



THE Mail Bag NEWS

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The Roads to Ruin

By Frank Salazar, President

Happy New Year! The calendar has once again returned to January, so once again we try to do things anew. This year is going to bring a lot of changes for the craft. For one, the NALC will begin negotiating with the Postal Service well in advance of our 2011 contract expiration date. Second, many of the National Re-assessment Process grievances will either be settled or appealed



to arbitration. Third, we will most likely begin to experience the handling of FSS mail (a.k.a. DPS'd flats) in some parts of our branch. The Postal Service must change, and so it will. However, it must involve the participation of the men and women who work within it. The Postal Service has already outlined its plans for 2010 and beyond and to say the least their ideas are not beneficial to those who actually move the mail.

While surfing the net, I came across a paper authored by the Postal Service entitled, Assessment of the United States Postal Service Future Business Model. The paper states that the USPS has lost \$12.6 billion in the last 3 years, and expects to lose almost \$8.6 billion in 2010. According to the Postal Service the current economic recession has reduced mail volume, and a huge amount of volume has been lost to the Internet-electronic diversion as they call it. But, these are not the only issues crippling Postal finances. The statutory mandate to pre-fund retiree health benefits is also placing a burden on the Postal Service. The NALC agrees that pre-funding retiree

health benefits to the tune of \$5.4 to \$5.8 billion a year through 2017 is onerous to say the least, and this amount has to be lowered and the time to pre-fund has to be extended.

I've always considered the Postal Service to be psychotic when it came to its identity of being either a service entity for the American public or a quasi-governmental business. Under the Postal Re-

organization Act of 1970, the Postal Service was mandated to break even. Under the Postal Accountability and Enhancement Act of 2006, the Postal Service went to a profit and loss structure. If the Postal Service were truly a business enterprise, it would not provide universal service at universal rates six days a week. Therefore, in my opinion, the Postal Service should give up on profit making schemes and concentrate on delivery services that the American people need and desire. Of course, the Service would still have to control costs and run efficiently, but not at the cost of profit over service.

For example, take Customer Connect. Here is a program that has brought in over \$800 million nationwide, but local managers in our district do little to promote it. They see it as more of a pain in the rear, and a budget buster with no allocated hours in their budget. The Managers on the workroom floor just don't get it. Here, at their feet, is a viable revenue stream that they refuse to fully embrace. A private enterprise would

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not stand for such ineptitude. Here is an example of a revenue stream directly related to delivery, not some pie in the sky profit scheme pushing a product for a large multi-national corporation.

In the paper, the Postal Service admits that its business model doesn't work in an atmosphere of declining volumes with increasing fixed costs. According to the Postal Service, its adding 1-2 million new deliveries a

year to its network and providing "affordable universal service" is driving costs up. Therefore, the Service states that it must consolidate operations, close unneeded facilities, and reduce its size (labor costs) quickly in order to take advantage of the early outs and current attrition. Otherwise, they will be forced to employ new hires defeating the purpose of the early outs and the NRP and Limited-Duty Pilot programs.

In the USPS view, its needs to eliminate 6-day delivery, weaken retirement benefits, weaken no lay off provisions, and weaken workman's compensation laws and benefits. It would also like to withdraw from providing universal delivery at universal rates, and be allowed to diversify into any type of revenue generation scheme they can. The Service also states that Congress doesn't want the USPS to rely on appropriated funds. Basically, Congress wants it to be self-supportive like it has been for over 3 decades. However, at the present time, the Postal Service can only see five business models in its future. I call these five business models, the Roads to Ruin.

The five Roads to Ruin as envisioned by the Postal Service are:

1) The USPS Remains a Self-sustaining Federal Entity, but is Granted New Flexibilities. Under this scenario, the Service would abolish 6-day delivery and get rid of restrictions on Post Office and facility closings. Also, look for the Service to weaken retirement and workman's compensation benefits, and to increase the use of casuals and TE's by attempting to weaken no layoff provisions. Moreover, look for additional calls of so called "worksharing" or contracting out.

2) The Postal Service is a Federal Government Agency Supported by Appropriations. Under this scenario, the Service becomes like the old Post Office Department depending on Congress for appropriations and becoming a burden on the taxpayer. Remember the days of political appointees and widespread cronyism? Remember collective begging for pay increases?

3) The Postal Service owns and maintains only the delivery network. Under this scenario, the Service would maintain the retail (window) aspect of the business, but would give up its mail processing and transportation to a private network. This plan would put the Service at the mercy of private businesses, which would increase costs to the USPS network. Look for potential system wide service failures due to the private entities

cutting back on services, employment, and transportation and taking other short cuts to increase their profits at the expense of the Postal Service.

4) The Postal Service is liberalized. Under this scenario, the USPS gives up its monopoly on the delivery of letter mail and exclusive access to the mailbox. Any business using anyone could deliver to anybody. The Postal Service would become the delivery service of last resort taking on all business bulk mail at the lowest rates. In turn, employment, wages, and benefits would decline. Good paying middle class jobs would be wiped out.

5) The Postal Service is privatized. Under this scenario, it's The End!

The Postal Service needs to really think their position through and avoid the roads to ruin by concentrating on their core business, and providing the services that the American public wants and needs. Working with the crafts that represent the men and women who work within the Postal Service would be a good place to start. The, my way or the highway approach is a non-starter and a dead end.

Branch 2902 Members in a Giving Mood

During October and November of 2009, the Branch sponsored a couple of year ending events to raise money for Muscular Dystrophy and the Saxsenmeier Scholarship Fund. In October, the Branch in conjunction with Branch 4006 Canoga Park sponsored a No Limit Texas Hold'em Poker Tournament. The Branches after expenses and prizes raised \$2234.00 for charity.

On November 1st, 2009, the Branch also participated in the first annual nationwide NALC Bowl-a-Thon for MDA. We experienced some growing pains with this event, because we had trouble getting in touch with our local MDA volunteer. The Branch didn't get enough advance notice to properly publicize the event locally. But thanks to Sandy Gaunce, our MDA representative, and Brunswick Bowl in Simi Valley, who donated the lanes and shoes, we managed to put the event together at the last minute. We had 13 people participate and we raised \$929 for MDA. Those in attendance had a blast. I hadn't bowled in at least a decade and had a great time. We all had a great time! Our high scoring bowler was Woodland Hills Letter Carrier Richard Uhlman who had a high 3 game average of 581. We will do this again next year with better participation and advance notice. This was a truly fun and worthy event. Hope to see you all at this event next year.

Protect Your Route/Protect Your Job:, Document & Scan

Internally, the NALC has had many debates about evaluated routes, and so has the Postal Service. What is an evaluated route? What is an eight-hour assignment? Are we going to have an evaluated route like the Rural Letter Carriers? Well, I think we are already there. We are already experiencing an evaluated route system and it's using a combination of your data (office and street times) and data from standard time based on 18 & 8, volume records, and data from 3999's. It is

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WELCOME TO THE YEAR 2010

By: Ray Hill, Executive Vice-President



Happy New Year and welcome to the Year 2010. No, that's not a typo, I wrote *Two Thousand and Ten*. Just looking at the number/year 2010 seems very strange to me and I find it hard to believe that a whole decade has passed since we rang in the Year 2000, also known as the dreaded **Y2K**.

I **vaguely** remember when I was a youngster, way back when, anxiously waiting for some anticipated event (like Christmas, summer vacation etc.) that seemed to take an eternity to arrive.

I also vaguely remember complaining to my parents that the much-anticipated event seemed like it might not ever arrive and how I wished that time would go much, much faster. I recall my father advising me not to "wish my life away", trying to speed up time in anticipation of some future event. My father also told me that, as I grew older, time would seem to fly by faster and faster and faster. He was surely right about that. Time is indeed steam rolling along and the 20th century is rapidly disappearing in our rear view mirrors.

It is no secret that the USPS did terribly, financially speaking, in Fiscal Year (FY) 2009. As I'm sure you've all read or heard by now, over and over again, the USPS lost **3.8 Billion Dollars** in FY 2009. That means that in FY 2009 the USPS lost 3.8 times more money than Tiger Woods has earned through endorsements and winnings in his previously considered illustrious career. Damn, that's a lot of money. Because of these huge losses, the USPS seems to be constantly "putting out fires", monetarily speaking, and USPS Management's answers to the economic problems we face is always the same; **torpedoes be damned, we must reduce costs no matter how much service to our valued patrons suffers**.

The USPS's drastic costs cutting/service cutting responses to their financial losses include some of the following knee jerk reactions, listed in no particular order:

- 1) The removal of collection boxes that served the neighborhoods where they stood for 50 years or more prior to their removal.
- 2) The removal of stamp machines from the lobbies of USPS facilities that do not have window service.
- 3) The elimination of jobs and work hours.
- 4) Offering early retirements to some employees.
- 5) Desperately trying to get congress and the public to buy into their suicidal plan to eliminate one day of delivery per week.

I was recently conducting a Station Visit at MCA in San Fernando when I spoke to a Carrier there who was very upset because of Management had recently removed stamp machines

from the lobby at MCA.

There is no window service at MCA so, like many other USPS offices without window service, they used to sell stamps out of machines in the lobby.

Well, they don't sell stamps anymore, because the stamp machines were recently removed from the MCA lobby. According to the USPS, it's just not cost effective to keep the stamp machines in lobbies where they do not offer full window service. Remember, it takes an employee to service and stock these stamp machines and the money just ain't in the budget.

The USPS's motto is this: if you want stamps then you should go buy them at Ralph's or Von's when you buy your groceries and, please, quit your whining about it.

The MCA Carrier who told me that they had removed the stamp machines from the MCA office also told me that she had received some complaints from patrons who were angry that the stamp machines had been removed.

I fully understand the monetary woes that the USPS is suffering from and I fully understand the need for the USPS to cut costs. I know that some of the neighborhood collection boxes that were removed did not receive much volume and that most likely the stamp machines that were removed were not doing a booming business. Nevertheless, I believe that whatever minuscule savings the USPS captures from removing collection boxes and stamp machines are negated ten fold by the loss of good will and the creation of ill feelings our customers have towards the USPS after these services are cut.

Maybe it's just me, but I'm of the opinion that the USPS should be doing all they can to try and **improve** service, instead of doing all they can to **reduce** service.

As our President Frank Salazar says, at some point the USPS must stop relying on merely slashing costs to save the company, they have to try and "grow the business".

In the spirit of saving the USPS by growing the business, instead of merely reducing service and costs, our NALC National President, Fred Rolando, has written an excellent article in the December issue of the Postal Record entitled: "Imagination, innovation are the keys to our future". Hopefully, you've all read it by now because President Rolando makes some excellent points and gives some excellent suggestions on growing the USPS and his article gives a brief history of the constant historical evolution of the USPS to meet the needs of a changing nation. There really is a hell of a lot more to saving the USPS than cutting service and costs. As President Rolando wrote, it will take creativity, imagination and innovation to grow the business and save the USPS and **therein lies the rub**. As we know, the USPS has not historically shown a whole lot of creativity, imagination and innovation, so may God help us all. I do know that

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2010 NEW YEARS RESOLUTIONS: STOP, LOOK & LISTEN

By: Ernestine Hernandez, Vice President and Oxnard Chief Shop Steward



Happy New Year Everyone! I really hope you had the best of holidays with your families and friends? I know we are all blessed with having a job to continue caring for our families, and a Union that keeps protecting our job and benefits. If you don't believe this, stop, and take a look at all the people who don't have a job or health benefits like we have. Just listen to what they are going through. It is a very hard reality to see and we should not take our

jobs for granted. But it was good to see how some fellow employees gave from the heart to people like that who need it most, by giving to the Combined Federal Campaign (CFC). Together we raised about \$5,200. Along with me these special people are Miguel Ayala, Danny Ramirez, Esperanza Padilla, Mario Gutierrez, Wayne Reeves, Dave Lory, Pablo Galvan, Ron Martinez, Joe Mora, Cynthia Broaddus and Maria Kays. It is so easy to give when it is not in a lump sum, but in small amounts which come out as a payroll deduction, so we don't even have to remember to send it. It is also helpful as a tax deduction for each of us. A special thanks again to all of you who gave!

Our carrier jobs have been going through so many changes, yet we continue to be strong. Let's make some New Years resolutions to do what's required of us with honesty. Everything we do reflects back on us. People believe we are the most trusted government agency, and it is very important for us to continue to earn that trust. There is a lot of competition out there especially through the internet. But it's our hands on, face to face expertise that gives us the upper hand. Our routes have changed so much lately, but it does not make us look good to our customers, when we skip important steps. Although management has chosen to look the other way about how some mail is being handled, we should not slack off and follow their example, because as I have said before, it reflects on us. Here are a few examples to look out for:

Misdelivering the coverages or not delivering them at all

With everyone struggling in these difficult economic times people are looking for good bargains and these ads are helpful to many people. The ADVO and Penny Saver coverages are not put together for free. These coverages were paid for to get properly addressed, and then delivered by us. What's more is, they really help keep the Postal Service afloat. At the same time, when people receive these ads with a different address, than the one delivered to, they do not appreciate it. It reflects

on us when they wonder if we are careless with all their mail, and also wonder if we are delivering some of their other mail somewhere else. Let's take the time to put them in delivery sequence and deliver them to the correct addresses. Because when management gets the complaints about coverages being mis-delivered, they are not telling the customers that they instructed us to deliver them like that (one to a house - addresses don't matter). But even worse is when we don't deliver them at all. Other mailers began to wonder if they can trust us with their important items if they can't even trust us to deliver coverages properly. Can they??? Do we want to save time or our jobs?

Accountables

Management has stopped requiring accountable items to be handled properly. We are getting all types of accountable including registered mail, COD's, certified mail, and Express mail in our parcel hampers, DPS mail, and in the hot case. These items should be recorded as accountable items. When we find them this way, they should be given to the accountable clerk to add onto the accountable items log. If these items get lost or don't get scanned there is no accountability. These are all items people pay extra for special services. We should give people what they paid for to keep them using our services, rather than continue treating them like regular mail.

Parcels

We get so many parcels every day. Sometimes it seems overwhelming trying to get them all delivered on coverage or heavy volume days, but we should try to do our best. Most Carriers do a good job putting the parcels in the order of delivery which saves time by not having to search for the parcels while out delivering, plus it really helps getting them all delivered. If they are in no particular order, and are just thrown in the LLV, there is more of a chance they will get missed and not get delivered at all. Don't do this to your fellow Carriers when you are not going to be on the route the following day. If you have parcels on the swing you are giving away, then at least give an accurate estimate of how long the swing will take with all the parcels included. Plus don't forget to scan the delivery confirmation parcels.

Resolutions for management

I would also like to ask managers reading this if they put the following items on their resolutions list?

To Stop, Look & Listen, by treating all employees fairly with dignity and respect.

To work to make sure accountable items are handled properly.

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REFLECTION

By: Greg A. Gaddis, Chief Shop Steward, Agoura Hills



Happy New Year to all Letter Carriers and your families! I hope everyone enjoyed the holidays. I can't believe another year has come and gone. Unfortunately that means we are all another year older. Oh well, we can't stop father time. At least we can be thankful we made it through this past year and still have a job to go to so that we can continue providing for families and ourselves. To those Carriers who retired this past

year my congratulations, may you enjoy many years of retirement with good health and I hope your dreams are realized.

This past year has been challenging to say the least. I for one can say it has been a very busy year as far as grievance activity. Don't get me wrong, I am not complaining. I am very thankful to be working, representing the Letter Carriers and hopefully making a difference with respect to holding management accountable for their actions through the grievance process. I don't like to lose any grievances. That's why I pledge 110% to representing you the Letter Carriers, to make sure your rights are not violated and the contract is adhered to, as long as I'm still needed.

On a personal note as of 12/4/09 when I was writing this article, of the four offices I represent (Agoura Hills, Chandler, Sylmar and Studio City), the Informal-A grievance filing stood at 254 grievances. Not counting any of the continued weekly NRP grievances that were also filed and the Formal-A grievances that were sent to the DRT. The grand total is 575 grievances so far. And I'm a retired Letter Carrier, representing the four offices just once a week. I know if I were in each of the four offices everyday, I'm sure the grievance activity would probably double. That's because I would have been able to see a lot more of the daily abuses and violations that I know occur. Please remember I can't help you if you don't let me know there is something I need to investigate. Besides putting your name on the Steward list, you can call the Union office and I will be notified if I don't talk to you directly.

As I look back on this past year, I can only hope the following year will not bring more of the same atrocities that Letter Carriers have experienced. By that I mean the NRP "crap" that a lot of Carriers who had on-the-job injuries had to be subjected to. Some of the injured Carriers were sent home in April of last year and have not worked at all to this day! Some were offered limited hours of work and some were sent to work in other Postal facilities, several miles away from where they had been working for so many years prior. Grievances have been filed for every Carrier who notified the Union when the NRP mess hit them. The Union is still waiting for a griev-

ance to reach arbitration and hopefully, a good decision will be handed down for all those Carriers who have suffered. I hope every Carrier who was abused by the NRP will be made whole and the Postal Service will be held accountable for their actions.

This past year brought us the modified interim alternate route adjustment process, or MIARAP. I know it's not the end all, fix all process to evaluate and adjust routes. But I feel as a Shop Steward, it's a whole lot better than the dreaded 6-day route inspection process of the past. At least the data that is used to adjust routes through MIARAP, was for a longer period of time and not just a few days as was the old process. The Union and Carrier now have input during the new process. Unlike the old way, for you old timers who remember when management got out their magic red pencils and deducted every little fraction of time, to bring your route time down to what they wanted it to be. Of course the old way never really solved anything. The Carriers were upset, grievances filed for the improper time deductions and management was upset because their numbers just didn't fit after they destroyed the routes and they could not figure out why the routes were still over 8hrs.

At least now, the Carrier and Union have a greater say during the new process. Even if you feel your route was not adjusted properly, at least there is an agreement between Union and management to come back and review the routes to make sure they are within 8 hours after the adjustments. Being able to review the routes after the adjustments is a change from the way routes were evaluated in the past. Like I stated it's not the greatest system, but it's better than having management "pencil whip" your route and whittle it down like the old days. If you do your route "by the book" everyday, your route time will dictate if the route is over or not when the data is reviewed. I think the majority of the offices have gone through the 2nd round of adjustments by now. From what I can tell, the majority of the routes were within 8 hours from the first consultations and adjustments to the overburden routes should have been made accordingly by the time you read this article. Carriers can still request a special route inspection, regardless of MIARAP, see your Shop Steward for details.

Besides the new way of adjusting routes this past year, Carriers will soon have the flat sorting system (FSS) confronting them. I'm sure the automated sorting of flats will bring a new dynamic to the way Letters Carriers do their jobs, like DPS did. At least that is what we are being told about the sorting of flats. However, remember when we were told there would be no need for a 3996 or overtime any more when DPS takes over.....R I G H T! Now we are being told Carriers will

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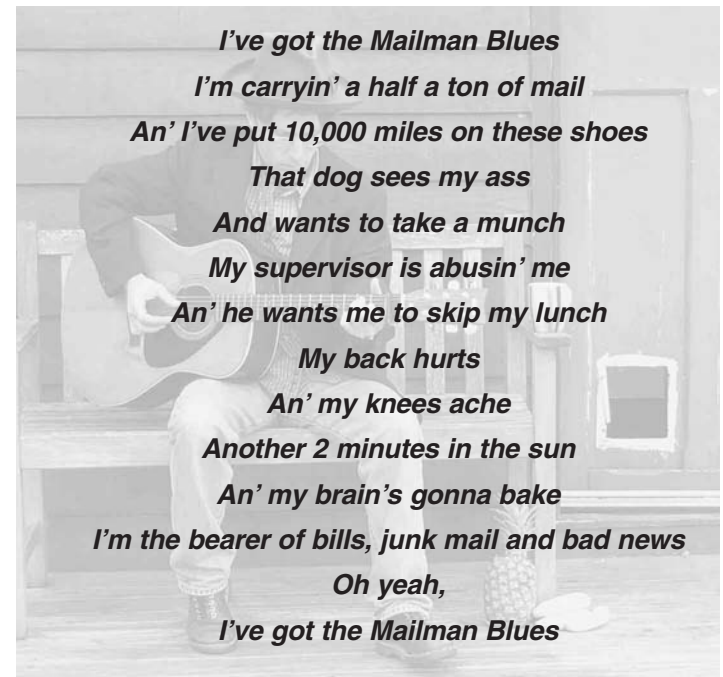
The Mailman Blues

By: Joe Vedder, Woodland Hills, Chief Shop Steward



I'm sitting here, at my computer, listening to many of the 2000 songs that I've downloaded onto my iTunes (".....Why don't we do it in the road? No one will be watching us. Why don't we do it in the road?") and trying my damndest to write an indignant article, spewing angst and venom. ("That's why they call me bad company. And I can't deny it. Bad company 'til the day I die.") I do my best article writing, for the MAIL BAG, when I'm pissed off about something Postal. ("Return to sender, address unknown. No such number, no such zone....."). But, I'm almost embarrassed to say that I'm kinda content at the moment. I like my Postmistress. I get along with my Supervisor. Most of our managers are likable, if not competent. I'm grateful to have a near recession proof job during these trying economic times. ("....But it's alright, Jumpin' Jack Flash, it's a gas, gas, gas.....") When I say I'm content, it's not to say that I'm as happy as a pig in mud or even satisfied (...Hey, hey, hey, that's what I say. I can't get no satisfaction. 'cause I've tried, and I've tried and I've tried and I can't get no....") I've always had an aversion to feeling too comfortable with any given situation. Life has a tendency to bite you in the ass when you're feeling too good about your place in the universe. I'm an optimist, but a pragmatic one. Jing, my pretty Postmistress, has usually been a pleasure to deal with. But, I'm always wary that she could grow fangs and rip my throat out.

Some of our amiable bungling supervisors may be very capable of descending into darkness and conspiring to commit great evil. Oh, I still get ticked off at lazy Supervisors who seem incapable of handling the simplest of tasks or do anything in a timely manner, yet require that their legions of Letter Carriers perform their jobs to perfection while they sweat until they drop and their bodies fall apart. And want it all done by 5. ("...You can't always get what you want. But if you try sometime, you just might find that you get what you need....") It will always anger me that to get onto, and stay, on the Postal hierarchy's fast track, a manager is expected to sell their soul to the USPS. They have to be able to lie as easily as they breathe. Everything in their lives becomes secondary to needs of the COMPANY, including their families, marriages and friendships. ("...yes indeed, you're gonna have to serve somebody. It may be the devil or it may be the law, but you're gonna have to serve somebody...") As I've said many times before, and will probably say several times again, The Postal Service is the only business that I'm aware of where the crap rises to the top instead of the cream. And that inadequate defecation is paid so well for performing so badly. ("Callin' it your job....don't make it right. If you want, I'll say a prayer for your soul tonight.")



*I've got the Mailman Blues
I'm carryin' a half a ton of mail
An' I've put 10,000 miles on these shoes
That dog sees my ass
And wants to take a munch
My supervisor is abusin' me
An' he wants me to skip my lunch
My back hurts
An' my knees ache
Another 2 minutes in the sun
An' my brain's gonna bake
I'm the bearer of bills, junk mail and bad news
Oh yeah,
I've got the Mailman Blues*

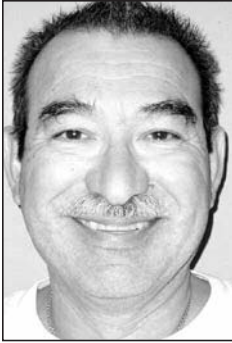
I've searched deep within my consciousness to find a reason for this contentment festering within my soul. While our current managers are, for the most part, a genial and accommodating bunch, they're also nothing like certain members of the former regime, which arose from the bowels of hell. Jing is the polar opposite of the micro-managing, vindictive and manic Joe Yuson. None of our Supervisors even resemble the scary psycho, Dennis Powell. Our current managers aren't nearly as annoying as the clueless, babbling Lisa Boatwright. ("...I wish that for just one time, you could stand inside of my shoes. And just for that one moment I could be you. Yes, I wish that for just one time you could stand inside of my shoes. You'd know what a drag it is just to see you").

Another one of my oft-repeated quotes is, "Try not to think too much about making any sense of why the Post Office is the way it is or does some of the things that it does. You'll just give yourself a nasty headache." After having worked for the USPS for 30 years, carried mail for 29 of those years and been a shop steward for the better part of 25 years, I've learned a few things that make working at the P.O. far more tolerable. Don't sweat the small stuff. Don't bicker and fret over your 3996. The information that you put on that piece of paper is the gospel according to YOU. It ain't changin' and you're not gonna skip a break or lunch to comply with your Supervisor's wishes to have you back before 5 PM or prior to penalty. If it's not approved, just make that 3 PM phone call. We don't make enough money to worry about that kind of crap. Give your Supervisor the ulcer, that's why they make the big bucks. ("Help!! I need somebody. Help!! Not just anybody. Help!! You know I need someone.....Won't you please please help me?!!"). Both Carriers

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Changes to the NALC Health Benefits Plan-How they affect you

By: Joe Gutierrez, Health Benefits Representative



I just finished reviewing the material from the recent health benefits seminar I attended in Las Vegas. It was a Great seminar and I wish there was a way that all members could attend. It would really open a lot of people's eyes as to all that is involved in selecting a health plan. It is amazing that you trust the NALC to take care of wages, work rules working conditions, uniforms etc... Why don't you trust the NALC health plan to handle your

health needs? We have a great plan that is available to all our union members but yet most chose to join other plans that do not stack up to ours. Yes, at one time the others were a lot cheaper but today the NALC plan is a lot less expensive than all but one of the most popular fee-for-service plans.

How many of you compare the benefits of all the health plans when open season arrives? We all get informed by OPM that open season has arrived. They ask that you compare plans and select the one that is best for you. How many of you actually do it? There is a web site just for this reason; I hope you put it to good use.

Now for the changes to our plan. As with most plans we will

have a rate increase. The cost is \$44.57 self-.\$86.11 for family. Don't judge a plan by premiums alone. Compare on what they have to offer. Co-pay for an office visit is \$15.00. Lab tests performed at Labcorp or Quest Diagnostics is covered at 100%.

The plan pays Non-PPO pathologists, radiologists, and emergency room physicians at PPO benefit levels. You now pay \$5.00 for a 90-day supply of NALC select generic medications purchases through the mail order program. \$4.00 when Medicare Part B is the primary.

Besides paying for foot orthotics every 5 years, the plan now covers repair of those existing orthotics, \$100.00 every 3 years.

These are just some of the changes to our plan, there are a lot more that I will try to cover in future articles. Your job now is to compare our plan with what you now have. Don't just stop at premiums but check the whole plan for what it offers. What you save in premiums you will lose in deductibles, co-pays, % of what your plan pay doctors hospitals etc...

Remember this plan is non profit and was created for Letter Carriers. The more of you who join this great plan the more we will be able to offer.

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called the Modified Interim Alternate Route Adjustment Process (a.k.a. MIARAP). Ok, it's not a pure science, but it's better and quicker than 6-day counts and inspections when it comes to speed and the lack of grievances.

As I see it, the future of the Postal Service will rely heavily on data and statistical analysis. It is all a numbers game and how we interpret the numbers. Headquarters Managers and District personnel are continually reviewing current data to compare to the same period last year to ascertain productivity and spot future trends developing (or they should). The better the data the better the interpretation. Management uses the data or should use the date to properly staff, budget, and make forecasts. The better the data, the better the staffing, budget, and forecasting. The problem is we are not generating good data because we are not properly documenting curtailed and delayed mail. We are allowing Managers and Supervisors and other crafts to do our work, and we are not properly scanning. Managers and Supervisors on the workroom floor are lying to their Postmaster's about curtailing mail, having Carriers out past 5 p.m., reporting accidents, etc. Postmasters are lying to

the MPOOs and District Manager about their hours and performance. We know it and they know it. In some instances, 204bs and Supervisors are casing curtailed and delayed mail while Carriers are out on the street. I can't help the Management side of the house, but I can help and advise our craft.

As Letter Carriers, after our last dispatch of mail, if we can not complete our assignment within 8 hours with all the mail at the case, we need to request a PS Form 3996 (overtime slip). If we ask for one, we should receive one. Fill it out and give it to our Supervisor. He or she should approve or disapprove it. If they disapprove it, we should call from the street at the appropriate time. If Management tells you to curtail or delay mail, they should provide you with a PS Form 1571 (cut slip). You fill it out and have them sign off on it. This form is important when it comes to adjusting your route. If you do not fill out PS Form 1571, and Management does not record the mail as curtailed or delayed there is no record. This lack of documentation will make your route appear to be 8 hours that day, when in fact if you took everything at your case your route would have been 9 or 10 hours. The same goes for NLM, S99 mail, loop mail, vacation mail, returned mail, etc. I've observed and I've been told by Carriers that Management is curtailing NLM even

continued on page 8

Family Protection in 2010

By: Chris Alessi, MBA/NSBA Representative



My wish for the New Year is that all of our members would have some kind of protection for their families in this new decade ahead. Life Insurance is a great way to have security for the ones you love in the event that you or the breadwinner or both are taken away.

MBA Universal Life Insurance provides a death benefit for the NALC member, his or her spouse, and children, grand children, and even great grandchildren. This plan combines the

low cost of term insurance with savings component. It is a flexible plan that allows the policy holder to increase or decrease the insurance protection; make withdraws; and increase, or decrease, or temporarily stop the premium payments, while the insurance stays in force.

MBA 10-Year Renewable and Convertible Term Insurance provides a 10 year renewable and convertible insurance policy. Term insurance provides members with death protection for a specific term of years, in this case 10 years. This plan is guaranteed renewable every 10 years or until the insured reaches age 80. With this plan, a policyholder does not accumulate a cash value; it is pure insurance for a given term. This low-cost coverage is ideal for young families and policyholders in the prime of life.

MBA Life Paid Up at Age 65 provides limited payment whole life insurance. It is ideal for all Letter Carriers and their

family members. The plan offers lifelong insurance protections without lifelong payments. It allows the insured to reduce their financial obligations upon retirement while maintaining their insurance coverage.

Independence–Single Payment Plan provides a convenient, whole life insurance policy. A once-in-a-lifetime premium pays off the policy at the time of purchase. In the event of the insured's death, the Independence Plan pays the survivors the full amount of the policy. This plan also helps with future needs by building cash value at current dividend rates. In times of need, a policyholder may borrow against this value or surrender the policy for the entire value.

MBA 20 Pay Whole Life provides a limited payment life insurance plan especially suited for Letter Carriers with young children. The policyholder pays the premiums for 20 years. In the event of the insured's death, the policy pays the survivors the full amount of the policy. The policy also builds cash value for the future, which policyholders may borrow against during cash emergencies. After the 20 years are paid up, the policyholder can elect to continue coverage at no cost. In that event, death benefits remain in force and the cash value continues to build up at current dividend rates.

In closing, I wish all our Brothers and Sisters and their Families of branch 2902 to think seriously about protecting your family and to have a great New Year ahead filled with lots of fun, peace, and happiness.

God Bless You. In Solidarity, Chris

PRESIDENT'S REPORT...

Continued from page 7

though it arrived on the last truck and contained first class and second class mail mixed with bulk. The excuse used by Management, we need everyone back by 4 p.m. This should be documented on your 3996 or 1571 and reported to your Steward. In many offices, Management is skewing the data on your routes by not properly documenting delayed or curtailed mail. This hurts you and the Postal Service. But, it mainly hurts the Carrier on the route.

Filling out 3996s and 1571s are only part of the battle. We must also swipe properly and swipe on the proper code. If you're on office time, you should be on the code for office time (usually code 722 in most offices). If you're on street time, you should use the code for street time (usually 721 in most offices). Many Carriers are not swiping correctly. In turn, this distorts the data on the routes. For instance, if you're loading your vehicle, you should be on street time. Many Carriers are loading their vehicles on office time. Moreover, the converse is also happening. Management wants Carriers back by 4 or 5 p.m.,

and Carriers will rush back to swipe back into office time to show that they are back by 4 or 5 p.m. However, they do not swipe back onto street time to unload their vehicles and deposit their collection mail. In many instances, Carriers are doing this work on office time, which skews their street times and expands their office times. Basically, the point I am trying to get across is that we must scan and swipe correctly to accurately record data so we get a fair and equitable route adjustment when need be. So, in this New Year, we should all make a better effort to record our data and scan everything that needs to be scanned. Recording and scanning is intertwined with our future, so we should make sure we do it accurately and correctly. Have a Happy New Year and Best Wishes for a happier and healthier year ahead. All for now back in two.

In Memoriam

Jesse C. Cordell

Retired - Simi Valley

MDA Bowl-a-Thon

By: Sandy Gaunce, MDA Representative



On Sunday, November 1st, our branch along with many other branches across the country participated in the First Annual National Association of Letter Carriers "Bowl-a-Thon" for the Muscular Dystrophy Association (MDA).

Our branch had thirteen bowlers. Each bowler was asked to bring in \$50.00 in donations for MDA. Brunswick Valley Bowl in Simi Valley donated four lanes and shoes for three hours. Everyone had a great time. We brought in a total of \$929.00 for MDA, well over the fifty dollar per participant request. The bowlers said it was easy to do if you ask people to

sponsor you and they would do it again.

Our top five highest scores with a combined total of the first three games were: Richard Uhlman with a score of 581, Mike Charles at 511, Patty Uhlman at 508, Ray Hill at 466 and Don Sucich at 460.

Our other bowlers were: Frank Salazar, Beverly Sucich, Bob Golden, Dan Gorman, Danielle Frame, Jenn Hill, Whitney Eldridge, and Matthew Hill. Thank you to everyone who participated for your support.

We look forward to next year's MDA Bowl-a-Thon. My goal is to double the number of bowlers. It really doesn't matter how well you bowl, it's for the cause. We welcome anyone who would like to participate in this worthy event.



Pictured above are the participants in the 1st annual NALC MDA Bowl-a-Thon held on November 1st. Everyone had a great time and the branch raised over \$900 for a very worthy cause. All of the above, please take a bow!!!

FOR THE GOOD LIFE!

By: **Bev Sucich, Retiree**



Hi to everyone. By the time you get the next Mailbag news I hope you will all have had a very nice Thanksgiving and a wonderful December holiday.

First, I will start with our October luncheon in West Hills. We had 17 members and 9 guests, 26 total in attendance. Our winners were Steve Garfinkle from Sylmar, Jim Dearborn from Simi and Rich Thatcher also from Simi. They all received a \$10.00 gift card from Home Town Buffet.

Our November luncheon in Simi had 31 members in attendance. Our winners were Al Cox from Granada Hills, John Mendez from Sylmar and again Rich Thatcher from Simi. Okay Rich, tell us your secret—how do you win 2 months in a row? Congratulations to all our winners for October and November.

I would like to mention that Don and Myra Esterman went to their home in Oregon and according to Myra, Superman (Don) slipped and fell on the ice that was on his back porch. He was pretty shook up and had some minor injuries. Some scratches on his face and arms and a bloody nose. Myra, you are a good woman, you took care of him and nursed his

wounds until he was back to normal. We will call you Lois for the day. He looked good at the last meeting.

Jean Graham hurt her back but she showed up to the luncheon. She was in a lot of pain. She did not eat but she wanted to see all her friends. What a great friend she is. We hope both of you are recovering and are in good health by now.

We would like to send our deepest and sincere condolences to the family of Jesse Cordell, a retiree from Simi Valley. Everyone who knew him will miss him.

We had a Shop Steward Christmas dinner on December 1, 2009. Some retirees were present. Along with myself, there was Sue Degenhardt, Dan Gorman, Greg Gaddis, Sandy Gaunce and Jim Dearborn. It went very well and it seemed like everyone had a great time. There was good food, nice decorations, music and lots of good conversation.

I would like to thank all the officers for doing a great job in 2009. I hope 2010 will be a lot better. I say this on behalf of all the retirees.

In closing, I hope all the retirees and everyone (not a retiree) had a good 2009 year and 2010 will be prosperous and healthy for everyone.

