, will be—in fact, long has been—a tireless voice on behalf of working people." Rolando also cited the wins by Virginia's new senator, Tim Kaine; Hawaii's senator-elect, Mazie Hirono; Wisconsin's newly elected senator, Tammy Baldwin; Ohio Sen. Sherrod Brown; Missouri Rep. Jo Ann Emerson; Virginia Rep. Gerry Connolly; Montana Sen. Jon Tester and many others elected or re-elected.

Congress now needs to act responsibly when it comes to an institution older than the country itself and indispensable to rebuilding a strong economy—the United States Postal Service.

"Addressing in a responsible manner the future of the Postal Service would be a good place for all sides to demonstrate a commitment to effective governing," President Rolando said.

Among its other meanings, the election showed the power of the labor movement and of working families. Despite its declining numbers—labor today represents 12 percent of the workforce, compared to three times that in



the 1950s—its political clout has remained strong. While it typically is outspent by business adversaries, corporations cannot match the boots on the ground that labor supplies, as it did once again this year to boost pro-worker candidates in key states such as Ohio, Pennsylvania, Michigan and Wisconsin. And union members voted in the millions across the country.

Labor's role was broader in this presidential election than it had been in recent ones. Not only was labor a player, it also was an issue. Long ignored by the media and much of the public, the labor movement became a political flashpoint after efforts by Wisconsin Gov. Scott Walker and governors or lawmakers in other states to make unions into scapegoats for the economic crisis. Beyond the state battles, labor was brought into the political spotlight by attacks on decisions by the National Labor Relations Board, on the compensation accorded public employees, on labor's role in the auto bailout and healthcare reform.

Several anti-worker candidates sought to gain votes by lashing out at unions, at worker rights and at the very idea of public service, which they often sought to privatize.

For the most part, these efforts failed. Voters in state after state showed an understanding that the economic crisis was not caused by teachers or letter carriers, by autoworkers or nurses, by coal miners or truck drivers—but rather by Wall Street and bankers and by politicians who had insisted on lax regulation of these sectors. And the voters said

in unequivocal terms that the crisis cannot be resolved on the backs of middle class and working families.

Indeed, in Wisconsin—the state that came to symbolize the “war on labor” after Gov. Walker tried to revoke public-sector collective bargaining, not to mention the home state of Republican vice presidential nominee Paul Ryan—voters sided with President Obama. Moreover, they sent a progressive, pro-labor candidate to the U.S. Senate.

So what does all this mean for us—for letter carriers and the NALC?

President Rolando said the election results provide an opportunity, but that the rest is up to us.

“It gives us the chance to save the Postal Service, to protect our craft, to continue to provide the American people with the world's best delivery service,” he said. “The results guarantee nothing, but they do provide a path forward.

“I know that we can rely on you, wherever you live, whatever your political views, to help get our message out and to let friends, neighbors, customers and lawmakers know the importance of retaining the world's best delivery network.” ✉



Top left: Labor walkers in Sedalia, MO Branch 139

Top right: Members of Region 13 work to turn out the vote in Virginia.

Above: A phone bank to re-elect Sen. Claire McCaskill (D-MO)

Below: Cleveland, OH Branch 40 members head to a rally.

