

# HISTORY OF THE FLORIDA STATE ASSOCIATION OF LETTER CARRIERS

By O. D. Elliott

The following record of the FSALC is compiled from various sources, i.e. old Convention Booklets, copies of the FSALC's former newsletter, "The Florida Letter Carrier", various Available documents and information provided by the NALC Director of Information, Nancy Dysart and Br 1091, Orlando.

Following the establishment of the NALC in 1889, various cities across America began establishing "Branches" and having them officially chartered by the National. At the same time, States began forming State Associations. The Florida State Association of Letter Carriers was chartered by the NALC on September 23, 1913. At the time of this charter, there were already several Branches chartered in Florida, including Br 818, Key West, Br 3944, Jacksonville (later became Br 53), Br 1477, St. Petersburg, Br 1071, Miami, and Br 1091, Orlando.

Although chartered in 1913, the first record of a Convention was 1923 in Tampa, Florida. From 1923 through 1972, the FSALC held yearly Conventions. In 1972, the Bylaws were changed and beginning in 1973, the Association began having biennial Conventions each odd year. During the 1920s through 1934, many of the Conventions were held jointly with the National Federation of Post Office Clerks (later to become the APWU), Association of Postmasters, National Association of Postal Supervisors, and the National League of District Postmasters. (This was generally at the request of the Post Office.)

Following is a list of State Conventions:

1923 - Tampa	1924 - Orlando	1925 - St.Petersburg
1926 - Miami	1927 - W.Palm Beach	1928 - Ft. Myers
1929 - Tampa	1930 - Orlando	1931 - St. Petersburg
1932 - Miami	1933 - Ocala	1934 - Jacksonville
1935 - Tampa	1936 - W. Palm Beach	1937 - St. Augustine
1938 - St. Petersburg	1939 - Daytona Beach	1940 - (unknown)
1941 - Miami	1942 - Jacksonville	1943 - (unknown)
1944 - Ft. Lauderdale	1945 - (none due to travel restrictions)	
1946 - Tampa	1947 - St. Petersburg	1948 - Jacksonville
1949 - Lakeland	1950 - Orlando	1951 - W. Palm Beach
1952 - St. Augustine	1953 - Miami Beach	1954 - Pensacola
1955 - Clearwater	1956 - Orlando	1957 - Ft. Lauderdale
1958 - Tampa	1959 - St. Petersburg	1960 - (unknown)
1961 - Jacksonville	1962 - Clearwater	1963 - Hollywood
1964 - (unknown)	1965 - Ft. Lauderdale	1966 - (unknown)
1967 - (unknown)	1968 - W. Palm Beach	1969 - Jacksonville
1970 - (unknown)	1971 - Miami Beach	1972 - St. Petersburg
1973 - Orlando	1975 - Tampa	1977 - Sarasota
1979 - Ft. Lauderdale	1981 - Orlando	1983 - Jacksonville

(Convention sites continued)

1985 - Hollywood	1987 - St. Petersburg	1989 - Orlando
1991 - Tampa	1993 - Ft. Lauderdale	1995 - St. Petersburg
1997 - Tampa	1999 - Ft. Lauderdale	2001 - Tampa
2003 - Orlando	2005 - Naples	2007 - Jacksonville
2009 - Naples		

Following is a list of Presidents of the FSALC. As with the Convention sites, the list is incomplete and could only be compiled from the records available.

1914 - 1915 BD Jenks of Key West  
1924 Joe Fletcher  
1925 WS Ferguson of St. Petersburg  
1926 FM Lang of Miami  
1927 Hubert V. Hiers of W. Palm Beach  
1928 WL Jacobs of Miami  
1929 William Dubose  
1930 - 1931 John Coram of Tampa  
1932 - 1933 (1st name unknown) Paulson  
1934 - 1936 CM Kickliter of Tampa  
1937 - 1940 (1st name unknown) Queen  
1941 - 1944 Spencer Locke of Orlando  
1945 - 1946 Lon Almand of Tampa  
1947 - 1948 James Sladky of Miami  
1949 - 1950 RH Peacock of Jacksonville  
1951 - 1952 Warren Sturgis of St. Petersburg  
1953 Doyle Adair of W. Palm Beach  
1954 - 1956 JR Mills of Tampa  
1957 Clarence Forbes  
1958 - 1959 Clarence Jacobs of Orlando  
1960 - 1962 James Dolan of Miami  
1963 - 1965 David Gardner of Plant City (a Rural Carrier)  
1966 - 1967 EJ Wilson of Miami  
1968 - 1970 Bill Corbeau (for whom our Scholarship is partially named)  
1971 - Howard Carter of Tampa  
1972 - 1976 Albert Arnold of Tampa  
1977 - 1978 Luther Sands  
1979 - 1980 James C. Mahlbacher of Miami  
1981 - 2008 John Giordano of Miami  
2009 Matthew Rose of Miami

FSALC AND THE "SEPARATE CHARTER ISSUE": During much of its early history, the NALC had provisions in its Constitution for "Separate" or "Dual" subordinate Branches. These consisted of a Branch for black carriers and a Branch for white carriers in the same city. Many cities, both in the North and the South had these "Dual" Branches. At the NALC Convention in Cleveland in 1954, this system of "Dual" Branches was abolished. However, the NALC allowed 17 cities to continue their "Dual" Branches,

including several in Florida. At the FSALC Convention in Clearwater in 1955, the State Association drafted and passed a Resolution seeking from National the restoration of the "Separate Charter" system. Even though officially abolished by the NALC in 1954, it persisted until April 14, 1961 when the NALC Executive Council issued a directive that "all" "Dual" Chartered Branches must merge within 90 days. This finally ended a regrettable period in our history, but one that cannot be overlooked.