WELCOME TO YEAR 2010

Continued from page 3

Letter Carriers, who are the face of the USPS, will continue to do their part to save the USPS by providing the excellent service that our patrons have come to expect.

As I am writing this (on December 15, 2009), the Reseda Post Office has just completed the first round of the **Modified Interim Alternate Route Adjustment Process** (MIARAP) consultations regarding the MIARAP adjustments that were implemented in the Reseda Office on August 22, 2009. I am currently representing the Reseda Carriers as their Steward since they do not have a Steward in their office at this time.

Therefore, by default, I am also the local NALC contact/representative for the Reseda Office in the MIARAP process.

Now, whenever I walk into the Reseda Post Office I hear the Sindelar brothers, B-Joe and Jimmy yell out, "Oh no, Ray's here, something bad is going to happen".

That's right B-Joe; you'll soon be delivering Reseda Blvd. from Rinaldi St. all the way to Mulholland Dr. Just kidding, B-Joe, just kidding.

In my opinion, as well as in the opinion of many of the Reseda carriers, the office took too big of a hit in the last round of MIARAP when 4 routes were eliminated.

Judging by the numbers for the evaluation period used on this latest round of MIARAP, Reseda won't be losing any routes

this time around. I'll briefly report on the Reseda MIARAP results in the next issue of the Mailbag News. How about just delivering Reseda Blvd. from Nordhoff St. to Ventura Blvd., B-Joe? How's that sound?

In closing, I'll eat my crow with barbecue sauce, please. I'm eating this crow because of my dumb-ass prediction in the last issue of the Mail Bag News that the Dodgers were going to "kick the Phillies collective asses" in the National League Championship Series.

I thought the Dodgers were going to have more trouble with the Cardinals than they did with the Phillies and I could not have been more wrong. The Phillies **trounced** the Dodgers and went on to the World Series where they were in turn trounced by the Yankees.

The future doesn't look too bright for the Dodgers right now, with their soon to be divorced owners feuding over the team. The Dodgers need starting pitching and right now it doesn't look like they are going to get it. We shall see soon enough. Talk to you all in two months.

"I dislike arguments of any kind. They are often vulgar and often convincing."

—Oscar Wilde, Irish Poet (1856-1900)

NEW YEAR'S RESOLUTIONS...

Continued from page 4

To properly evaluate workloads.

To stop leaving Carriers stranded without assistance when needed.

To stop violating contractual provisions to avoid unnecessary grievances.

To follow up on safety problems.

To answer the phones.

To be more professional.

I have one more thing to say. I really hope management will respect all Carriers by paying them for grievance settlements in a timely manner for continued contractual violations. Since the budget seems to be shrinking, so should contractual violations. We know things are tough but that does not erase the protections Carriers have on contract provisions agreed upon in the National Agreement by both management and the union. All our Supervisors and 204b's have been around for over 10 years and know what the violations are, yet continue to repeat them over and over again. The union will not abandon the protections and will continue to enforce them each time violations occur. This takes a lot of time and money, so when will management act responsibly and with integrity and do the right thing rather than the convenient things they are doing to get the mail delivered?



Executive Vice President Ray Hill(R) presents to new retiree Don Draper (North Hollywood) his retirement watch and union membership pin at the December union meeting.

And the winner is...MDA!

Pictured to the right are the cash winners of the Texas Hold'em, MDA fundraiser held at the union hall on October 17th. Top row (L-R) Hugo Gonzalez who took 3rd place and \$261, Ray Scott from Fox Printing who came in 8th and won \$109, Kenny Eng, a Carrier out of Northridge who took 4th place and \$218 and Jose Rodriguez a Chatsworth Carrier who came in 10th and won \$87. Bottom row pictured (L-R) Gary Pogosian a Woodland Hills Carrier who took second place and won \$392, Felix Esparza from Sylmar came in 5th and won \$196, Danny Acosta a Carrier from Canoga Park won the top prize of \$543, Richard Saiz, a Studio City Carrier was 7th overall and won \$130 and 6th place went to Javier Rueda and took home \$152. Congratulations to all the winners and thanks for helping the branch raise over \$1100 for MDA.



REFLECTIONS...

Continued from page 5

have one piece of sorting equipment and will only be in the office maybe one hour at the most when FSS arrives. Don't hold your breath though, DPS has been around for about 13 years now and I don't think the system is still fully developed the way it was envisioned by the Postal Service. The bottom line is, don't worry about it. It's going to come whether you like it or not, we can't stop it. Just like DPS, MIARAP and NRP I know the Letter Carriers will continue to do their jobs no matter what new system is thrown at them. I know you will continue to give excellent mail service to your customers and give a fair days work for a fair days pay, regardless of management's attempts to get you to buy into their "numbers". Hold your heads high, smile and give'em hell.....Stay well, until next time.



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THE MAILMAN BLUES...

Continued from page 6

and managers are guilty of committing harmless little infractions every single day ("Clowns to the left of me, jokers to my right. Here I am, stuck in the middle with you...."). But unless someone has received a letter of discipline, is being terribly abused, getting screwed out of their just pay, having their livelihood threatened, doing something that could endanger themselves, others or the USPS, being forced to labor in an unjust or unsafe workplace, watching management defiantly using the National or Local Agreements to wipe their collective asses ("Somewhere there's somebody ain't treatin' somebody right.....they're slippin' into darkness, slippin' outta sight.....got one thing in common. They've got the fire down below") who gives a rat's ass? Sorry, it's just not in my DNA to be anal. In most cases, 90% of what you worry about is never gonna happen. And there's nothing you can do about the other 10%. Let your incredibly willing and competent Shop Stewards, at least the two at Woodland Hills are, take care of that 10% that's out of your control. There's very little going on at the P.O. worth losing sleep over. Leave that dungeon behind you after you clock out and go home. ("I've got the keys to the highway.....I'm gonna leave here runnin', walkin' is most too slow....")

Recently, I was watching CSPAN and I got some encouraging news from an unlikely source. The Postmaster General, Jack Potter, was speaking about the future of the USPS. He said that the European P.O.'s are doing well by not limiting their merchandise to just stamps and Postal related materials. They are all-purpose gift stores, the local bank and sell insurance and cell phones. Whatever it takes to survive. I don't care if the USPS sells medical marijuana, comic books and Lucy Liu action figures ("Wild thing, you make my heart sing, you make everything groovy.....I think you move me.") Whatever it takes to allow the USPS to remain a viable entity.

I want to thank The Beatles, Rolling Stones, John Mellencamp, Eric Clapton, The Troggs, Bob Dylan, Elvis, Bob Seger, Lowell Fulson, Bad Company and Stealer's Wheel for allowing me to use all of those lyrics without their knowledge or permission. ("And in THE END, the love you take is equal to the love you make.")

Why do they put pictures of criminals up in the Post Office? What are we supposed to do, write to them? Why don't they just put their pictures on the postage stamps so the mailmen can look for them while they deliver the mail?



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When: Thursday,
January 21, 2010

Time: 11:30am to 12:30pm



Where: Hometown Buffet
Fallbrook Mall
6633 Fallbrook Ave.
West Hills

When: Thursday,
February 18, 2010

Time: 11:30am to 12:30pm



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“A lawyer with his briefcase can steal more than a hundred men with guns.”

—Mario Puzo, “The Godfather,” 1969

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Chatsworth Chief S.S.	Angel Hale
Shop Steward	Jim Maroney
Fillmore Chief S.S.	Call Office
Moorpark Chief S.S.	Lori Stewart
Alternate	Robbie Elsaleh
North Hollywood Chief S.S.	Steve Leyton
	Louie Rodriguez
Chandler	Greg Gadis
Laurel Canyon	Steve Leyton
Studio City	Greg Gadis
Valley Village	Steve Leyton
Northridge Chief S.S.	Onofre Varela
Shop Steward/ Webmaster	Larry Orcutt
Porter Ranch	Larry Orcutt
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Ojai Chief S.S.	Philip Navarro
Oxnard Chief S.S.	Ernestine Hernandez
Pacoima Chief S.S.	Steve Dickerson
Alternate	Rocio Fraire
Alternate	Frankie Mercado
Port Hueneme Chief S.S.	Kathi Albritten
Reseda Chief S.S.	Mike Longres
Alternate	Robbie Elsaleh
San Fernando Chief S.S.	James Perryman
M.C.A.	James Perryman
North Hills	C.C. Flatts
Sylmar / Main Office	James Perryman
Santa Paula Chief S.S.	Laura Walters
Simi Valley Chief S.S.	Sandra Gaunce
	Robbie Elsaleh
Mt. McCoy Station	Sandra Gaunce
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PAULETTE DYER

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Attn: Dan Gorman
Financial Secretary-Treasurer



Danny Cardenas (Simi Valley) accepts his retirement watch at the union hall. Good luck in your newfound life Danny!

New retiree from San Fernando, Marlene Dorn is presented with her retiree watch and 25 year pin. Congratulations Marlene and enjoy your retirement.



CALENDAR OF EVENTS

JAN 18 Martin Luther King Jr. Birthday-Holiday 

JAN 19 Regular Branch Meeting 7pm
Union Hall-Chatsworth
Dinner served 6 pm

JAN 21 Retiree Lunch 11:30am
Hometown Buffet-Simi Valley

FEB 2 Executive Board Meeting 6pm
Executive Council Meeting 7pm

FEB 14 Valentine's Day 

FEB 15 Presidents Day-Holiday 

FEB 16 Regular Branch Meeting 7pm
Garden Palm Hotel-Newbury Park

FEB 18 Retiree Lunch 11:30am
Hometown Buffet-West Hills

MAR 2 Executive Board Meeting 6pm
Executive Council Meeting 7pm

MAR 14 Daylight Savings Time Begins 

MAR 16 Regular Branch Meeting 7pm
Union Hall-Chatsworth
Dinner served 6 pm

MAR 18 Retiree Lunch 11:30am
Hometown Buffet-Simi Valley



THE Mail Bag NEWS

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OFFICIAL PUBLICATION OF TRI-VALLEY BRANCH 2902,
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Tri-Valley Branch 2902 Celebrates 25th Anniversary

By Frank Salazar, President

The Branch had recently purchased new office furniture. I think this was the first purchase of office furniture the Branch has transacted since its inception. After moving the old furniture out in preparation for receiving the new, I looked around at some of our old merger letters on the wall and was embarrassed to realize that I had forgotten our Branch's 25th Anniversary. "Typical male!..." exclaimed Chief Shop Steward Angel Hale of Chatsworth.

On August 17, 1984, President Jon Gaunce of Branch 5499 Thousand Oaks, CA and President Juan A. Arenas of Branch 4738 Chatsworth, CA were granted a request for merger. President Jon Gaunce had the vision of merging the many small locals into one larger local with full-time officers to take on Management on a more level playing field.

In the latter part of 1984, President Jon Gaunce of the newly enlarged Branch 5499 Thousand Oaks, CA engaged in merger talk with Theodore Z. Wells of Branch 2902 San Fernando, CA. Jon and Ted were granted a request for merger on January 18, 1985, our anniversary date. The merger letter indicates that the newly merged branch was to be known as "Merged Branch 2902". Later this same year, there were at



least six more mergers. I say at least six, because it appears that some of our merger letters are missing.

On April 22, 1985, the newly merged Branch 2902 was granted a request for merger with Branch 5536 Simi Valley, CA. The merger letter at that time indicates that Bob Beckham was President of Simi Valley at the time and the letter also records the first mention of

"Tri-Valley Branch 2902". On this same day a second merger letter was received granting a merger with Branch 4184 Reseda, CA with President Clyde Jones presiding. After these mergers, it seems that merger mania was on.

The Branch was granted mergers with Branch 1621 Oxnard, CA and Branch 1508 Ventura, CA on August 16, 1985. The merger letters indicate that Edward A. Jacobs was President of Ventura, CA at the time, but there was no mention of who the President of Oxnard was. However, the merger letter does indicate that Joanne K. Woodward was the Secretary of the Branch. On August 19, 1985 and August 22, 1985 respectively, Branch 2902 merged one of its largest and one of its most vocal installations: Branch 2740 North Hollywood, CA and

continued on page 2

PRESIDENT'S REPORT...

Continued from page 1



Branch 4471 Woodland Hills. Both merger letters also do not indicate who the President's of the Branches were at the time, but the Branch Secretaries names are referenced: James Dillingham of North Hollywood and Charles J. Kelly of Woodland Hills.

The pace of merger activity fell off in 1986, but was renewed in 1987 with the mergers of Branch 3834 Fillmore, CA President David L. Galvan presiding and Branch 1801 Santa Paula, CA

George O. Smith President. I think there may have been additional mergers during this gap in time, but we have no documents to bear this out. Additional research may shed some light on this period in Branch history. Our current records indicate that our last merger occurred on May 20, 1991, when Branch 2902 was granted a merger with Branch 5737 Ojai, CA President Dennis E. Prairie presiding.

While looking at these documents, I discovered some other interesting Branch history. One interesting fact is that the oldest charter in our Branch was issued to former Branch 1508 Ventura CA. The original charter for Ventura was dated May 17, 1913. And, the original charter for the Original Branch 2902, San Fernando, CA was January 15, 1929.

Also, to coincide with our 25th anniversary the members present at the February branch meeting approved a motion to name our meeting hall after our founding President "Jon D. Gaunce". Jon had the vision, and 25 years later the branch is stronger and more organized than ever. Thank you for the legacy Jon. We will keep it going.

I would just like to add that if any member, former member, or friend of the Branch has any stories of the mergers they

would like to share to send them to the hall so we can publish them in upcoming newsletters as an ongoing history of our Branch.

Postal Strike

Believe it or not, Branch 2902's 25th anniversary year is also the 40th anniversary of the Great Postal Strike. I think there has been a lot of dis-information and revisionist history on the strike so in fairness to President Emeritus James Rademacher, we have published his version of the events of the Great Postal Strike of 1970. In my opinion, I feel it is very unfair and inaccurate to leave his recollections out of the NALC historical record. In fact, he was President of the NALC at the time. President Emeritus Rademacher negotiated with President Nixon, Senators, Congressmen and Cabinet Members. How can his recollections and exploits be left out of the Record? They shouldn't unless you want to re-write history. So, take a few minutes and check out his recollections of the time.

Food Drive

The Second Saturday in May is our annual Letter Carrier Food Drive. Please give your support and make it the best food drive ever. This year the Food Drive will be kicked-off at the M.E.N.D. Food Bank in Pacoima. KCBS and KCAL 9 will be supporters of the Food Drive this year giving us television exposure and public service announcements. This year the Rural Carrier Craft is an official partner. However, rural carriers have been joining in for years.

Thank you Rural Carriers.

Please make sure you deliver the cards reminding your customers to leave food out and please pick up the food. The worst thing we can do as letter carriers on Food Drive Day is to leave the food uncollected. Have some pride in the service we do for the American and the people in need. Collect the food.

Thank You all in advance for another successful Food Drive. All for now back in two.



NALC Assistant Secretary-Treasurer Nichole Rhine (center), who happens to be in charge of the NALC Dispute Resolution Team at the national level, poses for a picture with full-time DRT member Joe McDonough (l) and backup DRT member Paul Drapkin(r).



Regional, National & Local Big Wigs!!! Pictured from left to right is Region 1 RAA Chris Jackson, National Assistant Secretary-Treasurer Nichole Rhine and Tri-Valley Branch 2902 President Frank Salazar all in attendance at the January union meeting in Chatsworth.

Big Brother is Watching, Brothers and Sisters!

By: Ray Hill, Executive Vice-President



The November 2009 issue of the **NALC Activist** has an article in it titled “The truth about GPS in Postal Vehicles”. This article gives some interesting information about the history of the Postal Service’s use of “Global Positioning System” (GPS) Devices and their plans for expansion of GPS use in Postal Vehicles.

The Postal Service first put GPS devices in their vehicles late in the year 2008 in Chicago, Illinois and the Albuquerque District. In early 2009 the USPS expanded GPS implementation and deployed additional devices in the Dallas, Houston, San Antonio, Arkansas, Louisiana, Oklahoma, and Fort Worth Districts.

By February of 2009 there were a total of 611 GPS units in Postal Vehicles throughout the country.

In April of 2009, GPS devices were placed in USPS’ Vehicles in other areas of Illinois and in parts of Arizona.

According to the **NALC Activist** article referenced above, there have been many discussions at the National Level between the USPS and the NALC regarding GPS since implementation began back in 2008. Part of these discussions addressed the issue of covert surveillance (i.e. using GPS to spy on carriers without their knowledge) and the Postal Service agreed to the following language: “...*City letter carriers working in delivery units where GPS devices are installed will be advised in advance of the installation and the vehicles receiving GPS devices...*”

Back in May of 2009 the USPS told the NALC that they “were not finding any return on their investment” and that there were no plans to expand GPS implementation any further.

Then, in typical “Bret Favre” fashion, the USPS changed their minds and now plan to place more than 4,200 additional GPS Units in Postal Vehicles throughout the country.

The Sierra-Coastal District is supposed to receive 100 of these GPS devices, 28 of which are going to the North Hollywood Installation.

While visiting the Valley Village Office for a station visit in early February, two of the carriers there told me that they had been notified via a Stand-up that they would indeed be having GPS devices placed in their Postal Vehicles.

I confirmed this information with North Hollywood Postmaster Mary Jane Smith, who told me that North Hollywood was getting 28 GPS Devices and that they would be placed only in the vehicles in the Valley Village Unit.

Postmaster Smith told me that they had decided to place the GPS Devices in the Valley Village carriers vehicles because, according to Postmaster Smith, “Valley Village has the worst street performance/expansion numbers” of all the North Hollywood Carrier Units.

The **NALC Activist** article states that a supervisor or manager does not have to sit by a computer to monitor the vehicles that have GPS devices in them. The article reads as follows on the subject of monitoring the GPS devices: “...*An activity report has the capability to depict the geographically specific location, idle time, speed and direction of movement, all time specific of the vehicle with the GPS device, which is tracked throughout the day. In addition to the activity report, the designated supervisor can pull up any vehicle in the office and find that vehicle’s activity for the day from any Internet access. The screen will show everything that happened that day including any time the vehicle sat idle for an extended period of time. It will show the supervisor any park points with a clock showing the length of time the vehicle was stopped there in 15-minute increments. This information is available for six months and then archived for an additional six years...*”

Also, several options can be programmed into each GPS unit. For example, the GPS Unit can be set to document and notify the Post office if the vehicle goes outside a specific boundary (i.e. a route, a zip code, an entire city, etc.).

Additionally, the GPS unit can be set up to show the vehicle’s traveling speed and can even be set to show if a vehicle exceeded a certain speed programmed into the device.

The GPS unit will also show when the vehicle’s ignition is on and when it is off. It will show if the engine is running when sitting in one place and if the vehicle is sitting in one place for an extended period of time with the engine running the report will also show this.

The GPS unit can be set up to use all of these options or just a few of these options. The system collects information every two seconds and it transmits information to the office every five minutes with a two-minute delay.

If the vehicle’s engine is turned off or the vehicle travels outside the preset boundaries, the GPS unit will transmit that information at that time.

The **NALC Activist** article states that: “*The GPS unit can also be set up to send an e-mail back to the authorized supervisor to notify him/her of any deviation from what is programmed into the unit. For example, if the vehicle goes outside the “electronic fence”, exceeds the speed limit programmed into the system, or sits in one location too long, an e-mail alert can be sent to the supervisor...*”

continued on page 6

What you don't know is what is keeping you down!

By: Ernestine Hernandez, Vice President and Oxnard Chief Shop Steward



I really wish our carriers would take the time to go to union meetings to educate themselves so they are not taken advantage of or made to suffer unnecessarily by unscrupulous supervisors. I'm talking about learning it firsthand, so that they will know what to do when a steward is not there at the moment to enforce their rights, no matter what the situation is.

What if the situation is an accident? Carriers still have many rights but don't seem to realize this and therefore allow supervisors to scare them with threats of discipline and removal.

It really upsets me to hear that a supervisor has made a carrier wait for over two hours before taking the carrier to get medical attention after an accident. It also upsets me to hear the same supervisor will type up a letter for the injured carrier to sign which states they will not file a workers compensation claim for injuries they incurred in an on the job injury. Why would a supervisor ask you to sign your rights away? This is truly despicable!

If you are injured and are in pain you have the right to get medical treatment immediately. The supervisor does not have to accompany you to the doctor's office and should give you a CA-16 to give to the medical facility for authorization for treatment. You do not have to wait to fill out an accident report first or a workers compensation claim at that moment, this can be done afterwards once you have received medical treatment. Sometimes an injury is more serious than you previously thought, and by not getting medical treatment you could seriously aggravate the condition. Think about this when you get injured out on the street and decide not to report it, or refuse medical treatment. Most carriers who have done this have gone on to regret their decision after their injury worsened. Also if you have accepted the medical treatment but have not filed a claim you may later be billed for all services received. A workers compensation claim (CA-1) should be filed for your continued medical and financial protection. A claim must be accepted by the Office of Workers Compensation Program (OWCP) to receive benefits, so include all the details on the claim form that prove the injury was caused while on the job.

Some carriers do not want to stop working when injured, but if the pain of an injury is unbearable they will come to realize they have to stop for a while in order to heal. Most carriers hate to do this because they feel their customers will also suffer the consequences of poor service because they will be losing someone familiar with their route. But their absence is no

different than when they go on vacation, so carriers should not worry. Get the needed medical treatment before the injury becomes a permanent one.

Don't let management intimidate you into believing you will lose your job because you were in an accident. Unless you maliciously intended to cause an accident or put someone in danger, you will not lose your job. Discipline is not automatic either, unless again management can prove it was done maliciously and intentionally. So don't be afraid to admit to being in an accident, and notify your union steward of everything that happened. The steward needs to have all the facts in order to defend you against anything management throws at you. What management is supposed to do is some type of corrective action such as retraining, or refresher courses, not discipline. Discipline would only be appropriate if you disregard what they show you and you intentionally repeat the same mistakes.

Come to union meetings and learn. Isn't your job worth one night a month?

By the Numbers-Membership 2009

As of Pay Period 26, 2009

Active 1334
Retired 373 (including 19 Gold Card members)

During the last year:

Separated	10
Retired	50
Deaths	2
(active carriers)	
Transfers out	7
Cancel	6
Total	75
New Members	12
Transfer In	1
Re-activate	2
Total	15

Branch 2902 is 94.4% organized

And That's A Re-RAP

By: **Robbie Elsaleh, Moorpark Alternate Shop Steward**



By the time this Mail Bag issue hits the stands, all city routes in the District would have been **revisited** per the 2009 Modified Interim Alternate Route Adjustment Process (MIARAP) agreement. Each and every city route would have been reviewed and readjusted if necessary, with the changes being implemented no later than February 27, 2010. Whether you got territory additions or relief, router added or taken away, or your route was untouched,

you still went through the MIARAP "ReRAP". For those carriers whom routes did not change, your base office and street times were still updated based on *your* data from the month of September, October, or November period.

I often get questions asking me why my route wasn't cut when I am averaging over 8 hours per day? First, I want to say that just about every carrier got the time they were averaging on the street. The street is not where carriers are being losing time. Second, It's very important to understand how the District Evaluation and Adjustment Team (DEAT) comes up with your office time and how this affects your total route evaluation. The MIARAP Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) reads in part: Office Evaluation – The DEAT's will select from the **lesser** of the following for the data analysis review period when determining the evaluated office time on each route: 1) The regular carrier's actual average total office time (including any auxiliary assistance), or, 2) The estimated 100% to standard (18 and 8, plus pull down time, plus fixed office time) for the route using the average cased volume. In addition, the DEAT's will consider feedback from the carrier's initial consultation regarding the route's office time. This basically means that you either get the office time that you have been averaging (including any auxiliary office time), or 100% to standards, whichever is less. Plus, if you have given legitimate reasons for needing extra office time, such as massive apartment's turnover resulting in extra daily cleanup, then the DEAT's are able to add that time in to your office time.

So let's say that your 100% to standard office time is calculated at 2:00 hours, but you have been averaging 2:20 in the office due to the massive apartment's turnover and cleanups. And let's also say that you have been averaging 5:40 on the street, which totals to 8:00 hours when added to the 2:20 office time. When your consultation comes around and they share your route data information with you from the selected month and ask for your feedback and comments, if you don't point out why you are going over 100% to standard everyday and need that extra 20 minutes of office time, the DEAT's won't know. All the DEAT's can do is go by the data in front of them, so they credit you 100% to standard and give you 2 hours of office time, which now makes your route 7:40. Guess what happens next? You will get an addition of 20 minutes to your route.

Another reason for your office time to get cut back and make

your route look shorter is if you are doing street duties on office time. Getting DPS mail, loading your vehicle, separation of undeliverable street mail (cleanup), unloading your vehicle, and sorting your outgoing mail, are all street functions. If you do any of them on office time, this makes your street time look shorter, and it makes your office time go over 100% to standard. What did I just say happens to unjustified office time that is over 100% to standard? It gets cut down to 100% and your route will get added to if it falls below 8 hours.

I hope my explanations clarify why some carriers may have been averaging over 8 hours per day, but their route evaluated at 8 hours or less. I have served as one of the DEAT members for both the MIARAP and the ReRAP phase. I believe this interim procedure of evaluating and adjusting routes is much better than going through the normal route inspection method. It's not perfect, nothing ever is. Especially when management is the collector and keeper of data and they ignore their responsibility to properly assign swings, to clean up clocking errors, to do current 3999's and accurately record relay times, travel within times, etc., and to use the correct operation codes. This makes it more challenging for the DEATs to properly evaluate and adjust routes. But all the DEATs I worked with did an outstanding job of researching, cleaning up, eliminating the bad data (anomalies), and adding time were time should have been given in territory transfers due to improperly done 3999's. All in all, I think most carriers will be satisfied with the outcome.

I've heard that another updated MIARAP agreement for 2010 is going to be forthcoming and perhaps continue into the future as a way to quickly evaluate and adjust routes as business conditions warrant. I feel very confident that this process will persist and only get better because of the tedious hard work that the DEAT's provided resulting in fair and successful adjustments. In order to ensure that you do not end up with a bad adjustment the next time around, all us carriers have to take stock in making sure we do our part to assist the DEAT's in looking out for us. As Jerry Maguire said, "Help Me help you". Work safe, follow the rules, take your lunch, take your break, and do your route in the same manner every day as if you are always being observed (even on Saturdays). It will in time become second nature and you won't have to think about it anymore, it will be automatic. GPS in the LLV's is in our future, so you might as well start practicing for that day now.

One last note to the Moorpark carriers. You men and women are consistently at the TOP, if not near the TOP, of performance and productivity. You are a great group of carriers and always do an outstanding job of moving the mail. Ignore the daily negativity and what you are being told on the floor. We have an unappreciative and unfulfilled Management team who fabricate failures in others to realize their own importance. During my MIARAP detail's, I have seen the data, read the reports, and viewed the charts, they all say one thing about Moorpark, you are amongst the best!

Take care.

Living and Working Today, For that Nest Egg Tomorrow

By: **Chris Alessi, MBA/NSBA Representative**



As we put our time in day in and day out do we stop to think if we are going to have enough money saved for the future to have a good quality of life when we retire?

Now is the time to start a **Maturity Income Policy** through your MBA. At the present time all policies Such as a Qualified Traditional or Roth IRA, or a Non-Qualified Deferred Annuity plans are earning 5.25% interest on all your contributions.

Traditional IRA- In a traditional IRA, the contributions you make each year can be deducted from your federal income taxes. In addition, earnings accumulate tax-free until the time of withdrawal. Upon distribution at age 59½ or older, the earnings and principle are taxed as ordinary income. The maximum annual contribution for a single filer under the age of 50 is \$5,000 and (\$6,000) for those 50 and older-with income eligibility limits of \$53,000 for single filer and \$85,000 for a married couple filing jointly.

Roth IRA- Contributions to a Roth IRA are not tax-deductible, but your earnings accumulate tax free. At the time of withdrawal, earnings are tax free from taxes if the owner has

held the IRA for a minimum of 5 years and are at least 59½ years old. This Roth IRA allows you to contribute a maximum of \$5,000 per person each tax year (\$6,000 for those 50 and older) if your adjusted gross income does not exceed \$101,000 for single filers and \$159,000 for married couples filing jointly.

Non-Qualified Annuity -There are no age or income limits for eligibility, no limits on your annual contributions to the plan, and no requirements to begin taking mandatory distributions at a certain age. Earnings accumulate tax-free until time of withdrawal, and then distributions are taxed only on the interest you've earned. The Non-qualified Annuity is not an IRA, but a deferred investment contract that makes regular payments upon annuitization.

Choose how you receive your maturity income – Options include monthly payments for as long as you live, a joint annuity payable during the joint lifetimes of two people, and a lifetime annuity with a guaranteed minimum of 5, 10, 15, or 20 years.

So start your nest egg growing today for a better tomorrow, and join the MBA and keep yourself and loved ones secure for the future.

In solidarity always, God Bless you, Chris

BIG BROTHER IS WATCHING...

Continued from page 3

Yes, Brothers and Sisters, Big Brother is indeed keeping a watchful eye on us. The Valley Village carriers are sure as hell not happy about the GPS Units that will be placed in their vehicles in late February and who can blame them?

No carrier wants to be scrutinized under such a powerful microscope, yet the Valley Village carriers will be the targets of just such scrutiny by the time you read this article.

I always followed all the USPS rules and regulations when I was delivering mail and I invited management on numerous occasions to come out and observe me any time they so desired. But even a rule-following, law-abiding carrier like me would feel very uncomfortable under such intense scrutiny.

However, as long as the USPS notifies the carriers in advance that they will be placing GPS devices in their vehicles, they can do so.

If by any chance you **are not** a rule-following, law-abiding carrier, I would suggest that you change your evil ways immediately, before GPS comes to your town. Make sure you follow all the USPS rules and regulations, don't deviate without prior permission from Management and everything should be just

fine. We shall see.

I'm sure you all have many, many questions about GPS, just like I do. Unfortunately, I don't know the answers to a lot of these questions.

No, I don't know how much these GPS Units cost or where the supposedly broke USPS is getting the money to buy them. Likewise, I don't know who in Management will be trained to monitor the GPS devices and who will be training them to do the monitoring.

God help us all, brothers and sisters, God help us all.

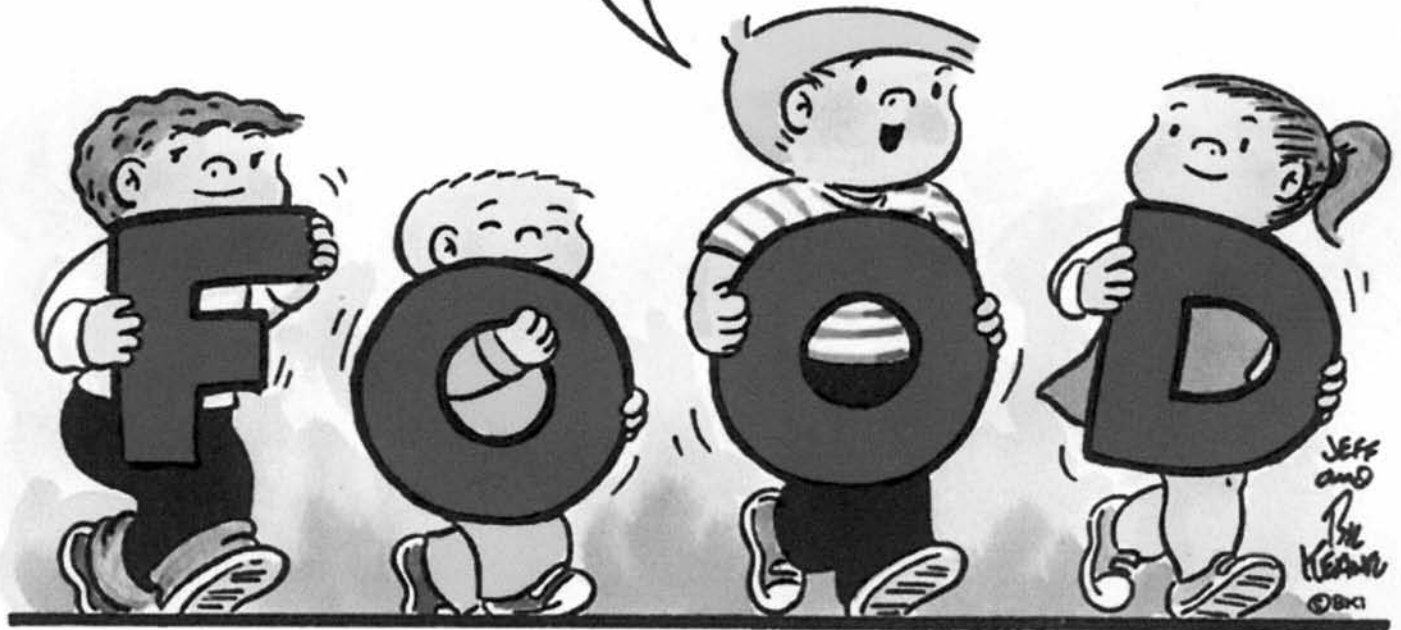
I do have one other question: Will they be able to put a GPS device on Reseda Carrier B-Joe Sindelar's pushcart? Just kidding, B-Joe, just kidding.

In closing, our thoughts and prayers go out to the family of Valley Village Carrier Wen Wa Chao. Wen's life was tragically cut short in late January, and we will all miss him. May he rest in peace. Talk to you all in two months.

"A conference is a meeting to decide where the next meeting will take place."

-Anonymous

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FAMILIES THIS
YEAR!



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The 1970 Postal Strike — Its Cause And Results

By James H. Rademacher • Past President NALC



Front page news item: “James H. Rademacher, President of the AFL-CIO Letter Carriers, today said the ‘lid is ready to blow off the postal service’ in strikes and other demonstrations protesting postal pay rates. He told the House Compensation Sub-Committee he has cautioned his members that strikes are illegal; can cost them their jobs and pensions; and even bring jail sentences and fines.

“But the time has come, he said, ‘when responsible union leaders no longer can control the troops.’ Mr. Rademacher cited a recent New York City demonstration which he indicated could be the last before a total walk-out. The Carrier leader urged an emergency 5.4 percent cost of living increase for postal workers on top of the 4.1 which takes effect July 12.”

“Cities vote emergency funds to save their schools, fire and police departments. Now it’s time to save the postal service,” he said. (*Washington, D.C. Daily News, June 26, 1969*)

Following this prediction-come-true statement, three Republican Congressmen (one a former special delivery messenger) walked out of the hearings. Three supporters of the NALC position—representatives Bill Ford, Jerry Waldie and Moe Udall—engaged this writer in colloquy in which the right to strike was explored. Meanwhile, our statement caused the ire of other association leaders and from that day until the “lid blew,” the relationship between NALC and the six other representatives of 600,000 postal workers was strained to say the least.

The following nine months were the most dramatic, revolutionary and productive in the history of NALC and the Post Office Department. Within one week, as if following a prepared script, 80 Branch 36 members were suspected of deliberately conspiring to withhold services by reporting ill. We were able to get the department to dismiss the charges but the “ill” workers were forced to take annual leave for their absences.

At the same time, NALC filed suit in U.S. District Court in Washington, D.C., asking the court to void as unconstitutional the oath signed by all federal employees that they “would not assert the right to strike against the government.” NALC won this suit three months later and the Civil Service Commission did not appeal the decision,

Following the “sick out” in New York, I attended a meeting of Branch 36 at the request of its President, Gus Johnson. At that time, I assured the membership I would personally lead them in a walk-out if there was no action taken on our pending pay leg-

islation. (The bill, HR 10,000, was reported out of committee two weeks later. It provided for the establishment of a Federal Employees Salary Commission as suggested by NALC and reduced to eight years the time necessary to reach top pay from 21 years.)

An automatic “comparability” pay raise of 4.1 percent took effect July 1, 1969; at the same time, congressional pay was raised 41 percent. This vast differential did not please our membership.

While NALC was concerning itself with the possibility of a strike and having pay legislation enacted, President Richard Nixon had sent to Congress a demand for legislation to reorganize the Post Office Department. This was not a new proposal. Larry O’Brien, LBJ’s PMG, had requested such reform back in 1967 when there was almost a total collapse of the service.

We fought vehemently against the type of corporation plan sought by the administration, generally because postal workers would find their impasse and grievances in the hands of a panel selected by the PMG with advisory, not binding, arbitration. We were the recognized leaders of the opposition. It was my personal belief, not heretofore expressed, that postal workers should receive some type of monetary settlement for agreeing to the transition which management so eagerly was demanding. And without the right to strike, the only alternative should be binding arbitration of grievances.

The situation worsened in the New York area. Our members were witnessing other unions winning large settlements as a result of strikes. Trash collectors, police and firemen and bus drivers won increases to \$10,000 while our members were paid meager salaries ranging from \$6,100-\$8,442 after 21 years of service. Some of our members actually received welfare benefits because of low salaries and large families. Turnover exceeded 166,000 in 1968, the cost of which could have helped provide a wage increase.

VETO THREATENED

On October 14, 1969, the “pay bill of the century” (my opinion) was brought to the House floor. Despite our warnings, appeals, letter writing and demand for swift action before the lid blew. Congressman Gerald Ford, Minority Leader and soon to be President, had the audacity (and courage, I suppose) to read a letter from President Nixon: **No reform, no pay raise**, threatening a veto. The bill passed over this threat, 311-51.

As the bill went to the Senate side, veto threats were echoed and the Senate Committee was reluctant to commence any action which would ultimately face a veto. There were not enough

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1970 POSTAL STRIKE...

Continued from page 8

senators willing to override Mr. Nixon who had been in office only one year.

NALC, alone, went into action, preparing the greatest nationwide lobbying effort in years. Ads were placed in more than 300 newspapers nationwide asking the reader to write the President urging he not veto this pay legislation. Even Jerry Lewis got into the act, taping a spot announcement for radio stations with the same message. Our locals, such as Branch 36 in New York, affixed stamps to patrons' letters as an incentive for support. The White House was deluged with three million letters!

On December 5th, 1969, White House Assistant Charles Colson called our office; "We got your message. When can we meet to discuss our differences? The President would like to settle this issue."

Immediately, meetings were set up, the first of which took place the very next day in Colson's office. I carefully reviewed with him the areas which NALC objected to in the Reorganization Act now finding its way through Congress. Among proposals I made on behalf of the future of NALC were: collective bargaining on all matters affecting wages, fringe benefits and working conditions of postal workers; guarantee employees would remain protected by Civil Service laws; guarantee there would be no loss of any benefits in the transition; guarantee continuation of Veterans' Preference laws; guarantee Congress would maintain oversight of postal operations; establish an 11 member commission to meet with postal officials periodically to review operation procedures, etc., and more importantly, that in all disputes, impasse and grievances binding arbitration would be the right of unions.

After each visit, I would secretly meet with two congressional leaders to explain the results of my meetings with Colson; with Senator Gale McGee, Chairman of the Senate P.O. & C.S. Committee in the basement of the Capitol, and with Chairman Moe Udall of the House Subcommittee on Compensation at the Congressional Hotel. Representative Udall began drafting amendments to the existing reform legislation, inserting language agreed to by Colson. (An interesting aside—eight years later, I also worked with Colson as a volunteer in the Prison Fellowship Program.)

December 18th, 1969, was the BIG day—I was invited to discuss the results of the Colson meetings with President Nixon. We talked briefly about the Bureau of the Budget's need to hold the line, the economic condition of the country, and why he found it necessary to veto any legislation which would "bust the budget." (He was unaware at the time there would be considerable budget busting just four months later.) The President questioned why these matters could not have been resolved between the unions and the Postmaster General. My reply was, "If the PMG would ever meet with me, perhaps we could have worked something out. Since I have met only once with Mr. Blount during his year in office, it was impossible." After more discussion on the labor-management provisions of the agreed-upon legislation, we posed for an "agreement photo" and I left proud as a peacock over my resounding victory. Victory was short-lived as the very next day all hell broke loose.

OTHER UNION OPPOSITION

Six postal organizations representing other crafts were livid once they learned of the Nixon-NALC agreement. Moe Udall came to NALC headquarters to meet with all organization leaders in an attempt to promote the new bill and to emphasize "it matters not who the authors are; what matters most is content." He got nowhere with these same presidents who had condemned me earlier for asserting the right to strike. They strode to the "hill" to make certain our agreement was not acted upon by the committee. Colson tried to soothe the ruffled feathers by inviting the whole group to the White House for consolation and discussion of the intent of the proposed legislation. It didn't work! I learned an important lesson: despite our own imaginative efforts for success in most projects, there must be unity. This theory proved true later when the seven craft unions, united in their efforts, succeeded in negotiating three labor agreements without going to arbitration. Interesting also is the fact that reorganization had to be forced upon these other crafts which today enjoy the fruits of the initiative of NALC, both at the White House and in the strike settlement. In other words, the other craft leaders had to be dragged from collective begging to collective bargaining. Newspaper accounts and records of congressional hearings will attest to this statement.

The year 1970 began with dissension among the unions and great pressures being brought to bear upon me for some type of job action. Christmas mail had been delivered efficiently, must to the chagrin of our critics who thought our members would take out their wrath upon our patrons. We were unhappy with those who placed us in a state of "peonage," not those whom we serve,

Chairman T.J. Dulski of the House P.O. & C.S. Committee, had his own version of reform which left the PMG as a member of the Cabinet. It was apparent he was trying to serve two masters; true and total reorganization of the post office and those who would not want to lose the so-called "cozy relationship" which existed between the committee and postal unions. We did have some faithful, strong supporters on the committees through the years, but I must look at the results—at this point our "friends" had left us more than 15 percent behind comparable private sector wage scales. I was ready to try something different with guarantees of third party settlement of disputes. But I had erred again!

After spending more than a year attacking the reorganization legislation and convincing our membership it was not in our best interest to support it in its present language, the sudden 360 degree shift caught our members by surprise. There were suspicions that I was seeking one of the new top jobs. There was distrust of any proposal of the administration, which had just threatened to veto our sorely-needed pay increase. So it was no wonder that our members at the Branch 36 meeting on March 12th, 1970 were not excited over the committee reporting out the Nixon-NALC bill, 17-6, over the strong opposition of nine other organizations including supervisors and postmasters.

After that committee victory, I wired Gus Johnson, who in turn relayed the information to his ongoing meeting. Thunderous shouts of "too little, too late" pierced the union hall. Johnson tried in vain to point out the significance of the victory. They had

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1970 POSTAL STRIKE...

Continued from page 9

enough promises, enough disappointments, enough, enough! Agreement was then reached, in response to the call for a strike, to conduct a strike vote the following Tuesday, March 17th, 1970. (It must be remembered that from February 1st until March 10th of that year, more than 400 branches, large and small, had taken votes to support the national president "in any action he deems to take to secure economic justice." Branch 36 had not voted such support up to this time.)

Thousands of uniformed letter carriers lined up at the booths set up for the vote at Manhattan Center, conducted by the Honest Ballot Association. Because of the long lines, hundreds left without voting. At 11:00 p.m., the results were announced—1,555 yes, 1,055 no. Reportedly, some voters were told the vote was an authorization to strike, not for an immediate strike. The total vote cast represented less than half of the Branch 36 membership, but it prompted Branch 36 President, Gus Johnson, to move swiftly.

Johnson was a very strong team player, being on the Executive Council as a business agent for the greater New York area, and somehow having faith in the National Program for Economic Justice. It was a very difficult decision for Johnson to make—he had a majority favoring a strike, yet he had loyalty to the national leadership which was doing its utmost to convince the administration and the Congress, "the house is on fire." Fortunately for the future of NALC, Johnson chose to recognize the needs of his membership over the programs of the parent union. He announced at midnight the letter carriers of New York City were on strike. At this point, even the "no voters" cheered him on.

[**Note:** The New York Post, on March 28th, 1970, headlined a full page feature story: "*Gustave Johnson. The Mailman Who Made History.*" Defending his union all the way, the story quoted Johnson as saying, "The shame is not upon the union. The shame is upon the Congress ... we have been the little people of this nation, our voice has not been heard. Well, it's being heard now." Subsequently, he was found guilty of contempt of a federal anti-strike injunction for failure to instruct his members to return promptly to work. No discipline or fines were ever imposed on Johnson, who at one time was subject to a \$500 daily fine with fines of \$10,000 daily, rising to \$30,000 against Branch 36. Just as impatient voters have turned on President Bill Clinton, the membership of Branch 36 voted Gus out of office only 8 months after the strike occurred.]

Other branches, learning of the New York walkout, quickly "hit the bricks" in support. Calls reaching headquarters questioned whether this was the signal to "go." Brooklyn carriers wasted no time in printing placards and forming picket lines. Hartford, Connecticut Branch 86 soon followed, as did most other Connecticut branches. The first day found more than 100,000 postal workers either picketing or honoring letter carrier picket lines. Before it was settled, more than a quarter million postal workers were involved in the walk-out, including those who were locked out. Postal inspectors attempted to intimidate the picketing workers by filming the demonstrations. These same inspectors received hefty pay raises as a result of the strike, as did all management.

At 7:00 a.m., March 18th, 1970, I was summoned by top postal officials, none of whom had ever worked in a post office before their political appointments, from my home to the post office headquarters. Alone in the lion's den, I was warned of the following possibilities if I did not make an effort to get the carriers back to work:

- Immediate discontinuance of the dues checkoff.
- Immediate discontinuance of the government's share of the health insurance payment.
- Immediate discontinuance of life insurance payments.
- The federal government would abandon its participation in the Civil Service Retirement Program.
- The Post Office Department would use every means at its command to punish, fine and even imprison leaders of the walk-out.
- NALC would no longer be recognized as a union under executive orders.

I had heard these threats before from the same sources and from some other union leaders. I did not accept election to the presidency of the NALC for the purpose of presiding over its dissolution. It would have been criminally irresponsible of me to have all of our accomplishments of 75 years thrown away in one angry and unreasoned gesture of defiance. On the other hand, I agree there can come a time when all reasonable courses have been exhausted and when a union no longer has reason to exist unless it is willing to fire the ultimate weapon. I chose to fight for time and sent a mailgram to Johnson insisting his members return to work promptly. With tongue in cheek, I knew that a mailgram could not be delivered during a postal strike.

Most clerks in the New York area were members of the Manhattan-Bronx Postal Union, the largest local of the independent National Postal Union. When the carriers walked out, its president, Moe Biller, urged his members not to cross picket lines, but he was forced to flee his own meeting on March 18th, after an uproar over his refusal to take a strike vote. A week later, as carriers were returning to work, Biller called for a vote and his members were then "legally" on strike. Following is the chronology of events which followed the first day of the walk-out:

March 19, 1970: NALC Executive Council met and adopted a resolution demanding the administration commence immediate negotiations toward settlement or we would make the job action official and nationwide the following Monday. The leaders of the largest branches and state presidents were summoned to meet March 20th at 11:00 a.m. at the Continental Hotel in Washington.

March 20, 1970: More than 300 local leaders were on hand for the "showdown" decision. They had come from every area of the country where the pent up anger and frustration of hungry and betrayed postal employees were breaking through the dam of self-restraint. As I was leaving my office at about 10:50 a.m., preparing to make the critical announcement which would have brought to a halt all mail service until our justifiable complaints had been dealt with. Assistant Secretary of Labor, Bill Usury called, he said officials at the Labor Department were ready to talk. Armed with this administration's response and 400 letters of support from our branches, I headed to the Continental Hotel.

continued on page 11

1970 POSTAL STRIKE...

Continued from page 10

After hearing details of the work stoppage, delegates unanimously adopted a resolution granting me complete authority to take any action deemed necessary. Delegates also voted to allow me to attend the meetings immediately at the Labor Department, withholding any planned action until my return to the meeting. The meeting was held with all other union presidents in attendance, along with administration officials including Secretary of Labor George Schultz and William Usury. Postmaster General Winton Blount refused to attend so long as employees were on strike. When I returned to the meeting of NALC delegates with information that the administration would commence negotiations as soon as our members returned to work, delegates voted overwhelmingly to allow me five days to reach a settlement or order a national work stoppage. I then returned to the Labor Secretary's office to join with others in establishing ground rules. It was the first time in history any administration was forced to deal with its employees in this manner.

March 21, 1970: A telegram was sent to all 6,000 NALC branches, reading in part: "Administration refuses to permit negotiations during climate of intimidation, Return to work Monday so that meaningful negotiations might take place. Public wrath shall replace support if non-concurrence."

March 22, 1970: No negotiations were scheduled because only 56 of 200 branches had returned to work. While appearing on CBS and NBC news programs, I got myself in trouble when there was serious misinterpretation and misunderstanding of what I said in two areas: first, in response to why were the letter carriers striking, after explaining some of the injustices being suffered, I added that members of SDS (Students for a Democratic Society) had joined the ranks of the strikers. SDS had attempted to do so but were not successful. There was no need for me to offer that information; secondly, I said I would ask AFL President George Meany, to call upon all labor to support the strike. Later, Mr. Meany demanded to know why I would put him on the spot. I told him abruptly NALC had paid per capita since 1917 to the AFL and it was time they gave us a hand. So he did! He decided in view of the environment in which we found ourselves, with six other craft presidents not on speaking terms with the NALC leader, to assign his assistant Jim Gildea to take over as spokesman for the postal unions. Gildea, who subsequently was appointed Assistant Postmaster General, ordered, "Rademacher—you are off TV. This is now an AFL postal union strike."

March 23, 1970: President Nixon ordered military servicemen into the New York City postal operations in view of "the national crisis." I went on the air immediately thereafter, deploring the use of troops and urged that soldiers not be permitted into post offices until such time as carriers had an opportunity to return to their jobs. Although the militia held back another day. Branch 36 members stubbornly held out. I was able to convince Labor Department officials that sufficient employees had returned and either they show good faith and commence negotiations, or my "5 day mandate" would begin running.

March 24, 1970: Administration agreed to comply with our demand for immediate negotiations and set March 25th and La-

borers' International Building as the date and place of commencement of negotiations.

March 25, 1970: Union demands were: 1) 12 percent wage increase retroactive to October, 1969; 2) 100% payment of health insurance premiums by the government; 3) compression to eight years the service necessary to reach top step; 4) wage adjustments in areas where recruitment was a problem and where turnover was so great, such as in New York City; 5) 20-year optional retirement; and 6) complete amnesty for those who participated in the walk-out. The first counter-proposal came from Deputy Postmaster General, E.T. Klassen, whose favorite response was, "You are the people that struck, not we." Another unsettling statement made by the administration was that any wage increase for postal workers must be granted all other government employees and the military.

March 26, 1970: Although negotiations were producing nothing more than rhetoric, a telegram was sent to each branch urging the membership to ignore all news reports and await official union releases, calling attention to the fact that any unauthorized precipitous action could jeopardize our situation. Meanwhile, due to a misunderstanding and not an attempt to deceive, the strike leaders were erroneously advised that the demands listed above had actually been agreed to. There is a difference between demands on the table and settlement.

It had now been necessary for me to remind negotiators of the "five-day mandate" insisted upon by our delegates on March 20th. I displayed our press release which would have brought to a halt all mail deliveries on April 6, 1970. This then "encouraged" Mr. Klassen to start moving. He offered the six percent retroactive increase, which was also to be paid to all other government and military, and six percent additional when the reorganization act was signed into law. I said "no way have our members risked their jobs, their families' welfare and possible jail sentence for only six percent on top of what others got for doing nothing but riding our coattails." We caucused and I settled for eight percent, bringing the wage increase to a total of 14 percent.

How ironic it was that after the Senate got the recommendation for the pay raise portion of the settlement, within 48 hours the bill was passed. Such speed and similar action six months earlier could have prevented the first successful postal strike in history. Perhaps it's better it didn't happen that way. We also subsequently got reorganization, bargaining rights and binding arbitration—all of which have been more financially beneficial to letter carriers than all the "collective begging" from 1900 to 1970. (More than \$12,000 of annual wages are attributed to COLA, which was negotiated into our first contract.)

The story doesn't end there. Even after the settlement reached Congress, there were lengthy delays in approving the reorganization plan and the ultimate eight percent increase. Because of the continuing delay, once again Gus Johnson came to the forefront. On April 10, 1970, he invited all branch presidents to a meeting in Washington to decide what course of action to take if Congress further delayed the strike settlement. There were 52 branch leaders in attendance at the May 1, 1970 meeting. The vote was taken as to how many present would support a new walk-out if Congress failed to provide the eight

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1970 POSTAL STRIKE...

Continued from page 11

percent by May 14th. The vote was 28 in support with 24 voting "present."

Recognizing the urgency and being familiar with Congressional delays, I asked Rep. Arnold Olson (D-Montana), member of the House PO & CS Committee, to sponsor an amendment making the eight percent effective April 16, 1970, and not upon enactment. Despite the opposition of AFL President George Meany, the amendment carried and when the bill was finally signed on August 12th, 1970, letter carriers received an average \$300 back pay. (Unfortunately, so did all other postal workers.)

Now, as we prepare to observe the 25th anniversary of this historic endeavor, letter carriers can look back with pride in their victory of removal from "peonage" status to true trade unionists, enjoying those benefits that have been won by others who have the right to strike. Dignity and respect has been restored to the profession, except on the work room floor and at the bargaining table where those elements have yet to be won.

THE RESULTS

- 6 percent wage increase retroactive to three months prior to the strike date. (All Federal employees, the military and other postal workers received the benefit of the letter carrier involvement.)
- Reduction immediately from 21 to 8 years the time required to reach top pay for postal workers only. (Due to a subsequent arbitrator's award, it now takes 12 1/2 years.)
- Enactment of the Postal Reorganization Act, converting the Post Office Department to the United States Postal Service, removing the PMG from the Cabinet, establishing the right of postal unions to collective bargaining under the terms of the Labor-Management Laws, including binding arbitration.
- 8 percent wage increase retroactive to the strike date settlement in exchange for the union's support of reform for postal workers only.
- Because of our earlier relationship with the President and his assistants we were able to secure total amnesty, causing the Postmaster General, Winton Blount, to resign in disgust. (Only 10 years later. President Reagan fired every air controller who walked out over poor working conditions. The Air Traffic Controllers Union was destroyed)
- No longer will postal workers or unions which represent them be taken for granted.

COMMENTARY

While the postal strike took place physically in 1970, the underlying cause has been apparent since the NALC organized in 1889. One of the main grievances at the time of organization was the inadequate pay scales for those who continued in government service after the Civil War. The pay at that time was \$2.21 per day. If it were necessary to be off for any reason, the regular carrier paid his substitute.

As early as 1820, James Monroe's Postmaster General announced he had no intention of paying his employees a sufficient salary so they could maintain themselves without taking a

second job. Historically, too, postal administrations have usually determined to operate on a break-even basis. This has inevitably resulted in service curtailments and in the systematic impoverishment of postal workers.

This historical background created a continual climate of oppression which built up an accretion of resentment and distrust among letter carriers toward their government employer. Even after it organized, NALC was considered too aggressive, leading to the issuance of a "gag order" by President Teddy Roosevelt. The order banned, under threat of dismissal, any discussions with Congressmen concerning wages or working conditions. When the order was overturned by the Lloyd-LaFollette Act in 1913, the price was an amendment which forbade postal and federal workers to strike.

More recently, the 1970 work stoppage also had roots in the eight years of the Eisenhower Administration, during which "Ike" vetoed four pay bills at the request of his controversial Postmaster General, Arthur Summerfield. Although the final veto was overridden by an all out union effort, the end result of these lean years was that letter carriers fell tragically behind the economic parade.

Here's a look at the progress that has been made since those early days:

1900-1925 – Raises averaged \$40 yearly.

1925-1943 – Raises averaged \$00—salary scales in 1925 ranged from \$1,700- \$2,100. Substitutes received 65¢ hourly.

1943-1969 – Raises averaged \$200 yearly.

1970-Present – Raises are averaging more than \$1,000 annually.

My father received the same 65¢ hourly in 1925 as I did in 1941. When asked why he left the Ford Motor Company, which was paying \$5.00 per day, my father told my mother, "For reasons of security." She found it necessary to proclaim on more than one occasion, "Guaranteed poverty is not security."

All that has changed now, thanks to those who risked everything so their successors might enjoy release from peonage, poverty and frustration just because they have chosen the letter carrier profession for a career

OH, GIVE ME SOME MEN, SOME STOUT-HEARTED MEN (AND WOMEN) WHO WILL FIGHT FOR THE RIGHT THEY ADORE ... AND I'LL FIND YOU TEN THOUSAND MORE!!!

About the Author

Jim Rademacher, son of a Detroit, Michigan letter carrier, entered the Postal Service as a temporary substitute in 1941. After serving in several branch and state offices, he was elected President of Branch No. 1. He held that office for 10 years prior to moving to NALC headquarters as National Assistant Secretary in 1960. In 1962, he was elected Vice President and in 1968 he became National President. He was in office only 18 months when the 1970 strike took place. He retired in 1977.



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IS MIARAP FULL OF CRAP?

By: James Perryman, San Fernando Chief Shop Steward



Hey guys. I'm back. I know it's been a long time since I last wrote an article. What can I say but, I have been busy with family, coaching youth sports, and of course work.

It's been a pretty good season, so far, for our defending world champion LOS ANGELES LAKERS. Can you say repeat? By the way I want to thank the members of branch 2902 for voting for me to be on the board of trustee again. I'm sincerely honored.

How about the MIARAP process? Do letter carriers think that it is working? Well let's discuss it, shall we. Local union representatives as well as some branch officers are mandated by the NALC, at the national level to participate with postal management in the MIARAP process. The Modified Alternate Interim Route Adjustment Process is a joint agreement by the NALC and the Postal Service to adjust routes to as near to 8 hours as possible. The parties at the local level are required to read a script to carriers and obtain the carriers input regarding his/her average office and street time for the route. In my experience with the process so far, this is when the MIARAP process becomes a hard sell for some letter carriers. I notice after the first part of the script is read, some carriers become very bored and sleepy or lost and confused. However, it's O.K. I don't think most carriers really understand what the hell was read to them until the carriers read their copy of the script. I don't think I fully understood the process until I read the script the 2nd time. Even after some carriers have read and fully understand the process, we still hear those famous lines "What the hell does my input matter to management. They are just going to do what they want to do to the route anyway." I understand why some carriers may become apprehensive while going through this process. Some carriers are not getting what they requested from their consultation, which gives a perception that management is not considering their input/request to adjust the routes to the way the carrier wants.

The reality of the process, and regardless of how you feel, is that the District Evaluation and Adjustment Team is required to adjust the routes to as near as 8 hours as possible, with the carrier's input or not. Just a reminder every level of this process has a team. On each team there is union and management representative. Both the union and management at the local levels are responsible for gathering information and recommendation from the carriers to provide to the D.E.A.T. team so that they can jointly adjust the routes. When the carrier's input and the data is provided the DEAT team, the team will use the information to adjust routes only if it makes sense. In some cases the information and recommendation from the carriers may not make sense, which may cause a route and other surrounding routes to be out of adjustment if territory is moved. Therefore, it may be impossible to give every carrier what he/she wants.

The MIARAP process has been working OK in San Fernando in my opinion. However, there are some bugs that need to be worked out. For example, the use of DOIS in the data that is used to provide the standard office time does not recognize if a carrier has excessive parcels, accountable mail, or carrier endorsements. It simply does not count these items; therefore carriers may not get the office time credit that he/she is entitled to. I advise carriers to count their mail everyday, and make sure to clock on the appropriate office function when conducting office work. Carriers should be prepared for their consultation by having their notes with them just in case there is a dispute regarding office and/or street times. Carriers should know what their average office and street time is. If a carrier can tell a supervisor when he/she is going to be over or less than 8 hours then that carrier should have an idea what his/her average office/street time is. There have been numerous times when we consulted carriers during this process at the local level that may have bad attitudes and just did not want to be bothered. I believe in most cases these carriers were simply not prepared to participate in the consultations and don't know how to explain or justify their position. I find that some carriers don't realized that when they come back from the route/street that the p.m. office time is part of their office time. When carriers are not properly clocking back into the office they are losing office time that they are entitled to. A carrier may even think he/she is getting over by conducting office functions on street time to increase the street time but, believe me it does not work. When management conducts 3999 (street counts) they will deduct and remove the improper time used for an office function while on the street time. So use the office time appropriately or lose it. In my opinion when a carrier is non-cooperative during the consultation it will also cause problems in the MIARAP process. The carrier who is unwilling to provide information that pertains to the proper adjustment of his/her route will make it difficult for the DEAT team to adjust the route to as near to 8 hours as possible. However it will get adjusted, even if all they have is the data and the carrier's demonstrated performance.

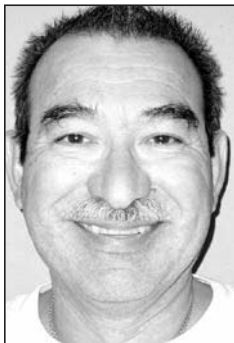
In closing I believe that all teams at every level are doing a pretty good job in doing their part to help make the MIARAP process a success. I think most carriers prefer to adjust routes using this process opposed to the conventional method of route inspections because their cooperation shows it. Even though I believe there is room for improvement in this process I do appreciate the fact that a major part of the evaluation comes from the carriers demonstrated street time performance. As long as the NALC and Postal Management continue to work together to improve this route adjustment process it will improve the parties work relations and provide longevity to the Postal Service.

The answer to the question above is...MIARAP is all that and will not be crap if we all put on our thinking hats. I know it sounds corny!! But it rhymes!!

Until next time, be safe, God Bless, and go Lakers.

A NEW YEAR, NEW BENEFITS!

By: Joe Gutierrez, Health Benefits Representative



A new year is now upon us once again, and with it brings a new deductible for our health plan. Before I talk about the plan and the benefits we are offered let me be the first to say thank you for joining the NALC Health Plan. Remember to use a PPO and you only pay a \$15 copayment for the office visit. If you have lab work performed you will pay nothing if the services are performed by Quest or Lab Corp.

The plan now pays at the PPO benefit level for non-pathologists, radiologists and emergency room physicians when provided at a PPO facility. Removal of impacted teeth not completely erupted are now covered under surgical benefits. The plan now covers the repair of existing orthotics with

a maximum plan payment of \$100 every three years. And finally the plan pays at the PPO benefit level for non-PPO air ambulance.

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In Memoriam

Wen W. Chao

Active Carrier- North Hollywood

Donald R. Spry

Retiree- Woodland Hills

Ray McTaggart

Past President- Branch 2902
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*-Nicholas Murray Butler,
American Educator (1862-1947)*

Union Meeting

January 19, 2010
Chatsworth



The meeting was called to order at 7:12PM by President Salazar. CC Flatts led the pledge of allegiance. A roll call of officers was done. Asking to be excused were Joe Vedder, Joe Gutierrez, Ernestine Hernandez, Chris Alessi, Sandy Gaunce, Mary Stanley, Robbie Elsleh, and Laura Walters. Fred Shaw makes a motion to excuse the brothers and sisters, S/C.

President Salazar reminds the members to sign the attendance book and purchase tickets for the 50/50 raffle.

NALC Asst. Secretary-Treasurer Nicole Rhine, RAA Chris Jackson, and DRT member Joe McDonough from Br. 4006 are introduced as tonight's guests.

Members are asked to review the minutes from the December meeting. Fred Shaw makes a motion to accept the minutes as printed, S/C.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

President Salazar asks for a moment of silence for the Haitian earthquake victims.

NALC Bulletin has a list of organizations for members to donate to the relief cause.

NALC Food Drive kickoff will be on Tuesday May 4 from the MEND Foodbank via KCAL9 and CBS2.

The food drive is on Saturday May 8, the day before Mother's Day.

COMMUNICATIONS

President Salazar reports on total grievance activity for 2009. Approximately \$196,200.00 was recouped for the members through the grievance procedure for various violations during 2009. Managers are being monitored by the Union for abusive behaviors.

NRP grievances are seeing some movement. Some DRT decisions have been received by the branch. Some are going on to arbitration. PS Form 1838 and backpay issues are addressed by President Salazar.

Excessing- Due to the implementation of FSS, excessing of employees will begin soon. Management projections are reviewed and discussed. Excessing may extend to a 200-mile radius. The first FSS machine is already built in Van Nuys and will process mail for Pasadena.

Healthcare update- In the handout is the latest health care reform information. This may be changing due to today's election outcome for Senator Kennedy's seat in the Senate.

Employee Focus- OIG and Postal Inspection Service to join forces to combat workers compensation fraud.

FERS- Change in benefits allowing FERS employees to receive service credit for unused sick leave. Also, additional legislation is being discussed for rolling cash value of unused sick leave and annual leave into TSP accounts. Information is in the handout.

Rates of return for TSP were reviewed.

No bills were submitted.

COMMITTEES

Recreation- Paulette Dyer gives the members information on the Grammy Museum and donates a See's gift certificate for a door prize.

Retirees- Don Minster announces the next luncheon will be on January 21 and the Simi Hometown Buffet.

Health Benefits- Lisa Leal informs the members that the NALC Healthplan pays for H1N1 virus vaccinations, and offers tips on staying healthy.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS- None

NEW BUSINESS- None

GOOD OF THE ASSOCIATION- Know your rights

Alfonso Covarrubias from San Fernando is presented with a 40-year membership pin.

Asst. Secretary-Treasurer Nicole Rhine presents Rudolph Hernandez from San Fernando with a Gold Card and 50-year membership pin.

RAA Chris Jackson speaks to the membership about the rules for excessing under Articles 12 and 30.

Asst. Secretary Rhine speaks to the members about how the outcome of the Massachusetts senate race could change the outcome of healthcare reform. She spoke about the pre-funding of the future retiree healthcare, the NALC's position on 5 day delivery, and listed her duties as Asst. Secretary-Treasurer.

Members reviewed the Treasurer's report. Lisa Leal made a motion to accept the report as printed, S/C.

Lori Stewart made a motion to adjourn, S/C.

50/50 drawing for \$14.50 was won by Paul Drapkin. Door prize was won by Larry Orcutt. Membership drawing was worth \$455.50. The name drawn was Jack Rice from Northridge. He was not present to win.

Respectfully submitted by Susan Degenhardt, Recording Secretary

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When: Thursday,
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"I once wanted to become an atheist but I gave up...they have no holidays."

-Henny Youngman,
American Comedian
(1906-1998)

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When planning an outing to a park or venue check the website for discounts.

At the monthly meetings (every third Tuesday of the month) coupons and flyers for various venues are available.

My famous homemade oatmeal chocolate chip cookies are 4 for \$1.00.

PAULETTE DYER

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NALC Assistant Secretary-Treasurer Nichole Rhine (center) presents to Alfonso Covarrubias (l) his 40 year membership pin and to Rudolph Hernandez (r) his gold card representing 50 years of NALC membership. Both men are from the San Fernando Post Office. Congratulations gentlemen and thanks for your continuing union membership.

CALENDAR OF EVENTS

- MAR 14** Daylight Savings Time Begins 
- MAR 16** Regular Branch Meeting 7pm
Union Hall-Chatsworth
Dinner served 6 pm
- MAR 18** Retiree Lunch 11:30am
Hometown Buffet-Simi Valley
- MAR 20** Spring Begins 
- APR 6** Executive Board Meeting 6pm
Executive Council Meeting 7pm
- APR 15** Retiree Lunch 11:30am
Hometown Buffet-West Hills
Tax Day
- APR 20** Regular Branch Meeting 7pm
Garden Palm Hotel-Newbury Park
- MAY 4** Executive Board Meeting 6pm
Executive Council Meeting 7pm
- MAY 8** NALC National Food Drive
- MAY 9** Mothers Day 
- MAY 18** Regular Branch Meeting 7pm
Union Hall-Chatsworth
Dinner served 6 pm
- MAY 20** Retiree Lunch 11:30am
Hometown Buffet-Simi Valley



THE Mail Bag NEWS

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OFFICIAL PUBLICATION OF TRI-VALLEY BRANCH 2902,
NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF LETTER CARRIERS AFL-CIO

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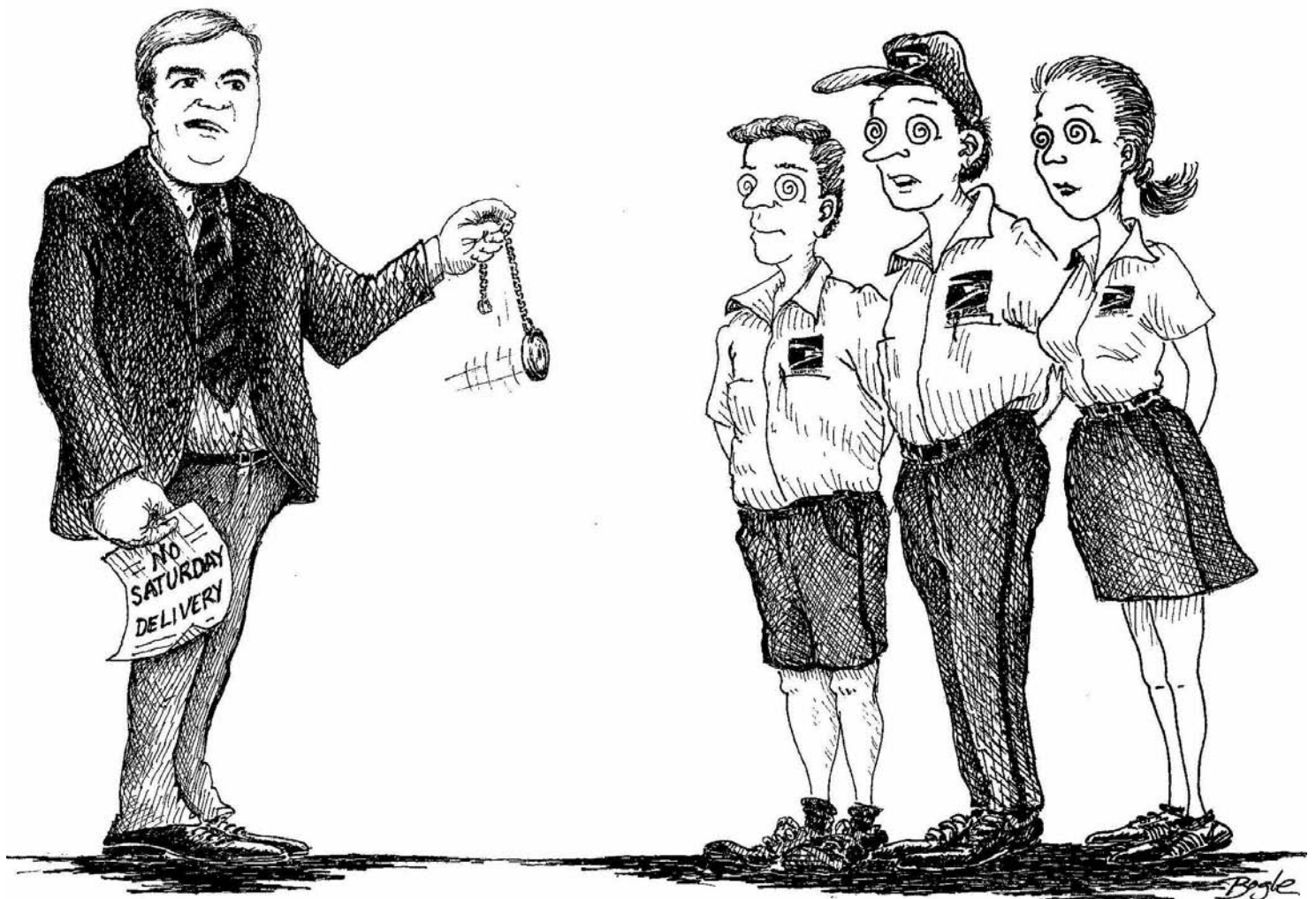
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Don't Believe the Hype!