REVENUE: From the beginning of the State Association until the introduction of automatic dues deductions in January of 1965, yearly per capita was collected from the Branches by the State Secretary. Each year the Secretary sent a per capita tax "call" letter to each Branch in the Association. He made a report at each Convention of the Branches that had paid and those that had not. Branches not paying the per capita tax were usually suspended until payment. In 1949, the State Association had some financial problems and sent a ballot by mail to all members in the State proposing to raise the per capita from \$1.50 to \$2.00 per member. The proposal passed by a margin of 724 (for) to 362 (against) with 98 ballots not returned. At some point between 1949 and 1981 (unknown), the per capita was increased from \$2.00 per member to \$2.50 per member. In 1981 in Orlando, the per capita was increased to \$3.00. The last increase came at the 1987 State Convention in St. Petersburg when the per capita was increased from \$3.00 to \$3.90.

THE FLORIDA LETTER CARRIER: Much of the information in this document came from old issues of "The Florida Letter Carrier. This was a paper published monthly and mailed to all members. Each month, many of the State Officers and the National Business Agent submitted reports. Also, Branches routinely submitted articles about matters of concern from their cities. This publication began in July 1936 and ended in late 1998. It ended when the publisher ended operations. The State made extensive efforts to secure another publisher. However, no publisher could be found who was willing to sell ads for the paper to cover the costs, as had been done by the previous publishers. The other publishers required between \$5,000 and \$6,000 per issue to cover the cost of the publishing and mailing. This cost was prohibitive.

FLORIDA STATE ASSOCIATION OF CARRIER RETIREMENT BENEFITS ASSOCIATION: In October of 1953, the FSALC put into place a retirement benefits program for Letter Carriers. This was a voluntary program that would upon the retirement or death of a (contributing) member pay a benefit to the carrier or his/her beneficiary (depending upon the amount contributed). Application was limited to carriers under the age of 45. This Benefits Association continued until the 90s, when it disbanded due to a lack of support.

MEMBERSHIP: Until the 1978 NALC National Convention in Chicago, Branches weren't required to belong to the State Association. At the 1978 National Convention, Article 2 of the Constitution of the government of State Associations was changed requiring that "Membership of this Association shall be composed of all members in good standing in the National Association of Letter Carriers within the geographical boundaries of their respective State." Prior to the adoption of this change, all State Associations, including the FSALC had ongoing problems concerning Branches choosing not to belong to the

Association or Branches being suspended due to non payment of per capita tax for their members. It should be noted that in 1977, the largest Branch in Florida, Br 1071, Miami voluntarily rejoined the State Association.

FUNCTION: During all of the NALC's history, action in the legislative arena has been the primary function of all State Associations. Until the NALC obtained the right to bargain collectively in the Postal Reorganization Act following the Postal Strike of 1970, the FSALC as well as all other State Associations, spent time, resources, and efforts in lobbying Congress for decent wages, working conditions, annual leave, sick leave, overtime pay and widows annuities. Instead of collective bargaining, it was much akin to "collective begging". In January of 1948, the FSALC and other State Associations met at NALC HQ in Washington, D.C. to form an aggressive program to present to Congress concerning pay and working conditions. In the 1949 FSALC Convention in Lakeland, the big issue were bills pending in Congress to give Postal Workers 26 days of AL , 15 days of SL, provide a one time \$100 clothing allowance, provide a pay increase of \$150 per year, eliminate the four lowest pay grades which would make the starting pay \$2,950 per annum and provide widows' benefits for deceased Postal Workers. By 1953, these same matters were still pending in the new session of Congress. In 1953 and again in 1954 the FSALC began, along with other State Associations an aggressive legislative campaign of urging Letter Carriers to write, telegraph, and telephone their Congressmen and Senators to urge them to support a wage increase. Many carriers, in their letters, noted that they had to have part time jobs just to support their families. At a District 2 meeting in St. Petersburg in 1954, NALC President William Doherty noted a survey that indicated that 79.66% of Letter Carriers either had outside jobs or their wives were employed outside the home. In February of 1957, the FSALC and other State Associations held rallies throughout their states seeking public support in urging Congress not to implement a threatened pay freeze. Again in 1958 and 1959, the FSALC had an aggressive letter writing, telegraphing, and telephoning campaign seeking support from Congress for a reasonable pay increase. A strong legislative agenda has always been of great importance for the FSALC as well as other State Associations. In the early years, the simple recognition of the NALC as a representative of Letter Carriers was paramount. During the 40s and 50s , our legislative efforts were primarily concerned with seeking support for things that we take for granted today, i.e. decent wages, overtime pay, guaranteed hours, clothing allowances, widows annuities, AL, SL, decent working conditions, etc. After obtaining collective bargaining rights, there was a concentration of legislative efforts to get the Hatch Act repealed. Throughout the history of the FSALC, legislative efforts have been made and are continuing to be made to get our members to contact their Congressmen and Senators to support legislation that would be beneficial and to oppose legislation that would not be in our interests. At the 2006 NALC Convention, the Constitution of the Government of State Associations was changed, making activities relating to legislation the sole mission of the State Associations.

While this report or history of the FSALC is far from being complete, I have endeavored to piece together as much information as possible from the sources available. Nancy Dysart, Director of Information for the NALC, and Dan Tegreeny, President of Br 1091 were extremely helpful with the material provided and loaned .