By Frank Salazar, President



Every Postal Employee in America probably received the same postcard I did. The back of the postcard is entitled "Ensuring a Viable Postal Service for America . . . An Action Plan for the Future." If you flip the card over its replete with phrases such as "unprecedented challenge" (we didn't see it coming), "handling fewer pieces of mail" (volume is down), "volume

will continue to fall" (we don't know how to bring the volume back), "flexibility to do more" (we want to weaken the work rules found in our National Agreements or get rid of them), "greater flexibility is vital" (we want more casuals, TE's, & PTFs and less Regulars), "we need our laws and regulations to enable

continued on page 2

PRESIDENT'S REPORT...

Continued from page 1



change" (we want to weaken worker's compensation laws, we want our employees to pay more for healthcare and life insurance, we want to dump the no lay-off provisions, we want all the rules in our favor). And, the main thrust of the message . . . "we're asking lawmakers to change delivery frequency to five days".

Hmmmm, the Postal Service is broke and it's spending tens of thousands of dollars by printing this piece of Management propaganda to convince us to support a law that is contrary to our own interests as employees of the USPS, as American citizens, and as consumers; I think not! We've got managers on the workroom floor giving stand-ups telling our employees that we are going to 5-Day delivery like it's already a done deal. Well, I've got news for you. It's not a done deal!

The Law of the Land states that mail delivery is six (6) days a week, which has been the norm since 1912. The brain trust that manages the USPS knows this is true and they know that it will take an act of Congress to reduce delivery down to five (5) days a week. Why do you think they are going through such great efforts to convince you to back 5-day delivery? Because, it's not a done deal! They know it and now you know it!

Do You Really Want 5-Day Delivery

Some carriers may say, "What's wrong with 5-Day delivery? I want the weekends off." So, who said you will have Saturday off? If you're a TE or PTF carrier you could be scheduled to case mail on Saturday or Sunday for Monday. Remember, every week will be a holiday week, and the mail will really back-up when we do have a holiday. Those of you who are not on the OTDL, guess what . . . daily mandatory overtime. There's going to be a ton of mail to move and not enough people or vehicles to move it. Management will not hire until we are bare bones on complement. Remember forced overtime, forced holiday mandating, and working in the dark?

Ok, say you're an overtime pig, a T-6 or have less than 6 years on the job. You want weekends off? Here's another scenario. Six of you get together. Who's going to leave? What do I mean? Well, if we are going to 5-Day delivery we don't need 1/6th of our carrier workforce. That means 25,000 T-6 positions go the way of the dinosaur. We don't need them! So guess what? Does the service conduct massive Article 41.3.O's nationwide or do you become an unassigned carrier and get assigned to that crappy withheld position nobody wanted? Hmmmm . . . or worse yet, how about if you're the junior T-6 that lost his position, there is no vacant carrier position in the office, and is not able to be excessed into a withheld position in the office and you are excessed 250 miles from home. Would you like to live in the desert or the Central Valley? Remember, if we go to 5-Day delivery before anyone can be excessed, all TEs will have to be separated and PTF hours re-

duced. Oh you're a PTF working 40 hours a week now, get used to living on less than 30, if there's excessing.

The absolute worst case scenario, if we were to go to 5-Day delivery would be lay-off. Don't get excited, this is only worst case and I pray it doesn't happen. Say the USPS is over-staffed, and they don't give an early out incentive that employees like. What do we do with the extra employees? Well, we have all these unassigned T-6s, all the TEs have been let go, so who goes now? "Don't we lay off the T-6s, because they are extra?" No. "So we get rid of the PTFs?" No, not necessarily. "So, if we reduced the PTF hours and excessed, and still have extra people, we don't lay-off the PTF's?" No, we could . . . but it all has to do with seniority. Whether you're a Regular or PTF it doesn't matter. What matters is that you have at least 6 years of continuous service. If you don't, you could be on the chopping block and you will have all the weekends you want!

Is 5-Day Delivery Necessary

No, 5-Day Delivery is not necessary. However, if you tell a big lie and tell it often enough many people will start to believe it. Don't Believe the Hype! You should all have heard about the "onerous" retiree healthcare pre-funding, where the Postal Service is forced to pre-fund retiree health benefits at the tune of approximately \$5 billion a year. No other Federal Agency bears such a burden. If the Service didn't have to pre-fund at such an "onerous" amount it would have made a profit in the last three years.

Fast forward to a recent USPS Office of Inspector General report. It recently reported that the Postal Service overpaid \$75 billion into the Civil Service Retirement System. If that \$75 billion overpayment was applied to our retiree healthcare pre-funding, we wouldn't have to go to 5-Day delivery . . . right Jack? According to PMG Jack Potter, we are right!

On March 18, 2010, PMG Potter testified before the Senate Appropriations Subcommittee and basically stated that if we got the overpayment from the CSRS and applied it to the pre-funding for the future retiree health benefits, and I quote ". . . we wouldn't have to go from six-, to five-day delivery."

So, when you hear about those polls being conducted saying the public is good with going to 5-day delivery, ask yourself how the question was asked? Was it put in the context of paying more for a stamp versus cutting back a day of delivery? Or, having the taxpayer support the Service versus cutting back a day of delivery? Was the public ever informed about applying the overpayment of CSRS to the pre-funding mandate? No, I don't think so. The Public supports the Postal Service and its letter carriers and they would agree to delivery cutbacks, if that were the only solution to ensure the financial stability of the Postal Service. But, cutting back to 5-day is not the way. There are other options. Don't believe the lie: don't believe the hype.

What We Can Do

Currently, there is a resolution in the House of Representa-

continued on page 4

PLEASE, DON'T DRINK THE KOOL AID! CAPECE?

By: Ray Hill, Executive Vice-President



I really wasn't planning to write anything about Five-Day Delivery in this issue of the Mail Bag News, because there are at least 2 other articles in here that articulately address this disturbing topic and the April issue of the **Postal Record** also discusses Five-Day Delivery at length.

However, I feel the need to at least broach the subject because, while conducting Station visits within the Branch, Five-Day Delivery is the topic that in-

variably generates the most questions that I receive from the membership.

It is interesting to hear the different ways that the questions on this topic are posed to me, and the way the questions are posed depends upon who is doing the questioning.

Some Carriers, generally those with a lot of service time, will ask me, *"When are we going to start getting Saturdays off?"*

Other Carriers, generally T-6's, PTFs and those with less years of service time, ask me *"Am I going to lose my job?"* Carriers also tell me that they are being bombarded with questions from their patrons about Five-Day Delivery, no doubt due to all the press time that the topic is receiving.

Carriers are also understandably concerned about Five-Day delivery because of all the mis-information that is being disseminated on the workroom floor by Supervisors, Managers and Postmasters. I've heard all about the doom and gloom stand-ups laced with unsubstantiated claims being spouted by Management. In one office a Manager gave a stand-up telling carriers that there was an "80% chance" that Five-Day Delivery was going to become a reality. I also heard that a Postmaster was telling carriers today (April 8th) that Congress had just passed a bill for the USPS to go to Five-Day delivery.

None of this is true and I'm getting tired of hearing about all the **Bull manure** that is being spread on the workroom floor by **ignorant** Management personnel that have apparently swallowed **way too much** of PMG Jack Potter's Five-Day Delivery Kool-Aid.

Hopefully you all read the Postal Record and the NALC Bulletins that are posted in your stations so that you can learn the **real truth** about Five-Day delivery and the negative consequences it would create for the USPS. Also, be sure to check the NALC's Website at nalc.org for up to the date information on important issues including the Five-Day Delivery Trojan Horse that PMG Jack Potter (a.k.a. Jackie Wacky) is preparing to wheel up to Congress's Front Gates.

MEMORIES

In the last issue of the Mailbag News, Branch 2902 President Frank Salazar reminded us that we had recently passed the 25th anniversary of the merger of Thousand Oaks Branch 5499 with the San Fernando Branch 2902. Frank asked the membership if they had any recollections of the merger to please share them for publication in the Mail Bag News, so I am going to briefly recount my somewhat foggy memories of the merger.

When I became a Letter Carrier in July of 1984, my employing office of North Hollywood was represented by local Branch 2740 with President Cipriano Montoya at the helm.

I was working at the Chandler station in North Hollywood at the time, and I can recall the "old timers" discussing the merger vote that would be taking place at the next Union meeting.

Bob (the Big Bopper) Gardner (how's it going, Bob?) was our shop steward and Bob Lea was one of our vocal "senior" carriers, who supported the Union and was really gung-ho in that support.

I recall hearing Bob Gardner and Bob Lea talking about the upcoming merger vote, and they were both very much in favor of the merger. I also know that Mike Steele was a proponent of the merger. They were all excited about the prospect of having a full-time Union Officer representing us, especially since that full-time Union Officer was going to be Jon Gaunce, about whom we had heard a lot of good things.

Well, to make a long story **somewhat** short, the North Hollywood membership voted in favor of the merger and North Hollywood Branch 2740 officially merged with Branch 2902 on August 19, 1985. The rest, as they say, is history.

In my opinion there is indeed strength in numbers and, as soon as we merged with Branch 2902, it seemed that we gained instant respect from Management.

As I have written here before, Branch 2902 President Jon Gaunce was an absolute wizard in the grievance procedure, and "back in the day" he got some of the greatest grievance settlements imaginable for the membership, often with smoke, mirrors and an uncanny ability to bluff his way through many a grievance meeting. Jon's battles with North Hollywood Postmaster Dale Herbert were legendary and I'm happy to say that Jon emerged victorious in the vast majority of those battles. Thank God that the members of Branch 2740 North Hollywood voted in favor of the merger with Branch 2902 back in 1985 because things have worked out quite well as a result. Great job on the mergers, Jon, great job.

continued on page 7

EMPTY COMMUNICATION

By: Ernestine Hernandez, Vice President



No time for proper communication? This is what I see a lot of in our office with management. If a standup is given one day, it is never followed up on, for the carriers who were off that day. How is a carrier supposed to know what is expected of them when management does not bother to keep everyone informed of what changes are going on? I find out briefly during fact finding interviews of stand ups that were given of changes that management expects us to know, that I was not present at, nor were the carriers who are being interviewed! Management puts no postings of the stand ups, nor do they repeat them to everyone. I also notice when I ask Art Arroyo to inform carriers of something in a standup, that instead he goes around and tells some carriers, but not all (because most of them have left). Al Sgro seems to do pretty well in his stand ups, as he did with the "saturation barcodes" for Penny Savers and ADVO coverages (The 93030 and 93033 carriers did not even get the standup until several weeks later). I see less of Al's carriers in fact finding interviews.

Speaking of fact findings, I bet most of you are wondering what is going on. And I've got to say it gets pretty tiring going into fact finding interviews in which management has failed to do any real investigating prior to calling a carrier in. For example, I was in fact findings where carriers were asked about missed delivery confirmations, where only the delivery confirmation number was available. There was no street address, no customer name, no information about the item, such as, was it a parcel or large envelope, nothing! How is a carrier supposed to know what management is talking about with no information to go on? Carriers were also taken into fact findings for missed scans on days they were not even working. We've even had a carrier called in for not delivering an Express Mail item he did not sign out for! I've asked Craig Saxon why he gives these types of fact findings, but he just shrugs and has no answer.

Just because a carrier was on a certain route does not mean management can pin a failure on him. An accountable log is there to verify who checked out an Express Mail item. Most likely it was picked up from the plant later when nobody is required to sign out for the items. How do you like that for accountability? Our office seems to hold little regard for that, as you can tell by the fact that most of the time we are never cleared for accountable items by a clerk. We are just left envelopes to place them in to slide under the accountable cage. How secure is that? The clerks do a good job, but Management does not have enough clerks staffed to do all the work required of them. The injured carriers that were doing back up for the clerks are no longer there because management felt that was just "make work" being given to them.

Carriers, if you get any discipline letters for any of the fact findings you've had, please let me know (because management won't tell me). And let's just keep doing our job the way we are supposed to. Carriers are doing a fantastic job!

PRESIDENT'S REPORT...

Continued from page 2

tives (H.RES. 173), which expresses the sense of the House of Representatives that, "the United States Postal Service should take all appropriate measures to ensure the continuation of its 6-day mail delivery service." Take a moment to read the resolution, its short and included in this issue of the Mail Bag News.

At our General Membership Meeting in March, the leadership of our Branch requested that those in attendance send a postcard to their congressional representative asking them to support H. RES. 173. Of those present, sixty-three responded to our request. Twenty-seven cards were sent to Representative Gallegly (R-24th), twelve to Representative Berman (D-28th), eleven to Representative McKeon (R-25th), nine to Representative Sherman (D-27th), three to Representative Waxman (D-30th), and one to Representative Waters (D-35th).

Take a moment to write. We have placed the addresses of the local congressional representative's home offices in this issue of the newsletter to make it easier for you. You don't have to type the letter or use a computer. Simply write your representative and ask him or her to support H. RES. 173. You can add anything else you would like, but make sure to tell them to support the resolution and 6-Day delivery. Don't forget to sign and print your name and to put down your home address. If enough of us write, we can stop the hype. All for now back in two.

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"Experience is a wonderful thing; it enables you to recognize a mistake every time you repeat it."

—Anonymous

JON D. GAUNCE UNION HALL

By: Chris Alessi, MBA/NSBA Representative



At the February 2010 executive board meeting I made a recommendation that we name the branch union hall after our late, great president and founder of TRI-VALLEY Branch 2902. It was a unanimous among the officers in attendance. At the regular membership meeting in February 2010 it was voted on and passed, also unanimously.

As we make preparations to have brother Jon's name painted on the wall of the union hall on this 25th anniversary of our branch, it couldn't be more fitting for a great union leader, the caliber that Jon was to his fellow carriers. Jon has been passed away 14 yrs as of the date I am writing this (4-10-10). Jon was a giant in the arena of fighting for the rights of letter carriers, and working conditions on the work room floor and out on the routes. I can remember that the Simi Valley Post Office was under attack daily by a militant style of supervision and the harassment was so bad that carriers were going out on stress almost weekly.

Brother Jon stepped up to the plate and formed an informational picket with carriers and their families out in front of the Main Post Office for a week or so and this was enough to call attention not only to the public but to Management as well. It got so bad that it was enough for the Government Accounting Office (GAO) to do an investigation with Postal management in Simi.

Jon was a great warrior for justice, whenever there was a fight to be fought; brother Jon was always on the front lines whether it was farm workers to hotel workers, he educated us on important issues that could harm the working man, then we would rally the troops in support of them because Jon always trained us that an ***"injury to one is an injury to all."***

Jon was a great teacher too. He always kept us informed of the latest bills in congress and step four and arbitration decisions made by top management and union leaders. The 14 point plan and the T-6 agreement were very helpful local agree-

ments that were made by Brother Jon to create peace and harmony among the carriers, stewards, and management. These plans helped a lot and kept the grievance numbers down and a lot less stress in our local Post Offices and grievances were finally getting settled at the lower levels.

On May 23rd Brother Jon would have been 55 yrs old and I know he would be very proud of all the hard work and ***great leadership in our branch.*** We will always be grateful for you my brother.

Until we meet again, in solidarity always,
God Bless you.

Where To Write

President Barack H. Obama
The White House
1600 Pennsylvania Avenue, NW
Washington, DC 20500

Senator Barbara Boxer
312 N. Spring St. Suite 1748
Los Angeles, CA 90012

Senator Dianne Feinstein
11111 Santa Monica Blvd., Suite 915
Los Angeles, CA 90025

Congressman Howard Berman
14546 Hamlin Street, Suite 202
Van Nuys, CA 91411

Congressman Elton Gallegly
2829 Townsgate Road, Suite 315
Thousand Oaks, CA 91361-3018

Congressman Brad Sherman
5000 Van Nuys Blvd., Suite 420
Sherman Oaks, CA 91403

Congressman Howard P. Buck McKeon
26650 The Old Road Suite 203
Santa Clarita, CA 91381

Congressman Henry Waxman
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Dispelling the S

By: Larry Orcutt, Northridge Shop Steward, Branch 2902 Webmaster



In 1945, the Imperial Japanese Army Air Force developed the Nakajima Ki-115 Tsurugi (*Sword*), a plane developed solely for kamikaze use. Its fuselage was designed to fit any of a variety of obsolete engines that were in storage from the past two decades. The controls were crude and its performance deplorable. It carried no defensive weapons. It was built cheaply and sparingly and the landing gear was designed to drop off because the

aircraft had one sole purpose: To crash. World War II ended, however, before the Tsurugi could be put to use.

The kamikaze tactics of postal management, however, are currently in full swing. The *Service* of the United States Postal Service has been targeted for destruction. It is in the process of being incrementally dispelled. Remember Special Deliveries? Now deliveries are becoming less and less special. "Speedies" are a thing of the past. Priority Mail used to be delivered in two days. Express Mail used to be attempted a second time. Collection boxes are being removed at an alarming rate. Post offices are being closed and consolidated. And the Postmaster General is fighting for a five-day delivery week.

Each of these steps effectively cuts back on *service*, the one commodity the USPS is intended to provide. It has apparently escaped management's attention that when the plane crashes, they too will burn in the wreckage. In fact, they'll be the first to go. Imagine your supervisor trying to function as manager of a business in the real world. Most have little education or training, no aptitude or ability, and are below zero when it comes to people skills. It's becoming more and more obvious that they possess no instinct for self-survival. I hope we don't allow this attitude to seep into the carrier craft.

On the local level, we carriers still have some degree of control. It is imperative to remember that *service* is what we are all about, and maintaining that service is vital to the future of the Postal Service. Management may be shortsighted, concerned only with the day (think: budget), but carriers need not follow suit. Our careers *depend* upon taking a longer view. We need landing gear. We are not so foolish as to want the USPS to crash and burn.

The stated intent of Handbook M-41, City Delivery Carriers Duties and Responsibilities, is to "help you give a high quality service that you will be proud of." There's that word again, *service*. The M-41 details our responsibilities, and we should follow its rules. It's good for the Postal Service, and, in turn, for the future of our careers. We are to finger each piece of mail to help eliminate misdeliveries (321.5). I once overheard a supervisor instructing a PTF to use the coverage cards in the DPS as "dividers," and not to "waste time" fingering letters. There goes that S. We all know how many mistakes the DPS machine makes,

and we aren't perfect casing the residual mail, either. Mail is to be "delivered as addressed" (POM Issue 9, 611.1a), and this includes coverages. To ignore the address and deliver a third bundle coverage one to a house may be a time saver. This might impress our supervisor, but it's doubtful that our customers would be impressed. Many would likely wonder where *their* mail was being delivered.

Accurate delivery of the mail is important to our customers, significant to our image, and vital to our future. The *Privacy Trust Study of the United States Government* ranked the USPS first among 74 agencies as the "Most Trusted Government Agency" for the fifth year in a row. Americans depend on the security of the mail and they trust the Postal Service to protect their privacy. If we betray this trust by delivering the mail sloppily and inaccurately, then can privatization be far behind?

Have you ever been tempted to simply notify a parcel because it was "too big" or "too heavy," or for some other reason? Parcels are mail, and it is our job to deliver them. That's what we are paid to do and it is the reason we were hired. It is the service that customers pay for. The M-41 instructs us to "determine if someone is available at the address by ringing the doorbell or knocking on the door" (321.4, 631.1). A supervisor once told me to, when delivering a parcel to an apartment, buzz the customer on the intercom and tell them to come down and get it. Not only is this poor service, but also if the customer is elderly, infirm, or undressed, their journey down could cost time rather than save it. We are to deliver "all mail carried" (321.6). We must resist the urge to bring mail back to save time and please our supervisor. Again, we are about *service*, not management's precious budget. The M-41 also states that if the carrier knows that someone at the address is usually available to receive parcels, not to leave a Form 3849, but to attempt a second delivery the next day (322.312a). This is *service*.

If a supervisor instructs you to compromise service, you are required to follow those instructions. But you must also see your Shop Steward. If the instructions are contrary to the postal handbooks and regulations, the Steward will rectify the situation, filing a grievance if necessary.

The USPS intends to implement a five-day delivery week, with no Saturday service, in fiscal year 2011. This change is contingent on Congress *not* enacting legislation to prevent it. The Postal Regulatory Commission must also review its plan and issue an advisory opinion. If a poll were to be taken among carriers today, they would likely vote in favor of having Saturdays off. Weekends offer precious time to spend with loved ones, and spot annual for these days are seldom approved. We all knew, however, that we would be working on Saturdays when we took this job, and obviously found this acceptable. Those in favor of Saturdays off haven't weighted the cost. If you think you wouldn't have to do six days of work in five days, you're wrong. Every week would be like a holiday week, and

continued on page 7

DISPELLING THE S...

Continued from page 6

holiday weeks – well, they'd have to hang up the sign that reads, "Abandon All Hope Ye Who Enter Here." If you think that carriers wouldn't lose their jobs as a result (and it wouldn't just be T-6's), you're dead wrong. And if you think this cut in service wouldn't be another nail in the coffin of the Postal Service as a government agency, you're dead-and-buried wrong.

It amazes me that management's solution to our fiscal woes is to cut service. It's like finding a hole in a sinking ship and trying to solve the problem by cutting a larger hole around it in order to remove it. Kamikaze management might work in the short run, but with no fuel and lacking landing gear, the end will hasten upon us with calamitous results. We must not buy into cuts in service as any kind of solution to a problem. We must do all we can to maintain a "high quality service." The M-41 requires it, and it is essential to the USPS – and, subsequently, our career.

DON'T DRINK THE KOOL AID...

Continued from page 3

4 GOLD CARDS

At the Branch 2902 meeting in Chatsworth on Tuesday evening, May 18, 2010, North Hollywood's favorite son, Mike Steele, will be receiving his NALC Gold Card.

Gold Cards are presented to those that have been NALC members in good standing for 50 years. 50 years! That is a hell of a long time. Mike joined the NALC in May of 1960 and he was actively involved with the North Hollywood Local Branch 2740 for many years prior to the merger with Branch 2902. Of course Mike continued to be actively involved with the Union after the merger as well. Mike became a Union steward **way back** in 1962, when John F. Kennedy was president of our country. I was in the 3rd grade at that time. Yeah, I know, we're **both** old.

Along with Mike Steele, 3 other Branch 2902 members will be receiving their Gold Cards on May 18th. These carriers are North Hollywood retiree Ron Weightman, Reseda retiree Max Feinberg and Thousand Oaks retiree, Edward Smith.

I know that Mike Steele and Max Feinberg are planning to be at the May 18th meeting to receive their Gold Cards and hopefully Ron and Ed will also be at the meeting. Please make your plans to attend the meeting on May 18th to celebrate these 4 carriers reaching 50 years as NALC Members in good standing. Bev Sucich will be serving us a tasty dinner starting at 6:00 PM so plan to come out and say hello to Mike Steele and our 3 other Gold Card recipients.

RENEWED HOPE

I'm worried about the Dodgers' starting pitching this year and unless the starters have injury-free, "career years", we could be in for a long, long summer.

The rival Giants have **really good** starting pitching this year, as do the Colorado Rockies. It won't be easy for the Dodgers to repeat as National League Western Division Champions this year but I'll keep my fingers crossed and we'll see what happens.

Talk to you all in a couple of months.

111TH CONGRESS
1ST SESSION

H. RES. 173

Expressing the sense of the House of Representatives that the United States Postal Service should take all appropriate measures to ensure the continuation of its 6-day mail delivery service.

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

FEBRUARY 13, 2009

Mr. GRAVES (for himself, Mr. RAHALL, Mr. SMITH of New Jersey, and Ms. ZOE LOFGREN of California) submitted the following resolution; which was referred to the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform

RESOLUTION

Expressing the sense of the House of Representatives that the United States Postal Service should take all appropriate measures to ensure the continuation of its 6-day mail delivery service.

Whereas the United States Postal Service has announced that it may need to reduce the frequency of its mail delivery service from 6 days a week to 5 days a week;

Whereas 6-day mail delivery service is an essential service that the American people have relied on since 1912, particularly working families that depend on the Postal Service for the timely delivery of their paychecks;

Whereas Social Security is the primary or sole source of income for many senior citizens, and any delay in the delivery of their Social Security checks would make it difficult for them to purchase even essential items, such as food and medicine; and

Whereas reducing mail delivery service to 5 days a week would inevitably cause not only delays in the delivery of mail, but higher postal costs, due to the many hours of additional overtime that the Postal Service would require in order to handle the resulting back-up of mail: Now, therefore, be it

- 1 *Resolved*, That it is the sense of the House of Rep-
- 2 resentatives that the United States Postal Service should
- 3 take all appropriate measures to ensure the continuation
- 4 of its 6-day mail delivery service.

○

"We are here to add what we can to, not to get what we can from, Life."

—Sir William Osler (1849-1919)



NALC FACT SHEET

Department of Legislative and Political Affairs — National Association of Letter Carriers, AFL-CIO

100 Indiana Ave. NW — Washington, DC 20001-2144 — 202-393-4695 — www.nalc.org © NALC

January 29, 2010

Eliminating Saturday delivery is not the answer

The U.S. Postal Service faces the worst crisis in its history. It expects to lose \$6-\$7 billion in 2009. Although the collapse of the housing and financial sectors in late 2008 is responsible for the largest decline in mail volume since the Great Depression in the 1930s, the main cause of the financial crisis is the decision advanced by the Bush administration in the postal reform law of 2006 to require the USPS to prefund its future retiree health benefits, a 75-year liability, in just 10 years. The cost of this unaffordable prefunding payment, \$5.4 billion in 2009, accounts for most of the projected loss this year. The annual cost will rise to \$5.8 billion by 2016. While the NALC is working with postal management to address the crisis with the Interim Route Adjustment Process, Congress must take action to relieve this prefunding burden to preserve affordable, universal service. See the NALC Fact Sheets on H.R. 22 and S. 1507.

Postal management's proposal to deal with the crisis—eliminating Saturday mail delivery—is not a sensible solution to the USPS's financial crisis.

The Postal Service estimates that by eliminating one-sixth of its delivery service, it can cut operating expenses by \$3.4 billion or 4.6 percent—not the 16.6 percent you might expect. The model it used to estimate potential savings is based on many unproven assumptions and did not specifically study the elimination of Saturday delivery, the day most Americans are home to receive packages.

To date, no study has been conducted to estimate how a reduction in delivery days would affect mail volume and delivery costs in the remaining five days or how different types of mailers would be affected.

A study conducted on behalf of the Postal Regulatory Commission suggests that total cost savings by eliminating one of delivery could be as low as \$1.9 billion or just 2.5 percent of total postal expenses.

The Postal Service is rushing to judgment.

In letters to employee groups dated June 11, 2009, USPS management requested input on a study of the feasibility of weekday-only delivery with replies due back by June 19, 2009. In July it informed the unions that it planned to finish its review in three weeks. The USPS appeared to be recycling an old IBM study it used for the PRC Universal Service investigation. A more thoughtful and serious study is needed.

The proposed reduction in delivery services would be the most radical change to postal operations in the 230-plus year history of the U.S. Mail. No such policy decision should be made after just a few weeks consideration, much less without a comprehensive study of its effects.

Six-day delivery makes the Postal Service unique.

One of the defining characteristics of the U.S. Postal Service is its policy of nation-wide uniform pricing with six-day delivery. Competitors charge don't deliver or charge high premiums for Saturday delivery while the USPS provides affordable universal as mandated by the Constitution.

American businesses value six-day delivery.

Business in the United States is conducted six days—and in many sectors seven days—per week. Small and large businesses alike, from individual entrepreneurs to large-scale financial firms, rely on the delivery of the mail six days per week to operate successfully. Saturday delivery is especially important to growing companies like eBay, Netflix and Caremark, and has long been vital for news magazines. The elimination of Saturday delivery will make the USPS less valuable to business and accelerate electronic substitution.

American citizens value Saturday delivery too.

Billions of prescriptions are delivered through the mail each year—a two-day delay in their delivery would seriously inconvenience senior citizens and others. Delayed delivery of payments, subscriptions and food products would adversely affect millions of households.

Rural communities would be disproportionately affected.

Americans living in rural areas where the Postal Service's competitors do not deliver or where broadband connectivity is not available rely especially on six-day USPS delivery and would be adversely affected by any service cuts. Farmers rely on the delivery of seeds and other products through the mail and citizens who live far from retail outlets need the USPS for mail-order delivery.

Broad coalition of stakeholders favors six-day delivery.

According to the PRC's 2008 study of universal service, parcel shippers, direct marketer, magazine publishers and other major mailers along with consumer advocacy groups and the seven postal employee groups agreed: The elimination of six-day delivery would hurt business and consumer interests while costing thousands of jobs.



NALC FACT SHEET

Department of Legislative and Political Affairs — National Association of Letter Carriers, AFL-CIO

100 Indiana Ave. NW — Washington, DC 20001-2144 — 202-393-4695 — www.nalc.org © NALC

March 23, 2010

“If that were to happen, we wouldn’t have to go...to five-day delivery.”

—Postmaster General John Potter, on the effect of returning \$75 billion in CSRS overcharges to the U.S. Postal Service

Postmaster General says correcting CSRS overcharge would end efforts to cut back mail service, ease Postal Service financial crisis

On March 18, 2010, Postmaster General John E. Potter testified before the Senate Appropriations Subcommittee on Financial Services and General Government. Responding to questions from subcommittee Chairman Sen. Richard Durbin (D-IL), Potter said returning \$75 billion in Civil Service retirement funds owed to the Postal Service would eliminate any need to cut mail service. Here is the exchange:

Sen. Durbin: The Inspector General says you have overpaid \$75 billion into the Civil Service Retirement System. If this is accurate, could you use this as a source for retiree health benefits and some of the other economic issues you’re facing?

PMG Potter: Yes, sir.

Sen. Durbin: ...Are you trying to recover the \$75 billion?

PMG Potter: ...We are working and have appealed to OPM and OMB to re-open this very matter. If it were to happen, it would literally, I think, we would be almost fully funded on



Sen. Richard Durbin (D-IL)

our retiree health benefits trust fund.... It would take a lot of pressure off. If that were to happen, we wouldn’t have to go to six-, to five-day delivery.

Sen. Durbin: ...You’re saying that if the \$75 billion is found, you wouldn’t have to cut the frequency of service?

PMG Potter: Right.

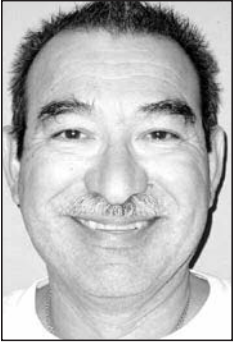


Postmaster General John Potter

Note on NALC policy on six-day delivery: Reforming the law and correcting computational errors related to the Postal Service’s pension liabilities and provisions requiring the USPS to pre-fund future retiree health benefits would remove any justification for eliminating Saturday collections and deliveries. However, even if such reforms and corrections are not adopted, NALC is strongly opposed to the elimination of six-day delivery. Such a step would be short-sighted and counterproductive, since reduced service and lower quality would drive more mailers to abandon the postal system.

The Benefits of a Great Health Plan

By: Joe Gutierrez, Health Benefits Representative



The results are in for the 2010 health plan enrollment. We had 6,468 new people join our health plan. Not bad but it should have been more. I still can't believe we have letter carriers that do not belong to our health plan for what ever reason. You now have about 6 months to think about what you are doing about health insurance needs and make the decision to join the NALC health plan.

For those of you, who have been with our plan, try to read the brochure that was mailed to you. Actually some of you might have received a CD detailing the plan's benefits. This is really important because the plan has a lot of benefits that are available to us and are not used.

The flu shot which I hope everyone got this year was free. You pay nothing for lab services if performed at Quest or Lab-Corp. Those of you with a brochure, take a look at page 27, 28 and 29. Your co-pay is explained and all the preventive care for adults is detailed. It's quite extensive and worth looking into especially as we get older.

For those of you who have families, the maternity care and preventive care for children is really outstanding in my book. There are many more changes to the plan that I will try to cover in future articles or in my report to the union at a future meeting. Hopefully you will read or view the health plan and utilize it properly. If you have any question please feel free to call me. My phone number is in the Mailbag Newsletter, which you are now reading.



Longtime Treasurer/Financial Secretary Dan Gorman (L) is presented with a special lifetime achievement award by President Frank Salazar for his many years of excellent dedicated service to Tri-Valley Branch 2902.



New retiree Gary Traba (L) from Pacoima is presented with his retiree watch by Executive Vice President Ray Hill. Congratulations on your retirement-enjoy!!!!

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- Individual Retirement Accounts
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- Share Certificate Accounts
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40 Years Ago

Ever wonder why scabs are allowed in our beloved craft? I did. A friend of mine in the NALC recently sent me a document giving some explanation. It turns out that after the strike, when Postal Reform was being finalized in Congress, an amendment backed by the anti-Union National Right to Work Committee was added to the Postal Reform bill.

The amendment read as follows:

Each employee of the Postal Service has the right, freely and without fear of penalty or reprisal, to form, join and assist a labor organization or to refrain from any such activity, and each employee shall be protected in the exercise of this right.

This amendment gave employees the right to give the finger to the Union but suck up and enjoy (like leeches, bacteria and fungus) all the benefits the Union gains for the craft. Remember if Management had it their own way we'd all be casuals with no rights or benefits.

What's interesting to note that amongst all the anti-Union corporations, organizations, Republican-types, and yellowed-spine Democrats who supported the amendment is the name of Vincent R. Sombrotto. Vince?! Yes, Vincent R. himself before he became President of Branch 36 New York, NY and before he became President of the NALC. I couldn't believe it myself. Sombrotto backing the presence of scabs in the Postal Service! 40 years ago today, Monday June 15, 1970, The Evening Star, Washington, D.C. Don't ask me why. Ask Vince Sombrotto c/o Branch 36, NY, NY.

KNOW YOUR RIGHTS

Step 4 Settlement

March 13, 2002, Q98N-4Q-C-01045840

The Managed Service Points (MSP) initiative is a national program intended to facilitate management's ability to assess and monitor city delivery route structure and consistency of delivery service. The following reflects the parties understanding of MSP: The parties agree that management will determine the number of scans on a city delivery route. Time credit will continue to be given during route count and inspections and will be credited in total street time. MSP does not set performance standards, either in the office or on the street. With current technology, MSP records of scan times are not to be used as timecard data for pay purposes. MSP data may not constitute the sole basis for disciplinary action. However, it may be used by the parties in conjunction with other records to support or refute disciplinary action issued pursuant to Article 16 of the National Agreement. City letter carriers have the option of using a personal identification number (PIN) other than the last four digits of their social security number.

M39-122.33

The employee, upon request, will be provided a Form 3996, *Carrier - Auxiliary Control*, after the supervisor has been verbally informed as to the reason for the request. The employee shall not be denied the form and, upon request, a duplicate of the completed form will be provided the employee.

Step 4

February 22, 1989, H4N-4G-C 13743

A letter carrier who signs for work assignment overtime is both entitled and obligated to work any overtime that occurs on the carrier's assignment on a regularly scheduled day, except when the carrier would perform the work at the penalty overtime rate and when another carrier who had signed the regular OTDL could perform the work at the regular overtime rate.

Note: This settlement does not preclude management assigning overtime to a casual or a PTF rather than an employee on the work assignment list.

Should Congress Endorse Compulsory Unionism For Postal Workers?

They Say NO!

Richard M. Nixon—
as a 1968 Presidential candidate
John F. Kennedy as President
National Alliance of Postal and Federal Em-
ployees and their 45,000 members

Arthur Goldberg,
President Kennedy's Secretary of Labor
George Shultz,
President Nixon's Secretary of Labor
The Republican party—
1968 campaign platform pledge
Winton Blount—in 1968
before the Republican platform committee
Chamber of Commerce
of the U.S. and their thousands of members
National Association of Manufacturers (NAM)
and their thousands of members
Vincent R. Sombrotto, Branch 36, National
Association of Letter Carriers and thousands of
his fellow New York postal union members

THE WASHINGTON STAR

THE WASHINGTON DAILY NEWS
and all SCRIPPS-HOWARD Newspapers

THE NEW YORK DAILY NEWS

THE WALL STREET JOURNAL

Joseph Ramez, a Bronx New York postal
employee and thousands of his fellow workers
National Federation of Independent Businesses
and its hundreds of thousands of members

American Farm Bureau Federation and its
hundreds of thousands of members

Senator Paul Fannin (R-Arizona)

Senator Hugh Scott (R-Pennsylvania)

Senator Sam Ervin (D-North Carolina)

FEDERAL TIMES

Congressman David Henderson
(D-North Carolina)

Congressman H. R. Gross (R-Iowa)

Congressman B. F. Sisk (D-California)

Master Printers Section,
Printing Industry of America

Senator Carl Curtis (R-Nebraska)

Senator Ernest Hollings (D-South Carolina)

Council of State Chambers of Commerce

Senator Spessard L. Holland (D-Florida)

GRIT

PHILADELPHIA BULLETIN

Associated General Contractors

Senator Clifford P. Hansen (R-Wyoming)

THE MILWAUKEE SENTINEL

Associated Builders and Contractors

ATCHISON (Kansas) GLOBE

Senator Howard Baker (R-Tennessee)

Senator James B. Allen (D-Alabama)

Virginia State Chamber of Commerce

NORTHERN VIRGINIA SUN

COLUMBUS CITIZEN-JOURNAL

Mechanical Contractors Association of Texas

DALLAS MORNING NEWS

DALLAS TIMES-HERALD

Senator John Tower (R-Texas)

Senator Harry Byrd (D-Virginia)

THE MIAMI HERALD

BIRMINGHAM (Afa.) POST-HERALD

Senator John Williams (R-Delaware)

Syndicated Columnist David Lawrence

Syndicated Columnist Ralph deToledano

Syndicated Columnist Andrew Tully

Syndicated Columnist James J. Kilpatrick

Commerce and Industry Association
of New York City

Printing Industry Association of Houston

Indiana State Chamber of Commerce

Congressman John J. Rhodes (R-Arizona)

Congressman Ben Blackburn (R-Georgia)

Congressman J. J. Pickle (D-Texas)

Dallas Manufacturers & Wholesalers Association

LOWELL (Mass.) SUN

BELOIT (Wisc.) NEWS

ARKANSAS (Little Rock) DEMOCRAT

Congressman Joel Broyles (R-Virginia)

Congressman Ray Roberts (D-Texas)

Congressman Bill Chappell (D-Florida)

Senator Bob Dale (R-Kansas)

Senator James Eastland (D-Miss.)

Senator Allen J. Ellender (D-La.)

Senator Barry Goldwater (R-Arizona)

Senator Stephen Young (D-Ohio)

Senator Edward J. Gurney (R-Florida)

Senator Roman Hruska (R-Nebraska)

Senator Everett Jordan (D-North Carolina)

Senator Len Jordan (R-Idaho)

Senator John McClellan (D-Arkansas)

Senator Jack Miller (R-Iowa)

DOVER (New Hampshire) FOSTER'S DEMOCRAT

MOBILE (Alabama) PRESS

Senator Karl E. Mundt (R-South Dakota)

Senator James B. Pearson (R-Kansas)

Senator Richard Russell (D-Georgia)

Senator John J. Sparkman (D-Alabama)

Senator John Stennis (D-Mississippi)

Senator Herman E. Talmadge (D-Georgia)

Senator Strom Thurmond (R-South Carolina)

Virginia Manufacturers Association

Southern States Industrial Council

Independent Farmers of Michigan

Congressman Lou Frey (R-Florida)

Syndicated Columnist John Chamberlain

Congressman Thomas G. Abernethy (D-Miss.)

Congressman Bill Scherle (R-Iowa)

Congressman Thomas N. Downing (D-Virginia)

SAN DIEGO TRIBUNE

SALT LAKE CITY DESERT-NEWS

WHEELING INTELLIGENCER

SYRACUSE POST-STANDARD

HUMAN EVENTS

East Texas Chamber of Commerce

BEAUMONT ENTERPRISE

ROCKY MOUNT (North Carolina) TELEGRAM

Congressman W. C. "Dim" Daniel (D-Virginia)

Congressman William L. Scott (R-Virginia)

Congressman O. C. Fisher (D-Texas)

Congressman Fletcher Thompson (R-Georgia)

CHATTANOOGA NEWS FREE-PRESS

SANTA MONICA OUTLOOK

Congressman Wilbur Mills (D-Arkansas)

Congressman John Myers (R-Indiana)

LUBBOCK (Texas) AVALANCHE JOURNAL

SANTA ANA (California) REGISTER

Congressman Wilmer Mizell (R-North Carolina)

Congressman John Ashbrook (R-Ohio)

OKLAHOMA CITY TIMES

Congressman Chalmers Wylie (R-Ohio)

Congressman Robert Stafford (R-Vermont)

OKLAHOMA CITY OKLAHOMAN

RICHMOND NEWS LEADER

WORCESTER (Mass.) TELEGRAM

Congressman John H. Buchanan (R-Alabama)

Congressman Sam Steiger (R-Arizona)

TALLAHASSEE (Florida) DEMOCRAT

BARTOW (Florida) DEMOCRAT

NORTHERN VIRGINIA DAILY

PARKERSBURG (W. Va.) NEWS

Congressman Bill Alexander (D-Arkansas)

Congressman John Hammerschmidt (R-Arkansas)

Congressman Bob Wilson (R-California)

DOVER (Delaware) STATE NEWS

THE NORMAN (Oklahoma) TRANSCRIPT

DENTON (Texas) RECORD CHRONICLE

JAMESTOWN (North Dakota) SUN

Congressman Charles Bennett (D-Florida)

Congressman James Haley (D-Florida)

THE WARRENSBURG (Missouri) DAILY STAR-JOURNAL

Congressman Jack Brinkley (D-Georgia)

Congressman John Flynt (D-Georgia)

Congressman J. H. Quillen (R-Tennessee)

Congressman Robert N. C. Nix (D-Pennsylvania)

Congressman Edward Derwinski (R-Illinois)

Congressman Philip A. Crane (R-Illinois)

BRISTOL (Indiana) BANNER

SALISBURY (Md.) TIMES

GASTONIA (North Carolina) GAZETTE

PARKERSBURG (West Virginia) NEWS

Congressman John Erlenborn (R-Illinois)

Congressman Earl Landgrebe (R-Indiana)

Congressman Keith Sebelius (R-Kansas)

Congressman Chester Mize (R-Kansas)

Congressman Garner Shriver (R-Kansas)

CEDAR RAPIDS (Iowa) GAZETTE

Congressman Edward Hebert (D-Louisiana)

STAUNTON (Va.) LEADER

Congressman Joe Waggoner (D-Louisiana)

Congressman Lawrence Hogan (R-Maryland)

Congressman Ancher Nelson (R-Minnesota)

Congressman William Colmer (D-Mississippi)

Congressman Robert Donney (R-Nebraska)

Congressman Dave Martin (R-Nebraska)

SAVANNAH NEWS

Congressman Walter Jones (D-North Carolina)

Congressman Nick Galifianakis (D-North Carolina)

Congressman Richardson Preyer (D-North Carolina)

Congressman Charles R. Janss (R-North Carolina)

Congressman James Broyles (R-North Carolina)

Congressman Roy Taylor (D-North Carolina)

NEW BEDFORD (Mass.) STANDARD-TIMES

Congressman Richard Puff (R-Virginia)

Congressman Bab Casey (D-Texas)

TULSA (Oklahoma) WORLD

Congressman Sherman Lloyd (R-Utah)

Congressman Mendel Rivers (D-South Carolina)

Congressman Albert Watson (R-South Carolina)

Congressman Albert Johnson (R-Pennsylvania)

Congressman John Duncan (R-Tennessee)

Congressman Laurence Burton (R-Utah)

Congressman James Collins (R-Texas)

Congressman Edwin Eshleman (R-Pennsylvania)

Congressman Robert Carbert (R-Pennsylvania)

CORVALLIS (Oregon) BENTON HERALD

Young Republicans of New Jersey — 1970 Platform Pledge

Congressman Bill Brock (R-Tennessee)

Congressman Ray Blanton (D-Tennessee)

Congressman Ed Jones (D-Tennessee)

Congressman Dan Kuykendall (R-Texas)

Congressman Olin Teague (D-Texas)

Congressman George Bush (D-Texas)

Congressman Graham Purcell (D-Texas)

Congressman Hamilton Fish (R-New York)

AND THE AMERICAN PEOPLE

As now written, the pending Postal Reform proposals would deprive Post Office Department employees of their protection from forced unionism. This protection is provided them by President Nixon's Executive Order 11491. It reaffirms President Kennedy's Executive Order 10988, which also prohibited compulsory unionism.

This week a leading advocate of postal reform, Congressman David N. Henderson (D-North Carolina), will offer the following amendment:

"Each employee of the Postal Service has the right, freely and without fear of penalty or reprisal, to form, join and assist a labor organization or to refrain from any such activity, and each employee shall be protected in the exercise of this right."

The adoption of this amendment will preserve the protection against compulsory unionism which Postal employees presently enjoy. Approval of the bill without this amendment would repeal the Right to Work protection which has always covered all Federal employees.

The National Right To Work Committee

1900 L Street, N.W., Washington, D.C. 20036

"Americans Must Have the Right But Not Be Compelled to Join Labor Unions"



*A Partial Listing

The Mail Bag News is the official publication of Tri-Valley Branch 2902 (Chatsworth, California) of the National Association of Letter Carriers. All opinions expressed are those of the individual author(s) and do not necessarily reflect the opinions of the NALC or its officers. The Mail Bag News welcomes articles and letters to the editor; however the editorial staff of the Mail Bag News assumes complete authority to decide which letters are presented for publication. Anonymous articles are not accepted. Permission is hereby granted to re-print articles. We just ask that you give the author and the publication appropriate credit.



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Where: Hometown Buffet
Vons Center
1855 Cochran Street
Simi Valley

When: Thursday,
May 20, 2010

Time: 11:30am to 12:30pm



Where: Hometown Buffet
Fallbrook Mall
6633 Fallbrook Ave.
West Hills

When: Thursday,
June 17, 2010

Time: 11:30am to 12:30pm

CANCELLED



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You may not know us, but we've been serving USPS employees and their families for over 75 years. We're the only federally chartered credit union serving all levels of Postal employees nationally. Your financial interests always come first.

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Greg Gaddis
Kurt Whitesell

“A conference is a meeting to decide where the next meeting will take place.”

-Anonymous

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Chatsworth Chief S.S.	Angel Hale
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	Robbie Elsaleh
Mt. McCoy Station	Sandra Gaunce
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	Florence Brewster
	Walter Williams
Alternate	Mary Stanley
Alternate	Alex Lopez
Newbury Park	Jim Mette
Ventura Chief S.S.	Laura Walters
East Ventura	Laura Walters
Woodland Hills Chief S.S.	Joe Vedder
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RECREATION NEWS

SEA WORLD:

Adults: \$56.00 (Gate price \$69.00)

Child: \$49.00 ages 3-9 (Gate price \$59.00)

SEE'S GIFT CERTIFICATE:

\$12.50 (Retail Value \$16.10)

When planning an outing to a park or venue check the website for discounts.

At the monthly meetings (every third Tuesday of the month) coupons and flyers for various venues are available.

My famous homemade oatmeal chocolate chip cookies are 4 for \$1.00.

PAULETTE DYER

THE MAIL BAG NEWS

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MEETING STARTS AT 7PM




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SATURDAY AUGUST 21, 2010
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CALENDAR OF EVENTS

- MAY 18** Regular Branch Meeting 7pm
Union Hall-Chatsworth
Dinner served 6 pm
- MAY 20** Retiree Lunch 11:30am
Hometown Buffet-Simi Valley
- MAY 31** Memorial Day-Holiday 
- JUN 1** Executive Board Meeting 6pm
Executive Council Meeting 7pm
- JUN 15** Regular Branch Meeting 7pm
Garden Palm Hotel-Newbury Park
- JUN 17** Retiree Lunch - CANCELLED
- JUN 20** Fathers Day 
- JUN 21** Summer Begins
- JUL 4** Fourth of July 
- JUL 5** *Holiday*
- JUL 6** Executive Board Meeting 6pm
Executive Council Meeting 7pm
- JUL 15** Retiree Lunch 11:30am
Hometown Buffet-Simi Valley
- JUL 20** Regular Branch Meeting 7pm
Union Hall-Chatsworth
Dinner served 6 pm



THE Mail Bag NEWS

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OFFICIAL PUBLICATION OF TRI-VALLEY BRANCH 2902,
NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF LETTER CARRIERS AFL-CIO

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July - August 2010

200 Years of Gold!!!

By Frank Salazar, President

At the Branch meeting in May, we recognized over 400 years of membership in the NALC. We were honored to have four of the NALC's newest Gold Card members. Gold Cards or Life Membership Cards of gold are issued after 50 years of membership and once that milestone is hit you get the card and are excused from paying dues, per capita tax, or special assessments for the rest of your life. The four newest gold card members are Max Feinberg (1960) Reseda, Edward Smith (1960) Thousand Oaks, Mike Steele (1960) North Hollywood, and Ron Weightman (1959) North Hollywood. Their gold cards were presented by Regional Administrative Assistants for Region #1 Bryant Almario and Chris Jackson. The guys had quite a night reminiscing with old friends and former casing buddies. It was good to see them all again.

We also gave out 40-year pins. Our former long time Branch trustee Sonny Castellano from Chatsworth and former San Fernando Letter Carrier John Mendez who stated that he was the one who came up with the name Tri-Valley when a merger with San



50 Year Union members Max Feinberg (Reseda), Mike Steele (North Hollywood), Ronnie Weightman (North Hollywood), and Edward Smith (Thousand Oaks) are presented with their Gold Cards at the May union meeting in Chatsworth. Congratulations guys and thanks for your support throughout the years!

Fernando was being contemplated both received 40-year pins to mark their milestone.

That wasn't all. We also had four new retirees in the house. Members Jim Johnson (1980) Thousand Oaks, Craig Launer (1977) Thousand Oaks, John Mitchell (1978) Northridge, and Todd Sturdevant (1985) San Fernando all received watches with NALC logos from the Branch to recognize their retirement from the Post Office and their long membership with the NALC, a combined total membership more than 400 years.

Please note that if you have 25, 30, 35, 40 or 45 years of service contact the Branch

so we can order you a membership pin to denote your years of service.

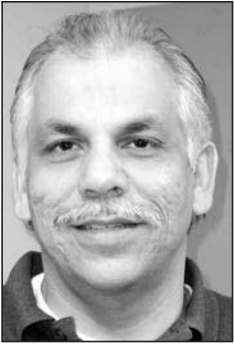
Best Organized

Branch 2902 has repeated as one of Best Organized branches in the state for branches with more than 1000 members. The Branch has maintained a 95% organization rate.

continued on page 2

PRESIDENT'S REPORT...

Continued from page 1



However, we were not alone this year. This year we were tied with Branch 24 Los Angeles, which also maintained 95%. Congratulations to President Larry Brown of Branch 24 and his membership.

I wanted to thank our membership and Stewards for the trust you have in our Branch leadership and representation. It is only your confidence in the Branch structure that keeps our high level of representation. And as repre-

sentatives of the branch your officers and stewards will continue to take care of business aggressively in a proactive manner. Again, thanks for your support.

New Director of Retirees

After more than 9 years as Director of Retirees, Don Minster of Oxnard decided to step down and let someone else take over the helm. Replacing Brother Minster is Sister Beverly Suich of San Fernando who has been appointed as the new Director of Retirees. We welcome Sister Suich and wish her a long stay and the best of luck. For all his efforts, the Branch awarded Brother Minster a plaque to commemorate his tenure and in appreciation for his past service as the former Director of Retirees.

MDA

In our ongoing commitment to support the Muscular Dystrophy Association, the official charity of the NALC, Branch 2902 once again co-hosted a Texas Hold'em event with Branch 4006 Canoga Park. After prizes and expenses, both branches raised over \$1000.00 for MDA. This is a biennial event held at our hall to raise money for MDA. If you like playing Texas Hold'em, this is an event where you can have fun with fellow carriers and test your skills. The next event will be this fall, so come out and join us for this worthy charitable event. In addition, the NALC has announced that the first Sunday in November will be the day for an annual MDA Bowl-a-thon. It was great event last year, and I'm sure it will be a better event this year. Check future issues of the Mailbag News for details.

Food Drive

We had an amazing food drive this year. I believe this was the first year that we broke 400,000 pounds. Actually, we took in 410,067 pounds of food. I wanted to thank the Letter Carriers, Rural Carriers, Clerks, Mailhandlers, and Managers who helped out in the food drive.

Overall the food drive went pretty well this year. There were no complaints of the public stealing food or of food not being picked up. It seems like most of the cards went out and those who received the plastic bags also made sure they went out. Our food totals seem to indicate that wherever the plastic bags went out the volume of food collected increased. I know that the bags were hard to deal with, but thanks for delivering them. The bags made a big difference in many people's lives. Below are the totals (in pounds) that we collected from each office.

Agoura Hills	7,500
Chatsworth	17,900
Fillmore	2,735
Moorpark	7,000
No. Hollywood (LCCA/Valley Village)	14,407
No. Hollywood (Chandler)	15,200
No. Hollywood (Studio City)	7,705
Northridge Main/Porter Ranch	33,000
Ojai	9,020
Oxnard/Saviers Station	35,780
Pacoima	12,000
Port Hueneme	7,000
Reseda	9,000
San Fernando MCA	21,125
North Hills/ Sepulveda	15,175
Sylmar	25,700
Santa Paula	3,000
Simi Valley Main	18,640
Simi Valley/ Mt. McCoy	27,640
Thousand Oaks	41,850
Newbury Park	8,035
Ventura Main Office	5,955
East Ventura Station	40,165
Woodland Hills	24,535
Total	410,067

Old Jack Says

Well, well, well . . . what is Old Jack Potter saying now? According to an article printed Monday, May 10, 2010 in The Washington Post, Old Jack stated that the Postal Service will be broke by fall and won't have enough money to make payroll. He is also quoted as stating that "If things go his way, Saturday deliveries would end next spring, he told customers in Nashville." Potter also stated that "The value of going to four days-removing a second day-is even greater, he said. Although no such plans exist, Potter said that Tuesdays are the second-slowest day of the week."

Well, there you have it. Jack's plan to save the Postal Service. Keep cutting days of delivery until we can make a profit. Problem is, if you keep cutting you lose customers to the point you cripple and kill the service. 5-day and 4-day is the Wrong Way. Next time we get some Management propaganda from Old Jack about cutting back the service and going to 5 or 4-day delivery . . . return it to sender or better yet . . . Send It Back To Jack!

Please Write to Congress

We need to write! I don't have to tell you that the Postal Service is in serious economic condition. I just described Old Jack's plans to cut back delivery. We have to get on top of Congress to support House Resolution 173, which would support and continue 6-day delivery. There's a lot at stake, and if

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Going Postal in the Digital Era

By John Nichols

This article appeared in the April 26, 2010 edition of *The Nation* and is reprinted with permission

April 7, 2010

Domestic policy debates of late have degenerated into an absurd argument about whether government can do anything right. Even Democrats can be heard mouthing the false premise that private markets are always the answer to the nation's public problems. But government does do things right; indeed, it does something right every day on a massive scale. The oldest of America's major public services—established by decree of the Continental Congress, brought into being by Benjamin Franklin and enumerated in the first article of the Constitution as a vital tool for binding together the new Republic—carries on in the twenty-first century as an essential and possibly transformative arm of the federal government, a service that has only begun to tap this agency's potential.

This is the proper starting point for progressives to enter the great debate about the future of the US Postal Service—and enter they must if there is to be any hope for maintaining it at a time when public services are under overwhelming political and economic assault. Because of declining mail volume and Congressional reforms that transformed the Postal Service from a taxpayer-supported institution into a “revenue neutral” agency that is expected to pay for itself, the Postal Service recorded a \$3.8 billion loss in 2009 and is, according to an extreme but oft-quoted estimate, on track to accumulate a \$238 billion deficit by 2020. The service has also been harmed by poor political and managerial choices—not to mention accounting errors that have socked it with pension liabilities that are as unsustainable as they are unreasonable.

The Postal Service's economic turbulence has fostered the fantasy that it is no longer necessary in an age when “warp-speed Internet” is constantly juxtaposed against “snail mail.” Yet the USPS is anything but “an anachronism” on “a slow march into oblivion.” It is a national treasure that provides an immense and irreplaceable public service. The scope and character of that service will change in the twenty-first century—ideally to provide a broader range of information, vote-by-mail systems, community services and even banking options to hundreds of millions of Americans who continue to rely on their local post office as the nerve center of their neighborhood or small town. But before any of this can happen, we must recognize that the Postal Service can and must remain public if we are to maintain the essential infrastructures of democracy.

Americans do not often talk about the Postal Service as a crucial underpinning of the democratic infrastructure, but we should. At a time when 35 percent of all Americans and 50 percent of rural residents have no broadband Internet access at home, the Postal Service is universal. Its 596,000 career employees travel more than 4 million miles to deliver more than a half-billion pieces of mail each day. It goes to extraordinary ends to assure that no citizen or community is neglected; it

contracts commercial planes to move parcels across the country in a matter of hours, yet it still sends bush planes into Idaho's River of No Return Wilderness Area and organizes mule trains to deliver mail, food and supplies to the Havasupai Indians on the floor of the Grand Canyon.

The Postal Service maintains a network of more than 35,000 retail outlets—the largest in the world, with more locations than McDonald's, Starbucks and Wal-Mart combined—which are visited by more than 7 million Americans each day. The postal workers they encounter in these offices and on their doorsteps are reflective of their communities, as the service has historically been and remains one of the surest sources of employment for African-Americans, Asian-Americans, Latinos, women and the poor. In short, the USPS forms a vital network of service, connection and community that provides the steady link between Americans and their government. As Postal Regulatory Commission (PRC) chair Ruth Goldway puts it, the service is “part of the fabric of the nation.”

Unfortunately, the Postal Service is not profitable. That's a problem because, under the absurd constraints placed on it by successive legislative “reforms,” the service must be “run like a business.” And the businesspeople who run the USPS these days, though they may want to save the service, are so fixated on the bottom line that they cannot see the public good. So they have proposed a process of downsizing that could lead to the dismemberment of what should be understood as a core civic institution.

If the wrecking crews are not stopped, they will tear a hole in the fabric of the nation, further isolating Americans from one another, deepening the decay of urban neighborhoods and remote villages, hiking unemployment in our hardest-pressed communities and accelerating the decline of newspapers and magazines, drying up content for the Internet and curtailing civic and political discourse. “We need the Postal Service,” says Illinois Congressman Danny Davis, a member of the House subcommittee that oversees the nation's post offices. Of course the Postal Service is going to change, Davis acknowledges. But Americans should start with the understanding that the Postal Service is “indispensable”—not with a debate about how much will be cut.

Regrettably, the latter approach is the one being taken by Postmaster General John Potter and members of the Postal Board of Governors, who are floating proposals to eliminate six-day mail delivery, close thousands of post offices and cut 26,000 full-time and 13,000 part-time jobs through attrition and layoffs. Overreacting to changes in the way Americans communicate while underestimating ideas that could reposition post offices as touchstones for the information revolution and a more consumer-friendly financial-services landscape, Potter

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Avoid Last Minute Headaches By Planning Ahead

By: Ray Hill, Executive Vice-President



Here at the Branch 2902 Office, we spend a lot of time involved in “damage control” and “putting out fires” of various size and intensity. It **never ceases to amaze me** how many last minute calls we receive here at the Branch Office from carriers that have some sort of problem that could have been, and should have been, dealt with much sooner. However, for whatever the reason may be, the problem was not dealt with sooner and consequently now needs to be dealt with immediately.

For example, carriers have called the Branch Office at 4:30 PM on a Friday afternoon saying that they have requested spot annual leave for tomorrow (Saturday) to attend their child’s graduation (or wedding or baptism or bar mitzvah or bat mitzvah or track meet or football game). A few minutes ago they asked their supervisor if they had tomorrow off and their supervisor, who was on their way out the door to go home for the day, acted surprised and told them that they know nothing about it (the carrier’s request for spot leave). The supervisor also told the carrier that the schedule was already made, that they could not approve spot annual now and that the carrier had to report for work on Saturday.

I will then ask the carrier whether or not they submitted a PS Form 3971 requesting leave and they will say something like, “*yeah, I turned it in two months ago*”.

When I ask them who they submitted the 3971 to, they will tell me that they “*left it on the supervisor’s desk*” and no, they do not have a copy of the 3971 or any proof that they ever submitted it.

Whenever a carrier tells me that they left something on their supervisor’s desk and that they do not have a copy of whatever it was that they left on their supervisor’s desk, my reaction is always the same.

First, I cringe. Then I visualize the **highly disorganized desk** of one of my former supervisors at LCCA in North Hollywood, piled high with various stacks of documents in no particular order. Next, I think to myself that when a carrier leaves any document on their supervisor’s desk without first getting a copy, they might just as well have run that document through a shredder or balled it up and tossed it into their supervisor’s trash can.

By now it’s 4:40 PM on Friday and the only one in Management still at the office is the PM supervisor who *really* doesn’t know anything about the carrier’s request for spot leave and has no authority to grant the carrier’s request to take annual leave tomorrow (Saturday).

The bottom line is that it is now 4:50 PM on Friday, the carrier’s leave request for tomorrow has not been approved, the annual leave board is full and we have no proof that the carrier ever requested the leave. Now the carrier has to decide whether the event they need to attend on Saturday is important enough to them to risk an AWOL charge and the possible disciplinary consequences that the AWOL charge will bring. It should have never come to this.

Branch 2902 Recording Secretary Sue Degenhardt has written an article that is printed in this issue of the Mail Bag News titled, “**PS Form 3971-Your best friend when using any leave**”. Please read Sue’s article and follow her advice when you are requesting leave of any kind.

Do not ever leave anything (a 3971, doctor’s note, jury duty summons etc.) on your supervisor’s desk and assume that it will be handled appropriately and not lost or misplaced.

Be sure that you get a copy of any document that you submit to Management. I tell carriers that they should have a “work file” at home that contains copies of documents that they have submitted to Management. It’s really very simple. Just get yourself a couple of file folders and keep copies of all the documents you give to Management in them so that they are readily accessible when your supervisor tells you that they lost the one that you turned in last month. **And please don’t wait until the last minute to verify whether or not your request for any type of leave has been approved. Plan Ahead!**

Another type of last minute call that we receive here at the Branch Office comes from carriers that are on jury duty. For example, a carrier might call here on a Wednesday afternoon saying that they are on jury duty today and that tomorrow (Thursday) is supposed to be their Non-scheduled (N/S) day. However, they are on a case and have to report the next day for jury service and now they want to know if they are going to be paid overtime for Thursday, since they carried their route last Saturday and won’t have a day off this week. I will then ask whether or not they submitted a PS Form 3189 requesting a Change of Schedule in order to conform to the hours of court, including the changing of their rotating schedule to one in which they have Saturdays off while serving on jury duty.

The carrier tells me that they did not know that they had to submit a PS Form 3189 and change their schedules in order to have Saturdays off while serving on Jury Duty.

Unfortunately, it is too late to resolve the problem now (because the carrier already worked at the Post Office last Saturday), and, no, they are not going to be paid overtime for reporting to jury duty on Thursday. The carrier will only be paid the fee the court pays them for serving on jury duty on what was sup-

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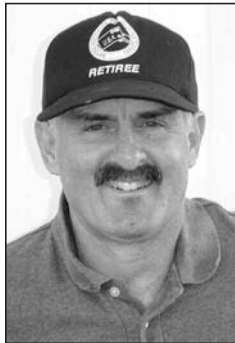


RETIREEES CORNER

By: Fred Shaw, Woodland Hills Retiree



A Cautionary Tale



I put my thirty plus years in at the Post Office and clocked out for the last time. Ah retirement! I never planned on being up here this soon – and neither did my wife. The wife and I relocated to the middle of the country. The kids were all grown and had left the nest so we looked forward to a bunch of golden years together.

We downsized from a large house to one more in tune with our needs. Big enough to have family and friends visit. Small enough that my retirement allowed us to live there and enjoy the free time we'd earned. The wife and I took up golf – even joined the local country club. She had a horse – loved to ride – and the horse trailer that went with it. I had my toys too. A boat, a fifth wheel, and a full-sized Chevy pickup to tow all our toys wherever we wanted to go.

We both took part-time jobs, more to occupy some of our free time than out of need. My retirement more than paid our way. We were still young enough to do all the things we'd promised ourselves.

When I retired my brother asked me if I was going to pay for survivors benefits. The wife and I discussed it but decided not to. Barely sixty and healthy we just didn't see the need for it. The wife was only a few years from Social Security and Medicare and both of our families were pretty long-lived. We assumed that like our parents and grandparents we'd live long and pass away pretty close to each other.

February 25, 2010, 1:30 A.M. Woke up and started to get out of bed. The wife was sound asleep – she's always been a very sound sleeper! Fell to the floor – couldn't move my left side – couldn't talk either. What the heck!! At 67 I was in pretty good shape I thought. February 27, 2010, 7:30 P.M. I left my mortal remains behind.

It's one week later and as I look down on my wife and kids, things have changed a lot! The wife will lose the

house and have to sell all the toys including her horse, and hopefully have enough life insurance to buy a small mobile home. She'll need to find a full time job. Not so easy for a sixty five year old retiree. If we had paid for the survivors benefit she'd have kept everything and I wouldn't be up here worried about how she'll survive.

This tale is based on fact! No, it is not my tale but it is the tale of someone very close to my family and me. If you're getting ready to retire think long and hard about that survivors benefit. It guarantees 55% of your retirement and includes health benefits for life for your spouse. Please remember - life is not a forever condition. Prepare now to save your family from regrets later. I only wish that I had heeded my own advise.

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CONFLICT OF INTEREST

By: Greg A. Gaddis, Chief Shop Steward / Agoura Hills



Greetings to one and all. I hope everyone is surviving the heat so far. I can't believe half the year has gone by already. As all of you have all noticed the mail is still being delivered 6 days a week. As it should be. Nice try Potter... enough said.

Well the grievance activity in my former office of Agoura Hills has not settled down, and with good reason, unfortunately. Carriers are receiving discipline for missing one MSP scan

and we know how this affects the delivering of mail to customers each and everyday don't we? Discipline issued to a carrier for attendance based only on incidents and not the actual dates so the carrier can have his "day in court" and try to explain the alleged abuse during the fact-finding investigation meeting. Discipline issued to a part time flexible carrier that was a result of a transitional carrier who just happens to run routes and is one of management's favorites. The TE got nothing.

Just recently the same transitional carrier was approved to take over a month off of work for personal reasons. Yet a regular carrier who requested time off work to have a baby and bonding a few years ago, received letters of AWOL charges, including a removal charge for taking the time off. The carrier was not one of management's favorite. A supervisor who continues to fill out the PS-3971 form with AWOL checked and instructs a carrier to sign it, after the same supervisor has already been instructed not to complete the employee portion of the form through grievance settlements.

Carriers that management can rely on to keep the "numbers" looking good in the District are receiving discipline just so the Union won't charge disparate treatment for allegedly missing one scan. Good work David, Paul and Eilyne. Piss off the carrier, that's how you reward the carriers who do excellent work for you day after day... That's a real moral booster.

Some of you may not know that there is a "tag team" husband and wife duo that supervises carriers in the Agoura office. I feel there should be regulation against a husband and wife supervising employees together in the same office. Supervisor Paul Allen and Eilyne Graves supervise carriers at the same time, daily. I found out, not too long ago that supervisor Graves kept a discussion binder on the workroom floor that had discussion notes on carriers with dates, that was from other supervisors including her husband Paul listed in the binder. Any supervisor, who wanted to issue discipline to a carrier, had access to the binder and could show the Union when a discussion date was issued, by simply looking at the discussion notes that were shared with each other. **Do we see a conflict of interest here?**

Of course I filed a grievance. Supervisors can't share discussion notes; it's a violation of our National Agreement. But to allow a husband and wife to supervise carriers in the same office is just plain wrong. The Postmaster had to destroy the notes, based on the DRT decision. Unfortunately I was not allowed to review the binder as I requested as part of my remedy, when management refused me access to the binder. How could anyone in the District not see a conflict when you have a husband and wife supervising carriers, together, at the same time everyday? **How can this not be a conflict of interest?**

Of course whenever I file a grievance with Paul that involves his wife, he denies everything, whether he was involved in the grievance investigation or not and he gets offensive and can't "stand back" and discuss the grievance subjectively. **How can this not be conflict of interest?**

I don't know about you, but I would not want to work with my wife supervising carriers, together, daily. It has nothing to do with my wife. I just think it's impossible not to discuss and share notes on carriers with your spouse, whether you're at work or at home. I think you need to have different working lives as a husband and wife, that's just my opinion.

The playing field is not level during grievance investigations when supervisors have access to discussion notes that should be private, especially with a husband and wife, working together everyday. **Is this not a conflict of interest?**

Of course postmaster Martino told me the office is so small with just a few carriers and routes that supervisors don't need to share discussion notes. If this were the case David, how come supervisors can't recall conversations with me or a conversation they had with a carrier from day to day when I ask them, but they can somehow remember the dates and what was discussed from months ago, without the use of the binder? How come supervisors don't remember if a carrier turned in a 3971, but they can remember a discussion from last year, without the use of the binder? It's called **SELECTIVE MEMMORY** and use of a binder.

I am convinced Paul and Eilyne shared the discussion binder, so that any time the Union requested discussion dates, they could produce it, regardless of what supervisor issued the discussion or discipline. That's why the DRT agreed with the Union there was a violation and ordered the notes destroyed.

Hang in there Agoura carriers; I'm holding everyone accountable in management whenever I find they have violated your rights. Just remember, I'm only in Agoura one day a week, so don't hesitate to call me at the Union office if I need to look into something that you feel just isn't right. Chances are, you are probably right...

In North Hollywood carriers who have not worked since last April because of NRP are not being paid properly, based on

continued on page 9

The Shadow Postmaster

By: Robbie Elsaleh, Moorpark Alternate Shop Steward



Do you know who covertly slithers his way into the Postmasters office every morning before the OIC and carriers arrive for work? Do you know who shuts and probably locks the office door, hides in there for an hour or so, and warms up the OICs seat for her? And do you know who's doing surveillance work on the street and relaying information on your whereabouts to the supervisor and OIC? There's a new Managerial Pilot Program being rolled

out and tested in Moorpark called, "The Shadow Postmaster," and Richard is its first enthusiastic participant.

At a time where management keeps crying about how the only way to save the Postal Service is to go to 5 day delivery, and maybe even 4 day delivery, it makes perfectly good sense for them to start assigning 2 Postmasters per office right? If this Pilot Program is successful, you can expect an OIC and a Shadow Postmaster in your office in the near future. Despite the fact that managements irrational 5 day delivery plan is driving businesses away and would be the beginning of the end of the Postal Service, does an office with 13 city and 3 rural routes need 2 Postmasters?

As you all know on April 1st, ironically being April fool's day, the now legendary "Shadow Postmaster" said in a 30 second stand-up speech that it was his last day acting as Postmaster. He announced that he is leaving immediately on a finance detail assignment for the District that is approximated to last till October, and that an OIC, who is an experienced level 20 Postmaster of her own station, will be filling in his level 21 position while he is away. Throughout that day, the Shadow did his upmost best to spread the word that **he** initiated this detail assignment for himself, and he further proclaimed to being the best Postmaster that Moorpark has ever had. He rambled on and on saying that carriers don't know just how lucky they are to have him as Postmaster. He also said that he will do his best to never be back to Moorpark, and that he wants to go where he doesn't have to deal with the BS of the 2902 Union. Blah blah blah... Boo hoo hoo... Well I have news for you Shadow; the only BS that you ever had to deal with is the BS that you intentionally generate and think you can get away with.

Besides The Shadow himself, I think there are only 2 other people left in the world that are so brainwashed by his unending and relentless 200 mile per hour foam spewing and bubble generating rhetoric, who still believe anything this man has to say. He will never change or go away quietly, let alone go away on his own. So let's see. He said that his last day was supposed to be April 1st. It's now June 6th as I am writing this article and he still spends hours per day, if not all day in Moorpark. Is there really a finance detail, or is this the new Shadow Postmaster Pilot Program? I realize he has to stop by Moorpark and pick up the staff car daily, but that only requires getting out of one car, get-

ting into the other car, and driving away. It doesn't require waking up extra early to sneak into Moorpark, hiding in the office for a while, spending hours here in the morning causing friction by gossiping, and telling the supervisor and OIC how much under-time all the carriers have and what to do; then leaving for the day and rushing back in the afternoon just before the carriers come back off the street, and spending even more hours here. On Saturdays, he even drives around the city spying on carriers and phoning their whereabouts to the supervisors. Okay so he lives in Moorpark and maybe runs out to get a bite to eat on Saturday and passes an LLV on the way. Is it Shadow policy that he calls the supervisor and reports time and place of observance? I bet on Sundays he's just dazed and confused wondering what to do with himself.

With all due respect, what's the OIC here for? Was she assigned here as a level 21 Postmasters assistant because a 13 city and 3 rural routes office is too much to handle for a single Postmaster? There's days when the Shadow is actually acting as the Postmaster while the OIC acts as Supervisor, so are we paying supervisors level 21 now? If I was the incumbent OIC of the office, who as I stated earlier is also a knowledgeable and experienced Postmaster of her own station, I would feel belittled, humiliated, and irritated to have someone literally over my shoulders all the time doing half of my work for me, and then second guessing the other half of my work that he graciously allows me to do. Not only would it undermine my authority, but how can I gain the respect of my carriers when their perception of me would be that I'm not really competent or in power, the Shadow Postmaster is. But then again, maybe it's more important to have a warm seat to come in to every morning.

On days when the OIC is off or taking a day of vacation, the Shadow would try to fool carriers as to his whereabouts by still arriving early and not parking in the Postmasters spot. He would park at the end of the parking lot making it seem that he was just there picking up the staff car and leaving, but instead, he would conceal himself in his office all morning secretly instructing the Supervisor on what to do. Anyone that knows the Shadow, knows that he is a hands-on, in your face and over the shoulder manager and can't stand being in the office when carriers are on the floor (except to eavesdrop). He won't even sit in his office when a District Telecom is in progress. And in the unlikely event he would be in the office, as soon as the distribution clerk yells out to the supervisor to come over and count the mail, the Shadow would run out of his office, past the supervisor, causing papers on the desk to be blown on the floor from his airstream just so he can count the mail himself, and telling the supervisor how much volume to record. I can't make this stuff up. Apparently, level 17 supervisors are not qualified to count mail.

So what will be next? Do we double the number of supervisors per office?

Till next time, be aware and informed, and don't let anyone tell you that you're not making standards...

PS Form 3971 - Your best friend when you use any leave

By: Susan Degenhardt, Recording Secretary



Many of the calls here at the Union hall have to do with carriers not being properly paid for the leave they have used. Whether it is sick leave, annual leave, leave with FMLA protection, sick leave dependent care, leave for doctor appointments, LWOP, whatever the leave is, it should be clearly documented on Form 3971 Request for Notification of Absence, by the carrier.

Scenario #1- Carrier Sam is called in for a fact finding about **unscheduled absences** with his steward. The supervisor asks why he called out sick for 3 days at the end of October, 5 days in November, and 2 partial days in December and 2 more days in January. Sam answers that he cannot remember all those absences, and asks to see his 3971's. The steward and Sam discover that the partial days in December and January were for doctor appointments where Carrier Sam had filled out his 3971's in advance and submitted them to his supervisor a week before the appointments.

The facts proved that the December and January absences were **scheduled absences**. Carrier Sam gets a gold star from his steward. Now if management has the stupidity to still issue discipline, then the Union will file the grievance and will be successful in removing the discipline from Sam's record.

Scenario #2- Carrier Joe is accused of abusing his sick leave because he has been absent a total of 30 days since his last discussion about attendance. He answers in the fact finding that he has an FLMA covered condition which he called out sick for 4 days, his mom had surgery and needed his assistance for 7 days, and then she had follow up doctor appointments. Then his son broke his leg and Joe was needed to help again. Then Joe got sick with his FMLA condition again for the last 7 days. The steward and Joe reviewed Joe's 3971's. Luckily for Joe he had filled out a 3971 for each of the absences, noting FMLA on each one, he even had copies of the 3971's and copies of all his FMLA paperwork (Joe's steward was sooo proud of him). Since each and every absence was properly documented and covered by FMLA, Joe has no worries (not about work at least). Management will not have just cause to issue discipline to Joe.

Scenario #3- Carrier Sally sprains her ankle at home on her day off. She goes to her doctor and he says she cannot be on her feet for 3 weeks.

Sally calls her supervisor and tells him that she will not be at work for 3 weeks. She does not ask for any particular type of leave. She does not speak to her steward about her situa-

tion, either. Well, Sally gets her paycheck and realizes that the supervisor paid her using her annual leave. Sally becomes irate. She was due to go on annual leave in 2 weeks and now she does not have any annual leave left. Stupid supervisor, she says to herself, and calls the Union. Well, lucky for Sally, we can usually fix the problem, but we may not in time for Sally's annual leave. As you can see, it could have been easily averted from the beginning if she had requested a 3971 from either her supervisor or her steward.

This form also has information on the reverse that the carrier should pay special attention to. There are boxes that the carrier can check that may apply to the type of leave being requested. So, when filling out the leave form 3971, flip it over and check the box that corresponds to whatever type of leave you are asking for. The moral of this story, (and it is just a story), is **FILL OUT THE 3971 COMPLETELY, LEGIBLY and AS SOON AS POSSIBLE!** Make sure you have the right dates and times in the right boxes. Have the supervisor sign the form when you submit it and **GET A COPY!** Your steward will be sooo proud of you too.

As an added note, keep a running record of your workhours and check those hours against your paycheck stub each and every pay period. Mistakes on pay and leave are happening more and more frequently. The longer you wait to notice a mistake the longer it will take to correct it. Bring it to the attention of your steward as soon as you can. Make a copy of your paystub and any other supporting documents needed for the steward to prove that there was an error. With the right documents we can usually fix the problem fairly quickly (quick is within a couple of pay periods), so you can get on with your life.

WINNERS OF THE MDA TEXAS HOLD'EM POKER TOURNAMENT

Held on May 1, 2010
at the Union Hall

Danny Acosta \$536
Rob Torchon \$334
Dennis Poncher \$217
Michael Marquez \$167
Wolfgang Prottung \$134

Time call-in notice received. Date given to supervisor. Amount of time and date of leave request. Used by timekeepers and/or supervisors when required. Used by employees, timekeepers to explain absences. Signature of person who was notified of the absence. Signature of supervisor when he or she was notified of the absence. Used only when an employee's tour is extended because of tardiness. It is never used when a bargaining unit employee's schedule is changed for his or her personal convenience.

Request for or Notification of Absence

Employee's Name (Last, First, M.I.) Social Security No. Date Submitted No. of Hours Requested Scheduled Start/End Dates

Insulation (For PMS users, show city, state, and ZIP code) NES Day Pay Linc. # OIA Code From Date Hour Thru Date Hour

Type of Absence: Annual, Career 7:31 Rule, LWOP (See reverse), Sick (See reverse), Late, COP, Other.

Documentation (For official use only): For FMLA Leave, For COP Leave, For Advanced Sick Leave, For Military Leave, For Civil Leave, For Higher Level, For Sensitive Training.

Signature of Supervisor and Date Notified

Official Action on Application (Return copy of signed request to employee): Approved, not FMLA; Approved, FMLA; Approved, FMLA Pending; Disapproved (Give reason); Ineligible for FMLA.

PS Form 3971, April 2001 (Page 1 of 2)

The reverse side of Form 3971 is used, where necessary, to document employee requests for sick leave. Detailed procedures for using this form are in Chapters 3 and 5. F-21

During This Absence, I Was Incapacitated for Duty by: Sickness, On-the-Job Injury, Pregnancy and Confinement, Exposed to a Contagious Disease, Undergoing Medical, Dental, or Optical Examination or Treatment (Job-related), Undergoing Medical, Dental, or Optical Examination or Treatment (Not job related).

During This Absence, I Was Unavailable for Duty Because: Sick Leave for Dependent Care, Care of Child - Bonding, Placement of a Child with Employee or Adoption or Foster Care.

Additional Information Regarding Detail of Leave (Production Under FMLA): Employee Not Eligible - Less than 1250 Hours Worked; Employee Not Eligible - Not Employed with USPS 1 Year; Employee Has Exhausted FMLA Entitlement in Current Leave Year; Absence Not for a Covered Condition; Absence Not for a Covered Family Member; Requested Documentation Not Provided; Documentation Provided: Does Not Meet Criteria for FMLA Protection.

Additional Documentation Required

Leave Type	Time Code	PSDS Code	Start Date	End Date	Day	Hour	Year
AL-FMLA	5001	32	Sat	01			
SL-FMLA	5002	33	Sun	02			
LWOP - FMLA - Part Day	5005	36	Sun	03			
LWOP - FMLA - Full Day	5006	37	Mon	03			
LWOP - Lieu of Sick Leave	5000	20	Sat	03			
LWOP - Professed	5002	21	Sun	03			
LWOP - Personal Reasons	5002	22	Tue	03			
LWOP - Part Day	50	23	Wed	03			
LWOP - ANCL	5000	24	Thu	03			
LWOP - ICID (Not FMLA) - CWCP	50	25	Fri	03			
LWOP - Maternity	5000	26	Sat	03			
LWOP - Suspension	5000	27	Sun	03			
LWOP - Union Official	50	28	Mon	03			
LWOP - Suspension Pending Termination	5000	29	Tue	03			
Continuation of Pay - USPS	71	53	Wed	03			
Continuation of Pay - USPS-FMLA	7103	34	Thu	03			
Continuation of Pay FMLA-ICD-CWCP	4804	25	Mon	03			
Court Duty	61	54	Tue	03			
Military Leave	67	05	Wed	03			
Postmaster's Organization	69	08	Thu	03			
Blood Donor Leave	69	03	Fri	03			
Other Paid Leave	86	10	Sat	03			
Convention Leave	66	12	Sun	03			
Acts of God	78	13	Mon	03			
Veteran's Funeral	80	10	Tue	03			
Respite	80	15	Wed	03			
Civil Defense	77	10	Thu	03			
Civil Disorder	81	17	Fri	03			
Voting Leave	65	18	Sat	03			

PS Form 3971, April 2001 (Page 2 of 2)

CONFLICT OF INTEREST...
Continued from page 6

their 3971 forms. A carrier, who was sent home last year, had requested annual leave during the year so they could get paid bi-weekly rather than later form OWCP. The carrier gets a paycheck with zero dollars. Management had put in LWOP. Carriers will request sick leave and be paid annual leave instead and the wrong amount too. A grievance had to be filed to adjust the mistakes made by management. Even when the hours and dates are broken down on the 3971, management will still get it wrong. It's bad enough these carriers are not working because of management, but to have their paychecks screwed up too is intolerable. I wonder how many supervisors, managers and Postmasters would start entering the correct information, if they had to pay the carrier out of their own pockets instead of spending the company's money to process pay adjustments. It's just a thought.

The offices that have lost carriers because of NRP are down routes daily, overtime is being used to complete workloads, transitional carriers are working 40-50 hours a week, all

the while senior limited duty carriers are sitting home. Good work USPS that's a sound business plan when the company is struggling through an economic crisis. Let's not get these injured carriers back to work, let's reduce the number of days we deliver mail as a plan. It's really unbelievable what the public doesn't know and the amount of money wasted by management daily.

On a positive note, some grievances are finally being settled in favor of the carriers who have received "make whole" remedies and received monetary settlements, re-credited leave because of LWOP, TSP contributions and even overtime pay are part of the remedy. It's a shame that these carriers had to suffer by not working, including time and expenses to the Postal Service and the Union just to prove that management failed to honor the ELM provisions concerning injured carriers.

Management is supposed to follow a "pecking order" when finding limited duty work for the injured carriers. Of course they failed to follow their own regulations and simply sent carriers home with little or no search efforts at all. For those of you still waiting for your grievance to reach arbitration, you will be notified before the actual arbitration date. I hope each and every one of you is made whole and hopefully you can return to work and earn a decent living so you can continue to provide for yourself and your families.

Remember to drink lots of liquids, take your breaks and comfort stops when needed. You want to be healthy when you retire to enjoy your earned "non scheduled day" for a long, long time. Until next time.



Tri-Valley Branch 2902 is presented with a plaque for our outstanding achievement in membership organization at the training seminar held in Pasadena in May.

Universal Life

By: Chris Alessi, MBA/NSBA Representative



The MBA's Universal Life insurance plan is the most affordable and flexible way to protect your family while investing for the future. Especially in these days when money is tight you can decrease or even suspend paying premiums while your insurance coverage stays in force. As your financial responsibilities to your family grow you can increase the amount of insurance protection. For example, when the kids are off to college, you can tell the MBA

to lower your insurance protection. You can also decide to accelerate the growth of your nest egg by increasing your payments.

Unlike Whole Life policies, if you need any of your cash back, in times of emergencies you don't have to take a loan from the insurance company and pay interest, you simply make a withdrawal. As long as your cash account maintains a positive balance, your policy stays in force. This policy is available to you as an NALC member and to your immediate family. It is always a good idea to insure your spouse, especially if your family depends on two incomes. Universal Life can help pay off

your mortgage and buy your children things they need. You can even use your policy to contribute to their college expenses. Because the plan builds cash value, it can provide you and your spouse with a nice retirement nest egg. Premiums are based on your age at time of purchase.

The MBA will keep you informed by sending you an annual report of your policy stating how much insurance coverage you have, how much it costs to provide you that insurance coverage, how much your policy is worth in cash, and lastly how much interest you earned in the previous year.

I encourage all of the members of The NALC who may be considering life insurance that Universal Life is the way to go. You can choose to pay through convenient bi-weekly payroll deductions, or you can opt for direct monthly or annual payments. You can even make lump sum payments.

In closing I want to say thank you for electing me as your delegate to our 67th National Convention in Anaheim, I will do my best to represent our branch and to support our resolutions to the membership and bring back all the latest info and any new products that the MBA has to offer.

In solidarity, God Bless You, Chris

GOING POSTAL...

Continued from page 3

and his compatriots imagine that the only response to a rough stretch is to slash the USPS. The madness of the cuts is summed up by Senator Susan Collins, a Maine Republican, who says, "The Postal Service cannot expect to gain more business, which it desperately needs, if it is reducing service."

Even the service's most determined defenders say that if the restructuring proposed by Potter goes through, the end result will not be the "leaner, more market responsive Postal Service" the postmaster general imagines. Rather, as American Postal Workers Union president William Burrus says, "It would be the beginning of the demise of the Postal Service."

But, of course, Americans will still need to communicate using paper and printed materials, and they will still need to ship all those parcels ordered over the Internet. The Postal Service's demise would not mean the end of those enterprises, just the end of postal workers' jobs and the service's commitment to communities that might not be the priorities of private companies like FedEx. Indeed, the downsizing of the Postal Service has often been discussed as the first step toward a huge bartering off of its responsibilities. Burrus has been saying for years that the service "has begun to travel resolutely down the road of privatization." And the *Washington Post* is editorializing, "Given the state of technology, privatization is prob-

ably the only long-term solution for the USPS."

Thankfully, privatization has a powerful critic. In response to a question posed in February about selling the Postal Service to the highest bidder, President Obama said that privatization is a "bad idea most of the time" because "oftentimes what you see is companies want to buy those parts of a government-run op that are profitable, and they don't want to do anything else. So, for example, the US Postal Service; everybody would love to have that high-end part of the business that FedEx and UPS are already in—business to business, you make a lot of money. But do they want to deliver that postcard to a remote area somewhere in rural America that is a money loser? Well, the US post office provides universal service. Those companies would not want to provide universal service."

Like many members of Congress, the president has sent signals suggesting a discomfort with cutting mail delivery down to five days. But he's been less engaged with the equally serious threat posed by proposals to increase stamp prices and rates for weekly newspapers and magazines, two moves that threaten to drive more paying customers away from a service that has seen annual mail deliveries drop from 208 billion pieces in 2000 to 177 billion pieces last year.

That drop in mail volume is often blamed for the Postal Service's fiscal troubles, but as economist Dean Baker notes, the service "has been scaling back its workforce more than propor-

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WELCOME
TO VASA PARK

National Association of Letter Carriers Branch 2902 Picnic

Vasa Park, Agoura Hills, CA
(Directions on Reverse)

Sunday, September 12th 2010
11:00AM - 4:30PM

All-You-Can-Eat Lunch Buffet – 12:00PM – 2:00PM

BBQ Sliced Beef, BBQ Chicken Breast, BBQ Baked Beans,
Red-Skinned Potato Salad, Watermelon Slices, Garden Salad and More!

Hot Dog Station – 11:30AM-4:00PM

Grilled Hot Dogs, Fresh Buns, Chili, Cheese & all the Fixins'

Beverage Service

Soft Drinks Served All Day, Beer and Wine Served at 11:00AM

Delicious Desserts And Sweets

Cotton Candy at 11:00AM
Ice Cream & Chocolate Chip Cookies at 1:00PM

All Day Entertainment for Everyone!

Including: Picnic Races 1:00PM-2:30PM
Slide Winder 274 ft. Water Slide, Swimming Pool,
Clown-Face Painter-Balloon Artist from 12:00PM-3:00PM,
Tiger Belly Bouncer, Three-Piece Obstacle Course,
And So Much More!!

Don't Forget to Bring your Swim Suit, Towel, and Appetite!

PICNIC RSVP

Please detach and return by August 23rd 2010!

Member's Name: _____

Yes, I will come to the picnic and bring ____ adult guest(s) (Over 18)

Yes, I will be bringing my children - **Please Specify Number of Children.**

Age 8 and Under: ____ Age 9 and Above: ____

MEMBERS AND
FAMILIES ONLY.
NO PETS. NO SCABS.

PRESIDENT'S REPORT...

Continued from page 2

we don't get our Congressional Representatives behind it, we will be in for a rough road that is why I am asking you to write your representative and to tell him or her to support H. Res. 173.

At this time, we have about 209 co-sponsors. But, we need more. We need to write to Representatives Elton Gallegly-CD 24, Howard McKeon-CD 25, and Henry Waxman-CD 30. So, those of you that live in Ventura County, Santa Clarita, the Antelope Valley or the Chatsworth area please write these representatives. We have to do all we can right now to save 6-day delivery. All for now back in two.

“The good lord set definite limits on mans wisdom, but set no limits on his stupidity—and that’s not fair!”

**—Konrad Adenauer,
German statesman (1876-1967)**

Directions to Vasa Park

2854 Triunfo Canyon Road, Agoura Hills, CA 91301

Ventura Fwy (101)

Exit at Kanan Rd and go South towards the ocean 3.2 miles.

Turn Right/West on Triunfo Canyon Rd.

Vasa Park/Camp Keystone is 1/3 mile on the Right

Look for the balloons on our mailbox!

From Pacific Coast Hwy (1)

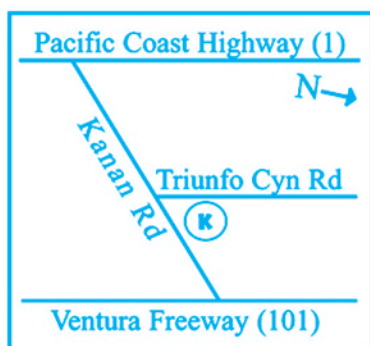
Take Kanan Rd North towards Agoura 8.8 miles.

Turn Left/West on Triunfo Canyon Rd.

Vasa Park/Camp Keystone is 1/3 mile on the Right

Look for the balloons on our mailbox!

Please drive straight through our facility and over our creek (use the cement bridge) to our large parking lot.



Check Out the Park at
www.TeamPlayEvents.com

GOING POSTAL...

Continued from page 10

tionately to the decline in mail volume, increasing the productivity of its workforce. This is exactly how we would expect a private business to respond to the decrease in demand for its services.” According to Baker, “The cause of the [current] shortfall has been the requirement put in place by Congress in 2006 that the Postal Service pre-fund 80 percent (up from 50 percent at present) of retiree healthcare benefits. The rule required that they reach this funding level in ten years. The Postal Service spent \$12.4 billion to reach this pre-funding target over the last three years, an amount considerably larger than its \$11.7 billion shortfall over this period.”

In addition, argues USPS inspector general David Williams, the service was overcharged \$75 billion by the government for pension liabilities when the Office of Personnel Management miscalculated its obligations. And, notes Baker, the Postal Service was “prevented by the Bush administration from applying for the employer subsidies available under Medicare Part D to businesses that provide drug coverage to retired workers.” What it all adds up to, according to Williams, is a pattern of “inequitable...financial entanglements between the Postal Service and the federal government” that are “generally at the expense of the Postal Service.”

With encouragement from the postmaster general, the House has taken steps to address some of these concerns, and Baker suggests that Congress should order an independent assessment of the key accounting issues. These moves, if approved by the Senate and the White House, would considerably ease the service’s economic uncertainty. That does not mean, however, that postal unions and defenders of the public interest should breathe a sigh of relief. Rather, the current focus on the circumstances and prospects of the agency creates an opening for a radical rethink of those “entanglements.”

Today the Postal Service exists in a netherworld where it must provide universal service—a classic public good—and at the same time break even; it must “compete” with private parcel services while providing them with platforms to expand their nonunionized and nonuniversal businesses; it must meet the demands of Congress while getting by without tax dollars.

Instead of entertaining ill-thought-out discussions about how to squeeze the Postal Service even more than it has already been squeezed, Congress needs a precise picture of what is threatened when we talk of going to five-day delivery, shuttering post offices, laying off experienced postal workers, hiking rates for newspapers and magazines (including, it should be noted, publications such as *The Nation*) and privatizing pieces of what is supposed to be a ubiquitous public service.

These “efficiencies” threaten more than just the Postal Service. They pose direct and indirect threats to democracy. Oregon Senators Ron Wyden and Jeff Merkley noted as much when they asked Congress and the USPS to avoid taking steps that would damage their state’s mail-in balloting. “While we admire and encourage examination of avenues to modernize the postal service, the implementation of this proposal

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For the Good Life

By: Bev Sucich, Director of Retirees



Hi Everyone, I am your new director of retirees. I am sure most of you have heard by now that Don Minster the previous director of retiree has resigned from his position. I would like to say thanks to Don for giving us retiree's great representation during his service in Branch 2902. He deserves a big thank you from all of the retirees. I know we will see him at the senior luncheons. I would also like to thank Sandy Gaunce for doing a great job

with the food drive. I know she has a lot on her plate right now. Thanks again Sandy from all of us. I would like to thank Sue Degenhardt and Debbie Riggs for helping me with cooking the union meals every other month. I could not do it without them.

Our President Frank Salazar approached and asked me if I would be interested in the Director of Retiree position until the next election. I accepted and at the Executive Board on May 4th 2010 President Salazar appointed me to Director of Retiree of Branch 2902. I hope to represent the retirees as good as Don Minster did. If I can be of any assistance to a retiree please contact me, my phone number will be in the Mail bag News.

We had quite a few Honorees these past few months. Jim Johnson and Craig Launer both from Thousand Oaks, Gary Traba from Pacoima, John Mitchell and Don Draper from North Hollywood and Todd Sturdevant from San Fernando retired from the Post Office. We all hope you enjoy your retirement fellows.

We had John Mendez from Sylmar, Sonny Castellano from Chatsworth and Al Covarrubias from San Fernando receive their 40 year membership pins. Congratulations fellows.

For the grand finale we had 4 members who received their 50 year Golden Membership card. Region 1 RAA Chris Jackson made the presentation honoring the following fellows at our May 18th, 2010 union meeting. Edward Smith from Thousand Oaks, Max Feinberg from Reseda, Mike Steele and Ron Weightman both from North Hollywood.

What an accomplishment Fellows!!!!

Congratulations to all of the retirees and thanks for continuing your union Membership.

Now for a short rundown on our Hometown Buffet luncheons. At the March 18 luncheon in Simi we had 23 members and 10 guests. Winners were Sandy Gaunce, Lee Leighton, Rudy Hernandez and I. All won Hometown Buffet gift cards.

At the April 15 luncheon in Canoga Park we had 25 members and 11 guests. Winners were Lois Perkins, A.M. Fitz, and Wild Bill all won HTB gift cards.

On May 20th in Simi we had 29 members and 12 guests. Winners were John Mendez, Chili's restaurant, Bill Everett, Subway, & Dave Perez, Ralph's.

In June we had no luncheon because of overcrowded graduation.

The July 15th luncheon will be in Simi at HTB.

I announced that we will try a variety of different gift cards including HTB and see how it works out for everyone. Winners will have their choice of a gift card and do not forget lunch will start from 11:00 to 1:00 and raffle will still be at 12:30.

I apologize if I missed any new retiree or a retiree getting a yearly service pin. I will try to pay more attention in the future.

Thanks for all your support and have a safe and happy 4th of July.

GOING POSTAL...

Continued from page 12

would pose a direct threat to democracy in Oregon," wrote the senators, whose concerns have been echoed by election officials from around the country, which increasingly relies on the Postal Service to carry regular and absentee ballots.

The PRC's Goldway has been at the forefront of arguments for taking state-based "Vote by Mail" experiments national. "Voters would not need to take time off from work, find transportation, find the right polling station, get babysitters or rush through reading complicated ballot initiatives," she explains. "The country's 35,000 post offices could provide information, distribute and collect voting materials and issue inexpensive residency and address identifications for voting purposes. Perhaps most important, given the concerns about voting machine security, mail ballots cannot be hacked. Tampering or interfering with mail is a federal crime, and the United States Postal

Service has its own law enforcement arm, which works closely with a variety of enforcement authorities including the F.B.I. Trained election clerks can take the time to check signatures without delaying or discouraging voters. And the advantages of a paper trail outshine the glitter of black box electronic gadgetry."

That's one of many visions for giving the Postal Service new and necessary responsibilities that are in sync with its historic mission. Another would be to dramatically reduce the rates charged the weekly newspapers and journals of opinion that sustain our civic and democratic discourse in their traditional print form and online. A new *Columbia Journalism Review* survey of more than 600 websites of print magazines suggests that magazines that do not make a profit on the web are nonetheless providing immense amounts of web content. Roughly half the magazines surveyed provide all significant content from their print editions free on the web, although many

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GOING POSTAL...

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of their websites are losing money. In other words, print publications are subsidizing the web even as they struggle to survive in an age of declining circulation rates and dipping advertising revenues.

CJR presented its survey as “the beginning of a long-overdue conversation” about the relationship of magazines to the web. That conversation, the editors suggest, should focus on the role print publications and their websites play in the “flow of information on which our democratic society is predicated.” Before postal rates are raised for journals of opinion and other content-rich print publications, researchers should determine the extent to which these publications are powering serious discourse in the digital age. Logic suggests this research will conclude that reducing postal rates for small magazines and newspapers will strengthen the scope and quality of the debate, not only in print but online. This is a public service investment that would seem to make particular sense when everyone is worried about how we’re going to sustain journalism during the difficult transition to the digital age; and, again, it is entirely in keeping with the mission of the Postal Service, which at its founding fostered the development of robust newspapers and journals of opinion with massive postal subsidies.

In the transition to a digital future, the Postal Service is neither at odds with nor resistant to new technologies. Indeed, just as the service was the driving force behind the expansion of a younger nation’s roads, railways and air transportation systems, it is now at the forefront of developing and implementing digital advances. The Postal Service maintains the world’s third-largest computing infrastructure—including more than 5,000 remote locations that receive Internet service via satellite. It operates the world’s largest intranet system and is the world’s leader in optical character recognition technology. Its ZIP code system serves as the structural underpinning for the nation’s 911 emergency system.

Now the Postal Service should begin to consider the potential its network of physical facilities has to play in closing the digital divide. Thousands of neighborhoods and rural communities that do not have libraries or other easily accessible public facilities have post offices; shouldn’t every post office have a hot spot with high-speed broadband? And shouldn’t the Postal Service be reimagining itself, in the way that highly innovative postal services in other countries have, as a media and technology innovator and service provider—think digital mail, to start with. “We believe we are in the communication business, not just in the physical letter-mail business,” explained Swiss Post executive vice president Frank Marthaler, in a recent interview with the magazine *Monocle*, which portrayed Marthaler and his colleagues as occupying “unique turf at the intersection of data networks and the old-fashioned letter routes, with the ability to carve out an unrivaled position in the digital age.”

When the conversation about the Postal Service’s future is turned on its head, it becomes evident that this public utility does not need to be ever on the defensive. It could remain a government-owned entity with a core public-service mission and the flexibility to achieve that mission, as has Swiss Post,

which was radically restructured in order to adjust to the new communications landscape. Indeed, the post office is precisely where the federal government should be making smart infrastructure and job-creation investments, as part of a new approach that seeks to maintain a public asset and maximize its potential.

Such an approach might even renew one of the greatest of all postal services. From 1910 to 1967, the agency maintained a postal banking system that allowed citizens to open small savings accounts at local post offices. The system was so successful that after World War II, it had a balance of \$3 billion—roughly \$30 billion in today’s dollars. Congress did away with postal banking in the late 1960s, but other countries—notably Japan—have maintained such systems. Today, Japan Post is, according to the *Wall Street Journal*, “the world’s largest financial institution by assets, with \$3.3 trillion on its balance sheet.”

In the midst of the 2008 financial panic, Michael Lind, policy director of the Economic Growth Program of the New America Foundation, proposed that “a new postal savings system should be part of America’s post-meltdown financial architecture.” “When Congress created the postal savings system nearly a century ago, one of its goals was to encourage savings among the large number of low-income immigrants,” Lind wrote. “A new system would help today’s immigrants as well as the native poor. Banks are not interested in people with so little money, many of whom are preyed upon by payday lenders and credit card companies.” The National League of Postmasters has started talking up the idea, and even Postmaster General Potter has hinted at openness to what Lind describes as a “simple” notion: “use the one government institution that can be found in most neighborhoods and rural areas—the post office—to encourage small savings and a habit of thrift.” From that simple idea could, he suggests, come financial security for millions of Americans, an alternative to growing indebtedness of the country to foreign governments and financial institutions, and a vehicle to fund investment in public assets like sewer systems and bridges.

That’s quite a payback for believing in the promise of the Postal Service. But, just as it did in Ben Franklin’s day, the post office can still deliver for America in the twenty-first century.

About John Nichols

John Nichols, a pioneering political blogger, has written *The Beat* since 1999. His posts have been circulated internationally, quoted in numerous books and mentioned in debates on the floor of Congress. Nichols writes about politics for *The Nation* magazine as its Washington correspondent. He is a contributing writer for *The Progressive* and *In These Times* and the associate editor of the *Capital Times*, the daily newspaper in Madison, Wisconsin. His articles have appeared in the *New York Times*, *Chicago Tribune* and dozens of other newspapers. He is the co-author, with Robert W. McChesney, of *The Death and Life of American Journalism*, just published by Nation Books.

AVOID LAST MINUTE HEADACHES...

Continued from page 4

posed to be their N/S day.

The USPS regulations regarding jury duty are found in the Employee and Labor Relations Manual (better known as the ELM). Printed below is the provision carriers should familiarize themselves with in case they receive a "Summons for Jury Service".

516.33 Accommodation of Employees Called for Court Service

The following provisions concern accommodation of employees called for court service:

a. Employee Options. Employees who are eligible for court leave and who have a conflict with court duty and work schedules have the following options:

(1) Work their postal tours of duty in addition to performing court service.

(2) Have their work schedules changed temporarily to conform to the hours of court service. (Employees who do not choose this option may not have their work schedule changed and are expected to report for postal duty upon completion of their court service.)

c. Temporary Change in Schedule. Employees who choose to have their work schedules changed temporarily to conform to court service hours submit PS Form 3189, Request for Temporary Schedule Change for Personal Convenience, as soon as possible, together with PS Form 3971, requesting such schedule change to the appropriate postal official at their installation (see Handbook F-21, Time and Attendance, 232.23). Such request states that the schedule change is for the employee's personal convenience and is agreed to by the local union.

Employees who exercise this option receive full compensation for the period of court service including any applicable night differential for the revised schedule (emphasis added).

When you receive a "Summons for Jury Service" you should notify your supervisor of the date that you are going to start jury service. Submit a PS Form 3189 requesting a change of schedule to conform to the hours of the court, including the change from a rotating/Sunday schedule to a schedule with Saturday/Sunday off. Remember to get copies of everything you submit!

In Los Angeles County, where I live, when you receive a "Summons for Jury Service" you are assigned a group number and instructed to phone in the evening before your first reporting day for instructions on whether to report for jury service or not. The instructions state that you are not to report for service unless your group number is identified.

The last time I received a jury duty summons, I phoned in on Sunday evening, Monday evening, Tuesday evening, Wednesday evening and Thursday evening and my group number was never identified. On Thursday evening when I phoned in I was thanked for my jury service and told that I was excused. I never missed any work because I never had to report to court.

I understand that there are many situations like I encountered when a carrier really doesn't need to change his or her

schedule because their jury group is not called and they never actually report for jury duty.

However, I still advise carriers who receive a jury summons to submit a change of schedule in order to have Saturday off, just in case they are required to go to court on what would have otherwise been their N/S day. If you don't change your schedule and have to go to court on your N/S day you will not be paid overtime but will only be paid whatever the court pays for jury service for that day. If you choose to roll the dice and not put in a change of schedule because you don't think you will ever actually have to report for jury service then that is your choice and you will have to live with the consequences if you end up working all 6 days and only getting paid for 5 of them. In my opinion the only time anyone should roll the dice is when they are standing at a craps table. Play it safe when you are on jury duty and change your schedule to conform to the hours of the court.

My intended message in this lengthy article is really very simple: plan ahead and don't wait until the last minute to try and resolve workplace issues. By planning ahead you can save yourself from a lot of unnecessary stress and anxiety. Talk to you all in two months.



Members Sonny Castellano (Chatsworth) and John Mendez (San Fernando) are presented with 40 year pins at the May union meeting.



Presented with retirement watches at the May meeting, from L-R are John Mitchell (Northridge), Jim Johnson and Craig Launer (Thousand Oaks) and Todd Sturdevant (San Fernando). Congratulations on your retirement...Enjoy!!!

NALC FOOD DRIVE 2010



Pictured above are just a few of the faces that made the NALC Food Drive such a huge success. Thanks to all of you it was a record breaking year at a time when so many need the help!

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“I have always felt that it was important that everyone who was a worker join a labor organization.”

—Eleanor Roosevelt 1941

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- AUG 3** Executive Board Meeting 6pm
Executive Council Meeting 7pm
- AUG 9** **NALC National Convention** begins
Anaheim, CA
- AUG 17** Regular Branch Meeting 7pm
Garden Palm Hotel-Newbury Park
- AUG 19** Retiree Lunch 11:30am
Hometown Buffet-West Hills
- SEP 6** Labor Day-Holiday
MDA Telethon 
- SEP 12** **Tri-Valley Branch 2902 Picnic**
Vasa Park-Agoura
- SEP 16** Retiree Lunch 11:30am
Hometown Buffet-Simi Valley
- SEP 21** Regular Branch Meeting 7pm
Union Hall-Chatsworth
Dinner served 6 pm



THE Mail Bag NEWS

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OFFICIAL PUBLICATION OF TRI-VALLEY BRANCH 2902,
NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF LETTER CARRIERS AFL-CIO

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The Future Begins in California

By Frank Salazar, President

There was so much that happened at this convention that it's difficult to summarize in this limited space. So, I will attempt to give you a few highlights. As national conventions go, this was an interesting and well run affair except for the opening night reception. It seems that many of the delegates were not keen on the amount of carbohydrates that were served: pizza, hot-dogs, mini cheeseburgers, sausage sandwiches, etc. When a delegate asked if there was a salad or some kind of vegetables, she was directed to a pickle, which seemed to be the only green thing on the menu. Oh well, everything can't be perfect.



The theme of the 67th Biennial Convention was Honoring the Past and Imagining the Future. In his opening address, President Rolando stated that the strength of the NALC is its 300,000 membership, which takes pride in serving its customers in every neighborhood at 150 million addresses 6-days a week. The NALC is the largest and best organized open shop Union in America. President Rolando described the challenges facing the Postal Service. He cited the ongoing economic recession, competition from the Internet, the \$75 billion overpayment into the Civil Service Retirement System, calls from the PMG to stop Saturday Delivery, and the \$87 billion re-

quirement to pre-fund retiree health benefits to name a few.

At the convention, President Rolando outlined 4 major goals: (1) Extend and enforce the ban on outsourcing city carrier jobs. (2) Win more work for Letter Carriers through the assignment of new deliveries. (3) Develop a better and fairer system for evaluating and adjusting routes. (4) Prepare for the next round of wage bargaining. Rolando stated that he would not back down on these goals. He

pledged to protect the job security and standard of living of letter carriers no matter what economic conditions we face.

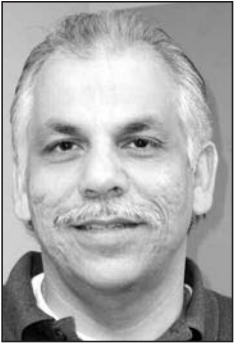
To reach these goals, the NALC must fight for a strong Postal Service. A strong Postal Service will provide employment and good wages. The NALC must support a strong middle class in America and support public employees. The NALC must turn back 2006 Postal Reform and save the Postal Service from its self. Hence, our future begins at the 67th Biennial Convention in Anaheim, CA.

But, to imagine our future, we have to know where we have been. We have to know and understand our past. To remind us of our past, there was a video presentation called "The

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PRESIDENT'S REPORT...

Continued from page 1



Strike at 40: Celebrating NALC's Heroes of 1970". It featured carriers, mostly from Branch 36 NY, who participated in the strike. The retired carriers recounted the hardships, emotions, and events surrounding the strike. Letters were read from President Emeritus Sombrotto and Rademacher. Although I thought the film was a little simplistic, it got the point across. Times were hard for letter carriers, pay was very low, and things needed to

change for the better. It took courage, sacrifice, and involvement and nothing changes without these key ingredients. Thanks to the membership of 1970, we enjoy the changes of Postal Reorganization to this day.

I noted two special motions made at the convention. One was a special resolution to make past President William H. Young, a President Emeritus of the NALC. And, the other was a motion from the floor of "No Confidence" in PMG Jack Potter. I also noted that our former National Business Agent and Director of the Health Plan, Tom Young, got up to the microphone, after the vote of "no confidence", and cautioned the body about the vote. But, it was too little too late. If Brother Young thought that the vote of "no confidence" was such a bad idea, he should have been up at the microphone earlier and said so. But, then he probably would have been shouted down. On the other hand, President Rolando was given a full vote of confidence when he and his slate of officers were all nominated and voted in by acclamation.

There was a long list of speakers at the convention, but the most interesting to me were Cecil Roberts, President of the United Mine Workers of America and Jeff Faux, President Emeritus of the Economic Policy Institute. Cecil Roberts is what I think the President of a Mine Workers Union should be. He was fiery, energetic, and passionate about the Union movement, solidarity, and maintaining a strong and healthy middle class in America. The man even quoted scripture in his speech and at times sounded like a fire and brimstone Baptist preacher. He is a truly inspiring Union leader.

Jeff Faux is an economist who basically told us what is wrong with America economically and gave us his opinion on how to get out of our recession. He had so many points that I couldn't take notes fast enough. To be brief, Mr. Faux states that since Ronald Reagan, there has been wage stagnation. Reagan taught us that its okay to produce things overseas with cheap labor and that it's okay to break Labor Unions. Instead of wages averaging \$22.00 an hour and going to \$44.00 an hour, wages are going down. When somebody loses a job, somebody with a job gives back. To keep the American dream going, more and more Americans have to borrow. If nobody spends, nobody works. Mr. Faux stated that in 2014, unemployment is going to be higher than now. He also stated that the United States spends more money on healthcare (17%) than the rest of the world, and we live less (78.1 years). Canada for example, spends 10% on healthcare and lives 81.2

years on average. To turn things around, Jeff Faux advises that the U.S. invest in America to the tune of at least \$400 billion, that we re-regulate and shrink the financial industry, reform trade, continue with healthcare reform, pass the employee free choice act and defend the public sector. He gave explanations on each and it all made sense.

In my opinion, for his first convention, President Fred Rolando did an excellent job. This was the first convention where speakers at the microphones on the floor were shown on the big screens. When Toledo, Ohio had numerous resolutions about DOIS disapproved, Fred took the time from the convention to explain the NALC's position in detail so there would be no misunderstanding about the JARAP process and the use of DOIS information. Great job Fred! On Thursday of the convention, President Rolando entertained ideas on how to proceed on collective bargaining with the Postal Service. Fred threw out a few options to the body and asked for our input. The options were (1) Wait and See what happens with the APWU and Rural Carrier negotiations. (2) Joint Bargaining with the other crafts. (3) Explore early negotiations. There was explanation on each of these choices, discussion, and debate. In the end, the clear consensus was early negotiations. However, the body left the decision to our National Officers.

The convention ended on Friday with over 3500 delegates attending a rally for jobs in downtown Los Angeles in front of city hall. Before being bused to the event, we got a rousing speech from Richard Trumka, President of the AFL-CIO. As you all know, PMG Potter is all about cutting back service. We were there to rally against 5-day delivery, saving 1/6 of our workforce and all the jobs related to the mailing industry. Sometimes, you have to hit the streets to get your voice heard. And, we did! This was a good way to end the convention. Like I said, there was a lot going on at the convention. There were workshops, resolutions, legislation, amendments, speakers, videos, debates, and so on. It was fun, entertaining, educational, and business. Every member who attended got something out of it. We truly have a great and democratic Union. For more information on the convention, visit NALC.org.

Surprise Station Visits

I wanted to thank our District Manager Kerry Wolny for conducting station visits with me in two of our high grievance activity offices. In fact, it was Mr. Wolny's idea. We have two offices in our branch-Agoura Hills and Moorpark-that have low VOE scores and a high amount of grievance activity relative to their size.

Mr. Wolny and I arrived unannounced at both offices about a week apart. Mr. Wolny gave the employees a quick synopsis of the economic environment of the Postal Service and then asked the employees how it was to work in the office. My greatest disappointment would be if carriers would fail to speak up. I'm glad I was not let down. In both offices carriers spoke up and told us what they felt was wrong with the office. In Agoura Hills carriers felt that there was an abuse of authority,

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FIVE DAYS IN ANAHEIM

By Ray Hill, Executive Vice-President

During the week of August 9th through August 13th, I was privileged to represent Branch 2902 as one of our delegates to the NALC's 67th Biennial Convention.

The convention took place at the Anaheim Convention Center and was attended by 7,352 delegates representing 621 Branches from all of the 50 states, the District of Columbia and the 3 territories. Branch 2902 sent a total of 36 delegates (33 paid delegates, 3 unpaid delegates) to the convention.

It really is quite amazing to see such a large group of letter carriers packed into one gigantic convention hall, attending to the business of representing the membership of our respective Branches.

During the week of the convention, the NALC put on a variety of educational workshops that took place in the mornings before the convention and in the afternoons after the convention proceedings had concluded.

The morning workshops started at 7:30 AM and ended at 9:30 AM. The convention proceeding ran from 10:00 AM to 3:00 PM or later, depending on what business was being attended to that day. The afternoon workshops ran from 3:15 PM to 5:15 PM, unless the convention proceedings had been extended past 3:00 PM. On those days the convention went into "overtime", the workshops began 15 minutes after the convention ended and then ran for 2 hours.

Many of the NALC Workshops that were "taught" in the morning were also repeated in the afternoon for the delegates that may have attended a different workshop in the morning.

This allowed the delegates to attend most, if not all, of the workshops during the week of the convention.

One of the workshops that was of the most interest to me was the Contract Administration Unit (CAU) workshop where the members of the CAU presented a detailed briefing on several timely workplace issues affecting letter carriers. The CAU is made up of some of the NALC National Officers and headquarter's staff members that "police" the contract at the National Level.

The CAU is comprised of some of the NALC's "brightest minds" and their workshop was among the best that I attended during the convention week.

At the workshop, the CAU discussed recent National Arbitration Awards as well as regional grievances that are of national interest.

I attended the CAU workshop on Monday afternoon after the convention had gone overtime and had adjourned a little after 3:30 PM. The CAU workshop should have begun at 3:15

PM but instead did not start until close to 4:00 PM.

There was supposed to be a "Question and Answer" (Q and A) session at the conclusion of the workshop but due to the late start the workshop did not conclude until about 6:00 PM.

Therefore, the CAU did not entertain questions from the workshop floor microphones since it was already 45 minutes beyond the time that the workshop should have concluded. However, to their credit, all of the members of the CAU staff stuck around afterwards and answered any and all of the questions asked by those delegates, myself included, that had waited around after the workshop ended to ask the CAU specific questions.

I waited around after the workshop because I had a question regarding the "Contract Talk" article that was written in the Postal Record in April of 2009. The article was about FMLA and some of the changes in the FMLA law. At the conclusion of the Postal Record Article it was written that the NALC was updating the NALC Guide to the Family and Medical Leave Act and NALC FMLA Forms to reflect the new regulations. After the workshop I asked the CAU staffer about the status of the new FMLA forms and he advised me that the new forms had not yet been produced and that in the meantime the NALC's FMLA forms were still sufficient for FMLA approval.

There was also an informative workshop that probably created the greatest buzz amongst the delegates titled: "Zero Tolerance: Preventing Supervisor Theft of Work Hours". As you can probably tell by the title, this workshop was one of the most interesting ones taught during the convention week.

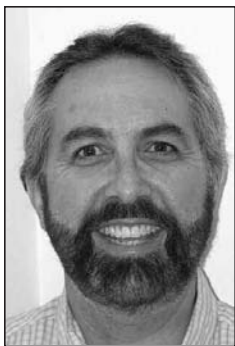
The main focus of this workshop was Management's evil practice of "altering" carrier's clock rings for the purpose of shortchanging the affected carrier on their pay and to "disallow" penalty overtime and other work hours the affected carrier was entitled to be paid.

I became an "expert" (yeah, right) on the subject of Management's alterations of carrier's clock rings back in early

2009 when it was discovered during the MIARAP process that a North Hollywood Manager had been altering carrier clock rings. At that time I learned a great deal about detecting how clock rings were altered, when clock rings were altered, and by whom clock rings were being altered.

"One of the workshops that was of the most interest to me was the Contract Administration Unit (CAU) workshop where the members of the CAU presented a detailed briefing on several timely workplace issues affecting letter carriers."

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ARE WE THERE YET?

By Paul Drapkin, Senior Vice President

As a parent you have heard it a million times from your kids, are we there yet? The question that becomes so annoying when on a journey in the car and the kids are so bored that it is their way of saying I have had enough of the ride. Well that is how I feel about the question, so when are you guys going to 5 day delivery? I don't know why, but at that moment I feel compelled to actually stop and explain to whomever is asking the question why 5 day delivery is so shortsighted on the part of the Postmaster General.

Yes the Postal Service is in trouble. You have heard it from every level. Everyone from the PMG, to your Postmaster, to your Supervisor, to the NALC and in the media has had their say. Not the first time. I have been in the Postal Service for 22 years and almost the entire time that I have been here I have heard that story.

I remember when Marvin Runyon was named PMG and everyone was freaking out about "Carvin Marvin" and all the job losses that were sure to follow. Looking back on those days I have to say that perhaps Carvin Marvin may have had it right. After all, he really did not eliminate craft jobs or even suggest cutting service in any way. He mostly attempted to eliminate the fat at the top of the food chain. Jobs which did not have a direct effect on the movement of the mail is what he went after. When he left, the Postal Service was still in fairly good shape. While it is true that the mail volume was not in the downward tailspin that it has been for the past several years, he had the right idea.

What I see about the era that we are in now is that it seems that those at the top of the food chain have become so arrogant that they feel a sense on entitlement no matter how they perform.

Real leadership starts at the top in the form of setting an example. That is why there really is no leadership in Washington. Nobody is willing to step forward and say, let me be the first to show what it is going to take for us to set this ship right.

The PMG and his Vice Presidents all still received their bonuses. Well over \$70,000 each. They all still receive their perks. They all still continue to live in an arrogant state of immunity to what they feel that the rest of us must sacrifice.

In a recent article that I read from PostalMag.com, it said that the Postal Service Headquarters staff has increased by 38% since 2000. According to the article, USPS Headquarters personnel went from 2279 employees in 2000 to 2924 employees in 2010. The Inspector General numbers are even more astounding. They went from 664 employees in 2000 to 1151 employees in 2010. Together they represent an increase of more than 38%. And I am sure that they all will tell you that they are overworked and underpaid. I find it incredible that while the number of overall employees in the Postal Service is shrinking, the number of management employees at the very top is grow-

ing. Let's see, more management to oversee fewer employees and less mail...yea, that makes sense!

In fact, according to the article, the only craft employees that did have a rise in percentage was the Rural Route Carrier craft. Why do you think that is? Because management has to pay them less than us so management has attempted to place as many new deliveries into the Rural Route craft as possible. Luckily the NALC has been able to put a stop to that...for now.

Wait until contract negotiations begin. EVERYTHING will be on the table. Rural vs. City vs. Contracting out, our share of medical payments vs. what or employer pays, Full-Time Carriers vs. PTF Carriers vs. T.E. Carriers, A/L, S/L etc...

Locally, in our own Sierra Coastal District, an entire new fleet of staff cars were purchased and new GPS units are being purchased and installed so that the overworked supervisors that we now have can do even less work. After all with GPS, there is no need to actually get off your ass and check on those lazy Carriers. All they have to do now is look at another computer screen in order to see that 99% of us are actually doing what the public expects...deliver the mail!

At the Woodland Hills level we have new Postmaster that is so far in over her head that she is not even able to insure that the front window is opened on time. On March 15th the front window opened about 15 minutes late because she and her Clerk supervisors cross crafts and do so much of the work themselves that they are unable to justify enough clerk hours which have been cut to the bone. Golly gee Ms. Postmaster, why would you be budgeted any more clerk hours when the clerks don't mind if you do their work for them!

The office is so screwed up that someone has actually sent Bob Swanson (imagine that) in just to observe where the problems lie. He did nothing but cause disruption to several carriers and in the end, except for one route change, admitted that the carrier was actually doing the job in the most efficient way. Again, imagine that. The carrier was doing the job as prescribed in the most efficient way!

WHY BELIEVE THEM?

I can not believe anything that management tells us. I believe that everything that is being said is just a set up for the next round of contract negotiations that are set to take place with the crafts that represent the backbone of the Postal Service.

I know that you may be saying, hey wait a minute, our contract does not expire until November 2011. We have a ways to go. That is true, but our sister unions such as the Rural Letter Carriers and the APWU will be going to bat THIS year, and I believe that it will not be pretty.

Management believes that if they cry hard enough to The Postal Rate Commission and Congress they will be able to convince them that if they could just have the ability to go to 5

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Postmaster vs. Routemaster

By Robbie Elsleh, Moorpark Alternate Shop Steward

A few weeks ago, a Postmaster, without asking for the carrier's workload estimation, told him that he has 20 minutes of under time for the day. The carrier replied by informing the PM that his

DPS volume was 850 some pieces over average, thus, he would not have the under time that he is being told he has. The PM replied by saying; that's only 6 extra minutes on the street, and you'll still have under time. So let's examine this for a bit. According to management, there's an average of 215 letter pieces in a foot, and 2 feet of letters in one tray. This means that the carrier has 2 extra trays for that day, and the 6 minutes generously given by the PM, translates to 3 minutes per tray. So I ask you, what is the complete process involved for delivering one extra tray of DPS letters? For this assessment, we are going to assume that this is a perfect world, and that all your trays are on 1 piece of equipment, and that all the trays are totally full.

First, you clock out to the street and proceed to the DPS staging area as normal. You begin by eyeing the tray labels for your first #A tray of delivery in a vertically stacked column of trays. You find the first tray 3 rows down and pull it out. You then carefully carry it and place it in your hamper and exam the first few and last few letters in the tray. You do this to ensure that you have the correct tray (it could have been mislabeled, or you could have two #A trays, etc.) and that no addresses are missing between the end of the first tray and the beginning of the 2nd tray. Once satisfied that you have the correct first tray, you leave it in your hamper and repeat the process for all remaining trays. Is 20-30 seconds per tray a fair time for this procedure? Remember, this is a perfect world scenario. I know that often times DPS trays for a single route are split between 2 pieces of equipment, and that they're out of order which causes you to alternate getting the #A tray and then the #B tray from 2 separate locations, not to mention that full trays might only be half full, or you might have those annoying mini half trays, and so on. In those instances, it could take 1 minute or more per tray, but for now, let's just say 30 seconds per tray is fair for this perfect world example.

Second, you proceed to your vehicle and have to load those DPS trays. You don't want to rush and topple any trays, so you safely and carefully pick them up from your hamper one at a time and place them in the vehicle where ever you normally place your DPS. How much time to pick up a single DPS tray from your hamper and securely put it in your vehicle? 5 seconds? Add that 5 seconds to the 30 seconds above and now were up to 35 seconds total.

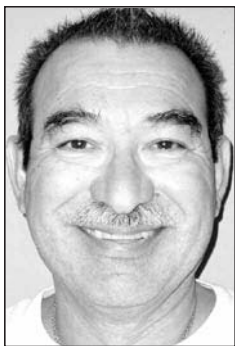
Third, you're out on your **non** park-n-loop Moorpark route delivering the mail and run out of DPS in the first tray, what do you do? I'll tell you what you do. You pull over, safely park following all safety procedures, remove your seatbelt, open the door, dismount with your empty tray in hand, go to where

ever you loaded your DPS (side or back door) and open the door. You get rid of your empty tray and retrieve your next full one, place the full tray on the tray shelf, close the side or back door, and walk back around the vehicle. You get back in to the driver's seat, close the driver door, put your seatbelt on, start the vehicle, and safely pull out of your park point following all safety procedures. What is a fair time for all this? 1 to 1? minutes? Remember, it's a perfect world, so let's just say 1 minute. Now we're up to a total time of 1 minute and 35 seconds, which only leaves 1 minute and 25 seconds per the PM's 3 minute calculation to deliver one tray of DPS (430 letters). 1 minute and 25 seconds translates into 85 seconds. If you take 85 seconds and divide it by 430 letters in the tray, you get .19th of a second per letter. This means that you will have to deliver 5.2 letters per second. Can you do that? Can you verify names and addresses and pull out forwards on 5.2 letters per second? Give me a break!

Look you guys. He might be the Postmaster, but you are the Routemaster. No one can better estimate how long the route will take on the street than the person who actually delivers it day in and day out. When you choose not to fill out a 3996 and to skip your break or shorten your lunch just to appease, your reward will be more deliveries added. When you choose to take unsafe shortcuts or forgo safety procedures, your rewards will be discipline when you get caught, get hurt or hurt someone else, and of course more deliveries added. When you choose to hold it rather than using a comfort stop to relieve yourself, your reward could be a bladder infection, kidney infection, and don't forget, more deliveries added. Ultimately, after you have single handedly saved the Postal Service by having chosen to do all the above and had more and more deliveries added, which made your PM extremely proud of you, guess what your next reward is? Your body starts to give out in one way or another. Your back? Your shoulder? Your knee? Your hip? Your bladder or kidney? Then finally, you go see your doctor, you get put on limited duty, and that's when your final big reward comes in. You get NRP'd and if you're lucky, you'll be given a job offer with 2 hours a day, 3 days a week, and told to take a hike.

All I can say is that; give a fair day's work for a fair day's pay. Don't jeopardize your health and safety or of the public's. There is no street time standard but the one you set for yourself. Follow all work and safety rules. Take your full lunch, street break, and comfort stops when needed. The routes belong to management, not carriers. You want to survive till retirement don't you? Let the PM scratch his head and figure out how to get the mail delivered. The M-39 Handbook Section 242.332 says: "No carrier shall be disciplined for failure to meet standards, except in cases of unsatisfactory effort which must be based on documented, unacceptable conduct that led to the carrier's failure to meet standards".

Till next time, be aware and informed, and don't let anyone tell you that you're not making standards...



A Health Plan for all (Open) Seasons

By Joe Gutierrez, Health Benefits Representative

ing giving out information on the NALC Health Plan. When I retired I assumed I would have a lot of free time to do as I wish, but it never happened. My two children decided to wait until I no longer worked to start having children, three to be exact. Then my beautiful wife decided to go back to work. As you have probably figured out I was the one chosen to baby sit our beautiful grandchildren, two boys and a girl. I am not complaining, just trying to explain why you don't see me at the meetings as often this year. Hopefully next year I'll be able to attend more often.

Soon we will have open season, please read the plans brochures and make the switch to NALC. You won't be disappointed. The plan is superior to most and the equal of all. I would just like to review a few of the benefits available to those of us who have chosen the NALC Health Benefit plan.

Some of us, due to the economy have either moved in with parents or they have moved in with us. Often we are taking care of an elderly spouse, parent or disabled dependant. The plan has a 24 hour 7 day a week phone number (877-468-1016) that we can use to get assistance in arranging Enhanced Eldercare Services. These calls are confidential and are of great use in arranging solutions for challenging situations. The plan pays for up to 6 free hours per calendar year.

Hello everyone. By the time you read this you will be getting information on open season. Usually I would be at a union meet-

Need help in quitting smoking? The Quit Power Program is designed to be healthy for yourself and your family. This is a voluntary program that gives you access to a Wellness Coach who can motivate and encourage you. When you sign up for the program you can qualify for an 8 week supply of over the counter nicotine gum therapy at no cost to you. To join, call (877) 784-8797 or visit www.nalc.org/depart/hbp.

Coverage is also available for prescription medications for smoking cessation under our prescription drug benefits. Keeping you and your family healthy is important to the health plan.

The NALC health plan website has links to the latest information about fitness, nutrition, prescription drugs and a wide range of health and medical information. These resources are sponsored by the plan and its business partners: CIGNA, CVS Caremark, and OptumHealth Behavioral Solutions.

In August I attended the health plan seminar at the National Convention I will report on any new information that I receive. Hopefully they will give us some insight on how the new health law will affect us.

With contract negotiations coming up it would be a great bargaining chip to show how Letter Carriers support the union health plan. If you have any questions about the plan, a call to our union officers can answer your questions. Most important you have me, your Health Benefits Representative available to help you with any questions or problems you may have, I don't know of any plan out there that can offer you that kind of service.

PRESIDENT'S REPORT...

Continued from page 2

the Postmaster not willing to deal with issues, attitude and personality problems, too much discipline for missing scans, and an unfairness in equally applying the rules. In Moorpark, carriers feared retaliation for speaking up about rude and disrespectful behavior in the office and over the phone when requesting overtime or auxiliary assistance. Carriers stated that they would rather skip their breaks or shorten their lunch than to call in and request time and get yelled at. (This also skewed their route times for JARAP evaluations.) It was pretty sad when we started the stand-up in Moorpark, the District Manager said, "Pull up your stools" and the carriers replied, "What stools?" I have done station visits in that office month after month and always figured that the stools were under the case. Let's see . . . the Postmaster has a chair, the Supervisor has a chair . . . but the employees have nothing to sit on. It was an awkward beginning to the stand-up to say the least (p.s. two weeks after the stand-up and after a threat to file a grievance we have stools in Moorpark). But, I digress.

I wanted to thank Mr. Wolny for taking an interest. I know

former District Managers Richard Ordonez and Virginia Tovar would have never cared to do such a thing. However, I think it's a poor reflection on the District Manager's MPOOs. Mike Martino and Vikki Noblitt should take a greater interest in their respective offices with high grievance activity and low VOE scores. I would be embarrassed to have my boss, do my job. What's the use of measuring and collecting data, if you are not going to do anything with it? Grievance activity and VOE scores are all indicators. Mr. Wolny found time out of his busy week to visit these offices and talk with his carriers and Managers; I know his MPOO's aren't that busy. If he could do it, I am sure they could have done it also. Let's just hope Mr. Wolny's visits made a difference.

GPS

At our last District President's Meeting in July, we were given a presentation on GPS by Ms. Kim Biehl. The GPS system used by the Postal Service was developed by an outside company and is used nationwide by many trucking companies. When Ms. Biehl first launched the system, the program showed an LLV in the water (the Pacific Ocean). The District Manager

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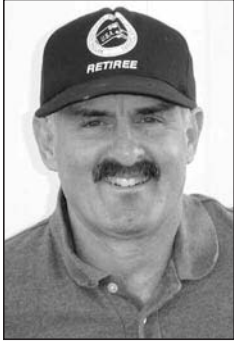


RETIREES CORNER

By Fred Shaw, Woodland Hills Retiree



Notes from the Convention Floor



JOBS – JOBS – JOBS! The word from the floor and the classrooms is six-day delivery, not five. This has to be our mantra going into the coming national elections and our next contract negotiations in 2011. If we give in on this the NALC could lose over 50,000 carriers and the USPS would save around 3 billion dollars. But this wrong-headed move could cost the USPS one

sixth of its 75 billion dollar gross revenue and grease a slippery slope leading to even fewer delivery days and more loss of mail volume. And UPS, FED EX, and others are waiting in the wings like vultures to pick up that lost volume and revenue. PMG Potter's shortsighted ideas could lead to the eventual demise of the Postal Service as we know it.

Fortunately for us, Congress is the only body that can dictate a change in days of delivery. House Resolution 173 speaks to that issue. The Postal Subcommittee has come out against 5 day delivery and 190+ Democrats (out of 258) have signed on as co-sponsors. Unfortunately, only 43 Republicans (out of approx. 160) have signed on. Once again the Republican House members seem intent on stonewalling whatever the Democratic majority favors. This makes our political action in conjunction with COLCPE contributions more important than ever. To this end our NALC Executive Council is asking carriers to get businesses to endorse Six day delivery through our Save Saturday Delivery Campaign. Your local Union officers have information on this.

The other elephant in the room is the 55 to 75 billion dollars that O.P.M. overcharged the CSRS retirement system before FERS. Based on a carrier's 1973 salary it split the cost of retiree health benefits – 80% USPS 20% Federal Government. Despite the fact that until we switched from U.S. Post Office to USPS we were on the federal payroll (OPM). Essentially the USPS was charged the Federal Governments bill. The USPS has been bleeding money for the last four years (5.3 billion per) to pay off future retiree benefits – thanks to a misguided decree by the Postal Regulatory Commission. We're the only business, public or pri-

vate to bear this burden – and we have to do it in ten years. We already have 35 billion in our retirement account and if we got the money OPM owes the USPS our future costs would be paid and we'd show a profit. In the House a resolution has been introduced (HR 5746) to direct OPM to correct this problem and return the money to the USPS. As of this writing 50+ Democrats have signed on as co-sponsors – 1 Republican. Sounds familiar, doesn't it?

This is where COLCPE and our feet on the ground make a difference. Write, call, discuss this whenever you get the chance. Let people know about HR 5746. If we get this overcharge corrected even PMG Potter has admitted there would be no need to suggest cutting to five day delivery.

Bear in mind that we need to fight for and protect our jobs. Look around at work. Very possibly the carrier to your left or right could be gone if the USPS goes to five day delivery. Or – if you're a junior carrier – it could be you!

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67Th Biennial Convention

By Chris Alessi, MBA/NSBA Representative

The 67th National Convention in Anaheim was President Fred Rolando's first convention as the 18th president of the NALC. My hat is off to him for running a very smooth convention and keeping every issue at hand under control with a good sense of humor. Brother Fred let every one speak who had questions or concerns about the business at hand. With confidence and knowledge he was able to set the direction of future negotiations with the will of the delegates that were present for our next contract in November of 2011. On Thursday August 12th, Brother Fred was elected President by acclamation for the next four years.

The main points of concern are to preserve the Postal Service and to maintain six day delivery. House Resolution 173 is not only for our jobs but for the good of our country. Giving more service to our customers and not less is the best way to keep the Postal Service viable.

Another great concern is to reform the pre-funding of future retiree health benefits to the tune of 5.6 billion per year. Over the next seven years that would cost the service 65 billion.

And lastly to urge all members and their families and customers to support House Resolution 5746, a bill that would cor-

rect a \$50 to \$75 billion overpayment to the U.S. Treasury by the USPS into the Civil Service Retirement Fund.

Some of the guest speakers that stood out in my mind that were invited to our convention were the President of the United Mine workers of America, Cecil Roberts, House Representative, Loretta Sanchez, President of the American Postal Workers Union, William Burrus, President of the National Rural Letter Carriers Association, Don Cantriel and President of the AFL-CIO, Richard Trumka. All gave very heart felt speeches of solidarity, compassion, and fighting the good fight of justice not only for Letter Carriers but for all working people.

On Friday August 13th (5,000) delegates took 65 buses to downtown L.A. and rallied for jobs with many other trade unions on the south lawn of the city hall. It was a great feeling to all come together to support great cause. The Mayor of L.A., Antonio Villaraigosa, and Senator Barbara Boxer to name just a few were there to support our fight.

In closing I want to say thank you to all our delegates who attended all the work shops and training sessions, it was truly a success thanks to all of you and our Branch 2902 Officers who worked so hard to make it all come together.

Take Care, And God Bless You, Chris

PRESIDENT'S REPORT...

Continued from page 6

said it looked like it was by Catalina. I told the DM to look closer; it looked like the LLV was off the coast of Cabo San Lucas in Mexico. Next, we were to be shown LLVs in Lancaster, but we ended up in North Hollywood. It was broad daylight, but the screen was dark. Looked like the LLV we were looking at was under a tree. But, seriously folks, when they had this thing up and running it was pretty remarkable what it could do.

If you have ever used Google Earth you know what I am talking about, and it has street view in real time. If you are coming to work every day, on time, and doing what you're supposed to be doing, this GPS program will validate it. If you are doing things wrong, you better stop and change any bad habits. This GPS program shows your vehicle as a circle. Picture a clock. When the circle is read from the 12-3 position, the LLV has been idle :15 minutes. When it's red from the 12-6 position, the LLV has been idle for :30 minutes and so on. The program can tell Management how many times you turned your engine off and on, how fast you are traveling, if you deviate and when, your current location, and a host of other factors. How much does it cost you say? \$14.99 a month after it's installed. Installation is about a couple hundred bucks. So, to wire all LLV's serving routes will cost the District about less than \$500,000 a year. Right now, we only have GPS in Oxnard and North Hollywood. GPS cannot be used solely for discipli-

nary purposes and they must notify you if it's installed in your vehicle. To be forewarned is to be forearmed.

\$\$2Burn

This latest round of NRP grievances has been a big waste of money. I was part of an NRP grievance arbitration out of Port Hueneme. I was supposed to be there to testify on behalf of a carrier who was put out of work in the spring of 2009. When I got there, I noticed the Arbitrator, two Labor Specialists (Donato & Laird), two other Management witnesses, a Union witness, the Postmaster, our advocate (Miller) and myself. Before the arbitration even got started, Management rolled over and capitulated. What a waste of time and money! The Postal Service was on the hook for all the salaries, the Postal Service and the Union also had to split the cost of the arbitrator, the NALC had to pick up the cost of the advocate, and the Branch had to cover my time. Next time the Postal Service says their broke and can't make salary or pay a decent wage, I am not believing it. Why? Because, they have shown me that they have money to burn!

Legislation

In this current economic situation, political environment, and upcoming contract negotiations, we have to pay special attention to legislation. If you don't think legislation is important, ponder recent legislation introduced by Congressman Chaffetz (R-UT). Chaffetz submitted HR 5919, which would grant the Postmaster General the authority to implement up to 12 non-

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PRESIDENT'S REPORT...

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delivery days each fiscal year for the United States Postal Service. What does this mean? It means furlough days. Basically, if a bill like this passes, the PMG could have us sit at home 12 days each fiscal year without pay. That would wipe out our 10 paid holidays and put us in the hole an extra 2 days. Luckily, the bill has no co-sponsors at this time. However, beware how bad things can happen to us by the stroke of the legislative pen. If you don't believe me, look up the bill on line and read it for yourself.

What we should be supporting is H. Res. 173 to save six-day delivery and H.R. 5746 to properly calculate the CSRS overpayment and transfer the funds to the Postal Retiree Health Benefit Fund. These are legislative issues we need to support. If you haven't already, please contact your member of Congress and ask them to support H. Res. 173 and H.R. 5746. We can't wait for the other member to write this letter. We have to take action and do it ourselves. If you don't think legislation and elections matter, take a look at what OSHA is doing to the

Postal Service. For many years, especially under the Bush administration, OSHA would not fine or act against employers for health and safety violations. Since we have changed administrations, and have a labor friendly President in office, the health and safety standards are being properly enforced. The Postal Service has been out of compliance for years, but since no action was taken against them for an 8-year period they figure its business as usual. However, now they are paying the price for their complacency and now finally the hazards are being addressed. This is just an example of how elections make a difference.

Remember to vote on November 2nd. Our vote makes a difference. There is a price to pay if you fail to do so. Vote the labor friendly, family friendly, consumer friendly, postal friendly candidates. There's no good excuse not to vote. You can always vote by mail. If you haven't registered to vote, please register today. If you have moved, please register today. If your child just turned 18 years old or if they are not registered get them to register and tell them why and how they should vote. In short, vote! All for now back in two.

ARE WE THERE YET?...

Continued from page 4

day delivery, and close enough Post Offices, and cut labor costs (in other words, provide less service) then we will be able to turn a profit again. But I have yet to hear any one of them say that they will step forward and take a pay cut, or eliminate staff at the headquarters level as an example of the sacrifices that they will expect the rest of us to take when our contract negotiations begin.

In an interview on C-SPAN, Postal Rate Commission (PRC) Chairman Ruth Goldway made it very clear that the Postal Service idea to cut delivery to 5 days a week is merely a request, not a decision. Goldway reemphasized the point that the PMG must come before the PRC to plead his case and only after the commission had determined that the request still meets the standards of universal service can they make a recommenda-

tion about what the Postal Service is requesting. Ms. Goldway also was clear about the fact that before they make the recommendation they will need to hear from the public about their thoughts on the subject.

This is where you and I come in. When you have a moment, write to your representatives in Washington. Get your family and friends to drop them a note also. Unless our elected officials hear from us they will not know how we feel on this subject. Our livelihoods and our way of life depend on it.

The Postal Service can be returned to the greatness that it once had. However cutting the only thing that we have to sell (service) is not the way. Yes things will have to change but that change must start at the top and in my never to be humble opinion the guys at the top do not have the guts or the foresight to take us there. When we do get those leaders please wake me up and let me know if we are there yet!



Pictured to the left are your 2010 Branch 2902 National Convention Delegates. These delegates work very hard to insure that the branch is well represented and that your voice is heard. Branch 2902 thanks each and every delegate for their commitment and dedication during a very busy week. We are proud that each and every one of them takes their responsibility very seriously.

FIVE DAYS IN ANAHEIM...

Continued from page 3

In the North Hollywood case the Manager was not altering the carrier's clock rings in order to steal work hours from the affected carriers. Instead, he was altering the clock rings to make it appear that carriers were back in the office or performing collection duties before 5:00 PM when in reality they were still on the street delivering mail. As written above, this devious practice was discovered during the MIARAP process and ultimately led to a full scale investigation that uncovered some underhanded clock ring alterations taking place in North Hollywood.

This NALC workshop was well taught and drew so much interest from the delegates that an additional workshop had to be scheduled in order to accommodate all of the delegates that wanted to attend. All of the delegates were eager to learn how to decipher clock ring print outs in order to prevent Management from altering them for devious, evil purposes.

There was also an excellent workshop on NRP, taught by NALC's OWCP expert, Ron "Doc" Watson, who has been at the forefront of the NALC's battle against the USPS's mistreatment of injured letter carriers under the guise of the NRP.

Ron Watson helped train the NALC's Arbitration Advocates that are handling NRP cases and to date NALC has won the overwhelming majority of the NRP cases that have been arbitrated. At the workshop, Ron gave a detailed history of NRP and gave the delegates in attendance some excellent tips on how to properly handle NRP grievances.

Ron Watson has helped both President Salazar and myself in dealing with some extremely complex OWCP issues involving members of Branch 2902. We are all very fortunate that Ron came out of retirement to help the NALC effectively deal with the war we are currently waging with the USPS over their mis-application of NRP.

The NALC workshops were well attended by Branch 2902's delegates throughout the convention week and I'm very proud of the professional manner in which our delegates represented the Branch 2902 membership at the convention. It was a really busy week and all of Branch 2902's delegates gained much needed knowledge to help us better represent the Letter Carriers of Branch 2902.

If you are interested in reading more about the convention, as well you should be, you can do so at the NALC's web site at nalc.org. Click on "NALC Convention" where you can read the Convention Chronicles, which give a day by day synopsis of the convention proceedings. You can also look at a whole bunch of photos taken by NALC photographers at the convention.

I would like to congratulate Fred Rolando on his election by acclamation to the position of President of the NALC. Fred really is the right man for the job and he will certainly have his work cut out for him when he and the other National Officers attempt to negotiate a contract for us after our current contract expires in November of 2011.

Likewise, congratulations and best wishes are in order for Manny Peralta, our current National Business Agent (NBA) and a long time friend of Branch 2902.

At the Convention Manny was elected to the position of NALC National Director of Safety and Health and he will be moving to NALC Headquarters in Washington DC after his installation in December.

I would also like to extend my congratulations to our newly elected NBA, Chris (Captain Jack) Jackson. Chris is also a friend of Branch 2902 and we wish him all the best as our NBA elect.

Yo've got some big shoes to fill Chris but we are confident that you will be up to the task.

Lastly, best wishes to Branch 1100's retiring President, Charlie Miller. Charlie has been the advocate for a few of Branch 2902's NRP arbitrations and he has done an outstanding job. Enjoy your retirement Charlie and as Mike Sexton says "may all your cards be live and all your pots be monsters". Yeah, Charlie likes to play no limit Texas Hold-em.

The Dodgers have one hell of a big mountain to climb as they are 5 games behind in the Wild Card race with 4 teams ahead of them and 34 games left to play. But it ain't over till it's over, right Yogi? It really is a long shot, but I've always enjoyed betting on long shots. We shall see what happens. Talk to you all in two months.

Save the Date

NALC & MDA

2nd Annual

Deliver the Cure

Bowl-A-Thon

Sunday, Nov. 7, 2010

Watch bulletin boards for
details to sign up
or see your Shop Steward

CSALC 2010 General Election Endorsements

The California State Association of Letter Carriers Executive Board voted on Friday, August 27, 2010 to accept the following endorsements for the Tuesday, November 2nd General Election.

As our ongoing fight to preserve 6-day delivery continues we

must encourage every member and their families to vote, **preferably by mail**, for candidates who will protect our jobs and the future of the Postal Service. **Please mail in your ballots or go to the polls on Tuesday, November 2nd.**

Governor - Jerry Brown (D)

Lieutenant Governor - Gavin Newsom (D)

Attorney General - Kamala Harris (D)

Secretary of State Debra Bowen (D)

Treasurer Bill Lockyer (D)

Controller John Chiang (D)

Superintendent of Public Instruction Tom Torlakson (D)

Insurance Commissioner - Dave Jones (D)

BOARD OF EQUALIZATION

District 1 Betty Yee (D)

District 2 Chris Parker (D)

District 3 No Endorsement

District 4 Jerome Horton (D)

United States Senator - Barbara Boxer (D)

United States Representatives in Congress

1 Mike Thompson (D)	28 Howard Berman (D)
2 No Endorsement	29 Adam Schiff (D)
3 Ami Bera (D)	30 Henry Waxman (D)
4 No Endorsement	31 Xavier Becerra (D)
5 Doris Matsui (D)	32 Judy Chu (D)
6 Lynn Woolsey (D)	33 Karen Bass (D)
7 George Miller (D)	34 Lucille Roybal-Allard (D)
8 Nancy Pelosi (D)	35 Maxine Waters (D)
9 Barbara Lee (D)	36 Jane Harman (D)
10 John Garamendi (D)	37 Laura Richardson (D)
11 Jerry McNerney (D)	38 Grace Napolitano (D)
12 Jackie Speier (D)	39 Linda Sanchez (D)
13 Pete Stark (D)	40 Christina Avalos (D)
14 Anna Eshoo (D)	41 Jerry Lewis (R)
15 Mike Honda (D)	42 No Endorsement
16 Zoe Lofgren (D)	43 Joe Baca (D)
17 Sam Farr (D)	44 Ken Calvert (R)
18 Dennis Cardoza (D)	45 Steve Pougnet (D)
19 No Endorsement	46 No Endorsement
20 Jim Costa (D)	47 Loretta Sanchez (D)
21 No Endorsement	48 Beth Krom (D)
22 No Endorsement	49 Darrell Issa (R)
23 Lois Capps (D)	50 No Endorsement
24 Tim Allison (D)	51 Bob Filner (D)
25 No Endorsement	52 No Endorsement
26 Russ Warner (D)	53 Susan Davis (D)
27 Brad Sherman (D)	

California State Senate

2 Noreen Evans (D)	22 Kevin de Leon (D)
6 Darrell Steinberg (D)	24 Ed Hernandez (D)
8 Leland Yee (D)	26 Curren Price (D)
10 Ellen Corbett (D)	28 Jenny Oropeza (D)
12 Anna Caballero (D)	32 Gloria Negrete McLeod (D)
16 Michael Rubio (D)	34 Lou Correa (D)
20 Alex Padilla (D)	40 Juan Vargas (D)

California State Assembly

1 Wes Chesbro (D)	40 Bob Blumenfield (D)
6 Jared Huffman (D)	41 Julia Brownley (D)
7 Michael Allen (D)	42 Mike Feuer (D)
8 Mariko Yamada (D)	43 Mike Gatto (D)
9 Roger Dickinson (D)	44 Anthony Portantino (D)
10 Alyson Huber (D)	45 Gil Cedillo (D)
11 Susan Bonilla (D)	46 John A. Pérez (D)
12 Fiona Ma (D)	47 Holly Mitchell (D)
13 Tom Ammiano (D)	48 Mike Davis (D)
14 Nancy Skinner (D)	49 Mike Eng (D)
15 Joan Buchanan	50 Ricardo Lara (D)
16 Sandre Swanson (D)	51 Steven Bradford (D)
17 Cathleen Galgiani (D)	52 Isadore Hall (D)
18 Mary Hayashi (D)	53 Betsy Butler (D)
19 Jerry Hill (D)	54 Bonnie Lowenthal (D)
20 Bob Wieckowski (D)	55 Warren Furutani (D)
21 Rich Gordon (D)	56 Tony Mendoza (D)
22 Paul Fong (D)	57 Roger Hernandez (D)
23 Nora Campos (D)	58 Charles Calderon (D)
24 Jim Beall (D)	61 Norma Torres (D)
27 Bill Monning (D)	62 Wilmer Amina Carter (D)
28 Luis Alejo (D)	65 Carl Wood (D)
31 Henry Perea (D)	68 Phu Nguyen (D)
33 Hilda Zacarias (D)	69 Jose Solorio (D)
35 Das Williams (D)	72 Esiquio Uballe (D)
36 Linda Jones (D)	76 Toni Atkins (D)
37 Jeff Gorell (R)	78 Marty Block (D)
38 Diana Shaw (D)	79 Ben Hueso (D)
39 Felipe Fuentes (D)	80 Manuel Perez

Ballot Measures

Proposition 20

Redistrict Congressional Districts

Recommend: Vote **NO**

Proposition 27

Eliminate Commission on Redistricting

Recommend: Vote **YES**

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- Individual Retirement Accounts
- Money Market Accounts
- Share Certificate Accounts
- Share Draft/Checking Accounts
- Regular Share/Savings Accounts
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The Mail Bag News is the official publication of Tri-Valley Branch 2902 (Chatsworth, California) of the National Association of Letter Carriers. All opinions expressed are those of the individual author(s) and do not necessarily reflect the opinions of the NALC or its officers. The Mail Bag News welcomes articles and letters to the editor; however the editorial staff of the Mail Bag News assumes complete authority to decide which letters are presented for publication. Anonymous articles are not accepted. Permission is hereby granted to re-print articles. We just ask that you give the author and the publication appropriate credit.



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RETIREES LUNCH **RAFFLE AT 12:30**

Where: Hometown Buffet
Vons Center
1855 Cochran Street
Simi Valley

When: Thursday,
October 21, 2010

Time: 11:00am to 1:00pm



Where: Hometown Buffet
Fallbrook Mall
6633 Fallbrook Ave.
West Hills

When: Thursday,
November 18, 2010

Time: 11:00am to 1:00pm



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In every age “the good old days” were a myth. ...For every age consisted of crisis that seemed intolerable to the people who lived through them.

*—Brooks Atkinson, 1894-1984
“Once around the sun,” 1951*

SHOP STEWARD LIST

Agoura Hills Chief S.S.	Greg Gaddis
Chatsworth Chief S.S.	Angel Hale
Fillmore Chief S.S.	Call Office
Moorpark Chief S.S.	Lori Stewart
Alternate	Robbie Elsaleh
North Hollywood Chief S.S.	Steve Leyton
	Louie Rodriguez
Chandler	Greg Gaddis
Laurel Canyon	Steve Leyton
Studio City	Greg Gaddis
Valley Village	Steve Leyton
Northridge Chief S.S.	Onofre Varela
Shop Steward/ Webmaster	Larry Orcutt
Porter Ranch Alternate	Larry Orcutt
Ojai Chief S.S.	Kurt Whitesell
Oxnard Chief S.S.	Philip Navarro
Pacoima Chief S.S.	Ernestine Hernandez
Alternate	Steve Dickerson
Alternate	Frankie Mercado
Alternate	Rocio Fraire
Port Hueneme Chief S.S.	Lorie Moore
Reseda Chief S.S.	Kathi Albritten
San Fernando Chief S.S.	Ray Hill
M.C.A.	James Perryman
North Hills	James Perryman
Sylmar / Main Office	C.C. Flatts
Santa Paula Chief S.S.	James Perryman
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	Robbie Elsaleh
Mt. McCoy Station	Sandra Gaunce
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RECREATION NEWS

SEA WORLD:

Adults: \$56.00 (Gate price \$69.00)

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At the monthly meetings (every third Tuesday of the month) coupons and flyers for various venues are available.

My famous homemade oatmeal chocolate chip cookies are 4 for \$1.00.

PAULETTE DYER

THE MAIL BAG NEWS

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Will be serving

DINNER

At the September
Union Meeting

DINNER starts at 6pm

CALENDAR OF EVENTS

- SEP 21** Regular Branch Meeting 7pm
Union Hall-Chatsworth
Dinner served 6 pm
- OCT 5** Executive Board Meeting 6pm
Executive Council Meeting 7pm
- OCT 11** Columbus Day-Holiday 
- OCT 19** Regular Branch Meeting 7pm
Garden Palm Hotel-Newbury Park
- OCT 21** Retiree Lunch 11:00am
Hometown Buffet-West Hills
- OCT 31** Halloween 
- NOV 2** Executive Board Meeting 6pm
Executive Council Meeting 7pm
Election Day
- NOV 7** **NALC-MDA Bowl-A-Thon**
Daylight Savings Time ends 
- NOV 11** Veterans Day-Holiday 
- NOV 16** Regular Branch Meeting 7pm
Union Hall-Chatsworth
Dinner served 6 pm
- NOV 18** Retiree Lunch 11:00am
Hometown Buffet-Simi Valley

The AIDS walk
Los Angeles
is coming up
Sunday, October 17th.



The USPS is a Corporate sponsor and encourages all members to participate by either walking or sponsoring someone on the 10 Kilometer walk! In Hollywood starting at 10 a.m.

David Hyman of North Hills
(818) 893-8613 will be walking in case you'd like to sponsor a Branch 2902 member.

For walk forms or more info call
(213) 201-WALK or visit their web site at
www.aidswalk.net



THE Mail Bag NEWS

- ★ SOLIDARITY
- ★ EDUCATION
- ★ ORGANIZATION



OFFICIAL PUBLICATION OF TRI-VALLEY BRANCH 2902,
NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF LETTER CARRIERS AFL-CIO

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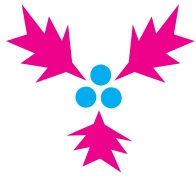
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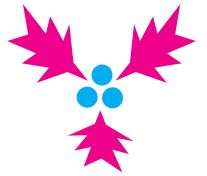
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Happy Holidays



Our Branch leadership recently attended a California State Association of Letter Carriers/Region #1 Leadership Conference in Sacramento where branches across California, Nevada, and Hawaii gathered together to discuss problems in our respective areas. At the conference, George C. Mignosi, Vice President of the NALC was in attendance and he spoke about what was happening at the National level.

During his talk, Brother Mignosi made reference to the phrase "fat vs. muscle" in describing Supervision as contrasted with Letter Carriers. While I can't remember word for word everything Brother Mignosi described, I got the message. Management is the fat and Letter Carriers are the muscle! So I got to thinking about fat vs. muscle.

When times get tough with the Postal Service, you cut fat not muscle. The strength of the Postal Service is its distribution and delivery system. We go to millions of delivery points every day, day in and day out, month after month, year after year, decade after decade, century after century . . . you get the picture. Our strength is our first and last mile.

Now in order for our system to work, the USPS needs more muscle than fat. Don't get me wrong, we need a little fat but not much. The Letter Carrier craft is what makes the Postal



Service go. We are the face of the Postal Service. We are the employees that the public sees every day and trusts. We are at the public's homes, in their neighborhoods, towns, cities, and businesses 6-days a week. So, why does the Postal Service keep so much fat around?

We don't need a lot of Supervision (fat), because we have lots of electronic tools to show where Carriers (muscle) are. We have GPS, MSP, and DelCon scans to let the fat know where we are at by leaving a data trail of dates, times, and locations. If this is true, we don't need more Managers and Supervisors. Brother Mignosi stated that "Managers should thank us Carriers for coming to work everyday and doing a good job, because we provide the Managers and Supervisors with a job to do." So, if fat means something in excess. And, if fat

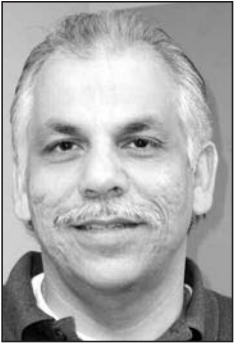
(Management) doesn't produce a product or service, why does fat treat muscle so badly (Letter Carriers). If muscle means effective strength, and strength is needed to move our company's products and services, and muscle equates to vitality and vigor why hurt the muscle?

I might have lost some of you on this analogy, but I am starting to see a trend I don't like in the Postal Service. I've just hit 25 years in the Postal Service, which is not very many com-

continued on page 2

PRESIDENT'S REPORT...

Continued from page 1



pared to some of you vets with 30 or 40+ years of service. However, I've been fighting and working with Management since I got off probation. I've always had a target on my back, but so be it, that is the path I chose. However, the majority of you chose steady employment and a paycheck with benefits. You didn't sign up for anger, fear, frustration, and hostility. And, this is the trend I am starting to see again.

When I first started with the Postal Service there was no Joint Statement of Violence and Behavior in the Workplace and it was before the term "Going Postal" was coined. The Postal Service was run in a very autocratic, it's my way or the highway, militaristic approach. Over the years, the NALC and the APWU had started to weed out the abusers to the point that the really obnoxious ones have left, retired, or moved on (which is a real shame). But, what I see is a new crop of manager coming up with no respect for the craft or the contract, ill trained, and poorly managed by their immediate superiors.

Many of us Letter Carriers are fathers, mothers, sisters, brothers, uncles, aunts, cousins, nephews, and even grandfathers and grandmothers. Would you want some punk 20 or early 30 something 204b/Supervisor threatening, harassing, bullying or yelling at your mom or dad, grandmother or grandfather? Hell, no . . . and you shouldn't either! If you haven't figured it out yet, the Service is becoming more data driven every year and current performance is always compared to the same period last year (SPLY). Times are tough for the Postal Service, so there is more and more pressure for Supervisors to meet their budget goals. However, per the Joint Statement of Violence and Behavior in the Workplace, *"Making the numbers" is not an excuse for the abuse of anyone*.

We know that Managers come around in the morning and state that "You don't need a 3996". "You don't need overtime or auxiliary assistance." "You have undertime. How much of a swing do you want to carry?" Or, "You'll be alright." We know you have managers that will refuse to give you a 3996, argue with you in the office, threaten to follow you on the street, or yell at you when you call from the street. We know that some Managers will try to make things up about you to get you in trouble or attempt to retaliate against you when you file a grievance or talk to the Union by cutting your hours, denying overtime, or refusing you spot or annual leave. We have seen this movie before. But, if you do nothing, nothing will change.

"Every postal employee has the right to perform his or her assigned duties in an atmosphere free of threats, assaults and other acts of workplace violence. The Sierra Coastal Performance Cluster is committed in the effort to assure a safe working environment for all employees."

I have had Carriers tell me that they have skipped their break and cut their lunch, just so they didn't have to call in and get yelled at by their Supervisor or Postmaster. I've had Carriers tell me they have urinated in a bottle just so they didn't have to take the time to drive to a bathroom and then have to call in to request more time and go through the harassment. I've had Carriers in tears tell me about the daily harassment over DOIS. Just remember, DOIS is a Management tool. DOIS is not gospel. You are on the route everyday, you know how much time you need. Don't be intimidated in cutting your estimate. The 3996 is not a negotiation process. It's a request for overtime or auxiliary assistance where Management either says yes or no. Management can ask you questions about your reasons for overtime or auxiliary assistance and they can give you instructions, but no where in the handbooks and manuals does it state that you have to negotiate. And, if you decide to negotiate, why not negotiate up instead of down?

What I am trying to say in all this, is that you do not have to work in fear under threat of discipline or removal. Per a Policy Statement-Permanent Posting signed by our current District Manager, *Every postal employee has the right to perform his or her assigned duties in an atmosphere free of threats, assaults and other acts of workplace violence. The Sierra Coastal Performance Cluster is committed in the effort to assure a safe working environment for all employees.* In our current Work Rules and Rules of Conduct, *All employees are to be Courteous and Professional at all times, and employees with customer contact must be especially mindful. Additionally, all employees are to maintain an atmosphere of mutual respect.* In a memorandum for all employees from our former District Manager Virginia Tovar, . . . *we have a zero tolerance policy for inappropriate workplace behaviors . . . Anyone engaging in inappropriate use of language (insults, name calling and put downs) within the workplace is in violation of our zero tolerance policy.* Lastly, under the Voice of the Employee-Workplace Relationships former PMG Runyon agreed that employees must be treated with dignity and respect. *To the extent that any manager or supervisor cannot treat employees consistent with this philosophy, appropriate counseling should be conducted followed by relevant training as necessary. If the manager or supervisor does not accept training or is not successful other appropriate corrective action should be considered.* This was written over 12 years ago and is still applicable and has been used against abusive Supervisors.

All I am saying is that you should not be subject to a hostile work environment. We may have disagreements about our workload, or office and street times on any given day, but we should not be harassed, threatened, bullied, yelled at or forced to work off the clock or to skip our lunches and breaks. We have avenues to stop this type of behavior early rather than later. Don't let this kind of abuse go unchecked. All for now back in two.



BRILLIANT!!!

By Ray Hill, Executive Vice-President

As every Letter Carrier knows, Holiday Weeks are always the most difficult weeks of the year to carry mail. The very **worst** of these difficult Holiday Weeks is the week of the Columbus Day Holiday.

This year, with all the political mailings being sent out in advance of the contentious elections taking place in November, the Columbus Day Holiday Week was truly as bad as it gets. However, once again, as usual, you Letter Carriers sucked it up, toughed it out and got the mail delivered. Kudos to you all!

The Postal Service, however, made what I would have to describe as an extraordinarily dumb-ass move, even by USPS standards. The Postal Service picked the Columbus Day Holiday week to send out a mass mailing, presumably to every address in America. I got mine at home on Thursday of the Columbus Day Holiday Week. Here in Chatsworth, where the Branch Office is located, the Carriers had to case and deliver this mailing on Tuesday, the day after the Holiday!

This mailing was printed on "slick" glossy paper, folded into 3 parts. It was apparently not "DPS compatible" and the Carriers had to case it or carry it as a separate bundle. The mailing had a message from Jack Potter ("Old Jack Potter" as Frank likes to call him) and Guy J. Cottrell, Chief Postal Inspector and asked the question, "Do you know the warning signs of Fraud?" I didn't just fall off the turnip truck and yes, I do know the warning signs of Fraud.

I also know the warning signs of dumb-ass stupidity and the mailing of a "non DPS compatible" coverage going to every address in America the week of the Columbus Day Holiday really was stupid. Also, can someone please tell me why the USPS does not take advantage of its own technology and send out only mailings that can be run through the DPS? That's a rhetorical question, by the way, since we all know the answer. All together now...BRILLIANT!!!

The mailing itself was not a bad thing and I no doubt would have found its message much more palpable had the timing of the mailing been different and had the mailing been DPS compatible. C'mon, Old Jack! Wake Up!

I can't wait to see the Flash Reports to check the overtime percentages for Branch 2902 Offices during the Columbus Day Holiday Week. Once again, all together now...BRILLIANT!!!

On another topic, a couple of weeks ago I was talking to a North Hollywood Letter Carrier about the route adjustment and territorial transfer that he had received during the recent MIARAP adjustments. This Carrier was complaining to me about one particular street that had been transferred to his route and he expressed what I would term as disgust when talking about the conditions of the apartment deliveries that he had "inherited".

Apartment mailboxes were either not locked or had broken locks, there were no Apartment directories and there were no names on the mailboxes.

Talking to this disgusted carrier got me thinking about a situation that I had encountered when I bid onto "my" route at LCCA back in 1988. At that time, I was on the 12 hour Overtime Desired List (yeah, I too like money) and one day I was given some apartment deliveries to carry on Fulton street in the 91605 unit. It was "check day" and I had a lot of government checks cased in with the letter mail. I pulled up to the first apartment building on Fulton, parked the vehicle and went in to deliver the mail. This was a large apartment building and the first thing that I noticed was that there were only a few names on the mailboxes and there was no directory listing the apartments and the names of the tenants. When I opened the first gang box lock I was surprised to see **at least** half of the mail boxes swing wide open because they were either unlocked or the locks were broken. I started to attempt delivery of the mail and I delivered the mail to the boxes that were locked and had names on them. However, if the boxes were unlocked I annotated "box not locked" and brought the mail for that apartment unit back. I ended up bringing back most of the mail for that building, including a whole lot of government checks.

The rest of Fulton street wasn't much better, but at least the buildings were smaller. I probably returned 200 government checks to the office that day because the apartment boxes were either unlocked or the locks were broken.

The next day the regular on the route asked me why I had brought back so much mail, especially all of the checks that I had brought back. She said that her patrons were going to be mad not getting their checks on time. I replied that I brought back the mail because the boxes were unlocked or the locks were broken and that it was against USPS regulations to deliver mail into unlocked apartment boxes.

This carrier was angry with me because I had brought so much mail back and she told me that she always delivered all of the mail, whether the boxes were locked or not. I couldn't believe it. By the way, this Carrier resigned from the Postal Service back in 1990, so no names need to be changed to protect those guilty of sloppy delivery practices.

The following excerpt regarding delivery to apartments is taken from the M-41 Handbook, which should be at every Carrier's case in their route book. Section 341 discusses "Notice 11" which is supposed to be placed in the mail boxes of new tenants in an apartment building.

Section 341 reads as follows:

341 Notice 11 — Information for Apartment House Customers

This notice shall be placed in apartment house letter boxes for customers who have moved into the building.

Did you read that? M-41 Section 341 says that Notice 11 "shall be placed in apartment letter boxes for customers who have moved into the building".

continued on page 12



Is it Ignorance or Apathy?

By Susan Degenhardt, Branch 2902 Recording Secretary

At the last union meeting COLCPE Director Ernestine Hernandez gave her report outlining the number of 2902 members who have signed up to donate to COLCPE. The numbers for the branch are dismal. I was reminded of the old "Man On the Street Interview".

Question: What do you think is worse, ignorance or apathy?

Answer: I don't know and I don't care.

What is your reason for not donating to COLCPE?

Why in the world would Carriers not contribute a measly \$5.00 per pay period to help insure their jobs? Are they aware that the other delivery businesses are spending billions of dollars to try to get their hands into America's mailboxes?

Yes, I know that lobbying has its ugly side, however, it is the only game in town right now and we cannot play if we don't show up with a ball. It takes money my friends, lots of money. Like it or not.

The money has to come from you. Union dues cannot be used for political reasons. That is the law. The money from COLCPE is used to finance trips to Washington where your Union brothers and sisters talk to representatives about Letter Carrier issues. Your Union brothers and sisters are willing to give up precious time with their families to speak for you. The money is used to help Senators and Congressmen/Congresswomen who are supportive of Letter Carrier issues get elected. The money is used to benefit you. Capitol Hill is

where the fate of the Postal Service is discussed, debated and voted on. Current legislative issues involving the pre-funding of the future retiree health care, and the overpayments into the CSRS and FERS funds involve **you**. If these overpayments are not fixed correctly by the powers on Capitol Hill, guess who suffers the consequences? That's right, **you**.

Oh yeah, and then there is that good old boy/boss of ours, PMG Potter up there spouting off about the need to go to 5 day delivery. His short sightedness would be the first nail in the Postal Service's coffin. As Sister Hernandez reported to us, once the 6-day delivery mandate is repealed, it is not replaced with another mandate. Not 5-day, or 4-day, or even 3-day delivery. Once it's gone, it's gone forever. No more mandate.

If the Postal Service folds, where will you apply for work? Not too many union jobs are left out there. What will happen to your health benefits, retirement plan, or for that matter, your home?

Enough already with the gloom and doom you say. Okay. Hope springs eternal they say, but it is going to take more than hope this time. It's going to take action from the members, yeah **you**. We have a form to help you sign up to donate to COLCPE. If you cannot afford \$5.00 per pay period, then contribute what you can. It's your job, your future.

At the National Convention in Anaheim this last August, branches from across the country were recognized for their COLCPE donations. Some branches actually had 100% of their members contributing. How did they accomplish that? How did they get each of their members to participate?

This is the time and the place to make our stand. We must make our voices heard by those who will sign the legislation that can save the Postal Service from imploding.

So, the question remains, ignorance or apathy? I find it hard to believe that it could be either. Our members are generally well informed, educated and you do care. We make a decent wage, have good benefits and we want to continue with that, right? Together, we as union brothers and sisters must put our money where our mouths are...literally. So whaddya say?

Economists tell us, and it is evident, that the middle class is eroding. Draw the line in the sand here, brothers and sisters. This is probably one of the best middle class jobs in the world. Let's save it for the next generation of Letter Carriers, like the previous generation saved it for us. Remember hearing about the Postal Strike of 1970? Those brave souls put it all on the line. They were even threatened with jail time. What is that when compared to donating \$5.00 every pay period? This is a call to arms, a challenge to all who care, to sign up today! Call the office or Ernestine Hernandez. We can and will show them that Letter Carriers are neither ignorant nor apathetic.



Pictured above from L-R are Larry Orcutt and President Frank Salazar both receiving their 25 year membership pins, and Don Melton, who received his 40 year membership pin. Thanks for all your support throughout the years.



CONTRACT WILD FIRES WHO'S PUTTING THEM OUT?

By Ernestine Hernandez, Vice President

Keeping on top of the contract violations in our office takes a lot of time and effort from all of us, and I really have to thank all the

Carriers who are helping me achieve this by the auxiliary assistance they provide on my route. I know it gets difficult at times for you and for me, but being the only Steward in the office of our size puts a heavy burden on me alone. More union Stewards are needed in our office, now, and for the future. It takes a lot of time to get the all research and the paperwork done within the time limits, and to meet with the Supervisors who continue to believe you have no rights.

I also know the Supervisors like to pretend the grievances are our fault, but they are not. We carriers are not the ones who disapprove the 3996's when we can't make it back in 8 hours. And we carriers are not the ones assigning overtime to Carriers on other routes, or to Carriers on the 8 hour list only, thereby, denying overtime for those who really want to work it. Then Management gets angry that I will need the union time to investigate, write and file the grievances. And if the grievances that have merit are denied by the Supervisors, then more union time is needed by me to appeal them to the next level. The Supervisors know what contract violations are, but ignore it because they feel they are in charge and no one can tell them what to do. I try to let them know what they should do, but since they don't want to hear it, I just file the grievances after they occur.

The Carriers on the overtime desired list are not getting equal overtime opportunities either, even though I try to give the Supervisors a weekly overtime tracking sheet throughout the quarter so they can see who is falling behind. Instead, they prefer to wait until the last minute and begin scheduling the low OTDL (overtime desired list) Carriers every non-scheduled day to catch them up, but fail to equalize them anyway and end up paying them the difference.

I am just glad that many of the Carriers recognize when they are being had, and report the violations to me to follow up with the grievances. I'm also glad that our efforts are very successful and that almost all the violations are getting Carriers properly compensated. No one likes to say they do not want to be on any overtime list then get forced to work the overtime. Nor do Carriers sign the work assignment list (for overtime only on their route) to have to carry swings on other routes! This is just plain wrong! But some Supervisors have it in their heads that they are the ones who make the rules and that is just not true.

Unfortunately, overtime violations are not the only type of grievances I have been working on lately. There are also grievances for Letters of Demands, sick leave issues, National Re-assessment Program (NRP), now going to Arbitration, and

some discipline grievances. Plus there are also Carriers still being moved off their opt assignments. And when Management doesn't provide me with documentation and enough union time to investigate it all, that is a contract violation too.

We also have major posting problems which include holiday scheduling, opts, and updating annual leave charts. And I have to say that most of the problems are coming from the Saviers Station side. Carriers are kept guessing as to what is available rather than having it made available as it is supposed to be. I have reported this to the Postmaster but get no results there either. So I'll have to file more grievances.

You may wonder why I even bother. Well, since our office is so big and things can easily go undetected, someone has to speak up to call attention to things that are not right, but which affect many Carriers. With so many changes happening, I make sure our contractual rights are not overlooked. We are all entitled to the protections the National Agreement provides, and it is with pride in our Carriers that I defend it. So keep doing your job well and I will do both my jobs the best that I can.

Just one more thing I would like to add. Check out the NALC website, at www.nalc.org and read what is happening on the legislative side as elections are coming up. Our jobs are tied directly with whatever Congress votes do with the Postal Service. Sign up to receive e-activist alerts so you can know when you can help stop negative actions. It is only with our combined voices that Congress hears what Carriers and the public needs as far as the Postal Services are concerned. So if you value your job and look forward to a good retirement, check into this. In Unity for All.

LEADER OR BOSS

Are you a Boss or Leader? There is a difference. A Boss fixes blame. A Leader fixes mistakes. A Boss knows everything. A Leader asks questions and learns everyday. A Boss creates fear, A Leader instills confidence. A Boss makes work drudgery, a Leader makes it interesting.

A Boss is interested in himself or herself, the leader cares about the people.

While there are also differences among the Leaders—primarily because of differences in the people themselves—there are some common traits. Good Leaders all share professional competence, human understanding and have strong, independent character. They also have the ability to empathize with their people because they have genuine compassion and care.

Good Leaders also realize the importance of the mission and the need to get the job done, while at the same time assuring the needs of their people are fulfilled. Leading is not always an easy task, and often requires some unpopular decisions. But good Leaders have earned, not demanded, the respect of their people and their people share in the rewards and pride of a job well done.

The choice is yours—Leader or Boss.

—Col. Roger A Sorensen

Don't fall for the Bull

By James Perryman, San Fernando Chief Shop Steward



Hello to my brothers and sisters. Let's get down to business. We have been hearing about how the Postal Service has been losing money; however we haven't heard how the Managers for the Post Office plan to save the Post Office other than by eliminating 6 day delivery, which will eliminate jobs. The Post Office's "IF IT FITS, IT SHIPS" commercials seem to help but it is not enough. It appears the only other answer that these big wig Managers have is eliminating Postal jobs, except their own.

Let's take a look at some examples that managers are using to eliminate Carriers assignments:

1. FSS Automation, which has been rumored, will eliminate about 200 Carrier assignments district wide.
2. The use of DOIS, which is a tool that managers use to count the volume of mail per route (NO WONDER WHY THE MAIL VOLUME IS DROPPING).
3. Managers use the above as a tool, a scare tactic to persuade Carriers to run their assignments.

How would Managers use automation and DOIS to eliminate routes? It's simple. Some managers have been telling Carriers that if they don't case better than the office DOIS stan-

dards, the DISTRICT ELVAUATION AND ADJUSTMENT TEAM will add on to the route. Some managers also have told Carriers the same will happen if they don't meet the route street base time. Now I know this sounds stupid, but this is Management's thought process. If Management eliminates 200 routes through automation and encourages Carriers to case and run the routes to make the routes less than 8 hrs, and eliminate 6 day delivery, this gives Management the results they want to save the Postal Service.

These are some of the examples of how Management plans to save the Postal Service. I encourage Carriers not to fall for this bull. It does not make sense for a Letter Carrier to case a route faster or run a route faster than the route takes. The DEAT will not adjust or add to a route just because a Carrier is not making DOIS office standards nor will they add to the route if the Carrier is not making the base street time of a route.

I know there are many changes that are currently happening in the Postal Service and in the lives of its employees. I encourage all employees to hang in there and be strong. See your Shop Steward if Management is telling you this bull. Remember EAP is there for you to help and assist in any problems that Postal employees may have. It is strictly confidential.

Until next time God Bless and go Lakers.

Winners! MDA! Winners! MDA! Winners!

Pictured above are the 9 final winners of the MDA Texas Hold'em held on October 2nd at the Branch union hall. The charitable event raised \$1910 for MDA that was shared between Branch 2902 and our sister local, Canoga Park Branch 4006. Pictured from left to right in the back row is 9th place winner Tony Traba, a Carrier from North Hills, 10th place finisher Wolfgang Protting, Canoga Park Carrier and 8th place finisher Boris Pintar, 7th place finisher Russ Hayashi and 6th place winner Eli Duarte, Shop Steward extraordinaire from Canoga Park. Front row, left to right is Branch 2902 Executive Vice President and 3rd place finisher Ray Hill, 4th place winner Ron Berry and tied for first place, Tabettha Berry and Jan Granstrom. Thanks to all who participated and helped to make this a fun and smooth running event.



Postal Service Gets it Right

Bill Mauldin Stamp Honors Grunts' Hero

The post office gets a lot of criticism, always has, always will. And with the renewed push to get rid of Saturday mail delivery, expect complaints to intensify. But the United States Postal Service deserves a standing ovation for something that it did in March of this year: Bill Mauldin is getting his own postage stamp.

Mauldin died at age 81 in the early days of 2003. The end of his life had been rugged. He had been scalded in a bathtub, which led to terrible injuries and infections; Alzheimer's disease was inflicting its cruelties. Unable to care for himself after the scalding, he became a resident of a California nursing home, his health and spirits in rapid decline.

He was not forgotten, though. Mauldin, and his work, meant so much to the millions of Americans who fought in World War II, and to those who had waited for them to come home. He was a kid cartoonist for Stars and Stripes, the military newspaper; Mauldin's drawings of his muddy, exhausted, whisker-stubbed infantrymen Willie and Joe were the voice of truth about what it was like on the front lines. Mauldin was an enlisted man just like the soldiers he drew for; his gripes were their gripes, his laughs were their laughs, his heartaches were their heartaches. He was one of them. They loved him. He never held back.

Sometimes, when his cartoons cut too close for comfort, his superior officers tried to tone him down. In one memorable incident, he enraged General George S. Patton, and Patton informed Mauldin he wanted the pointed cartoons — celebrating the fighting men, lampooning the high-ranking officers — to stop. Now the news passed from soldier to soldier. How was Sgt. Bill Mauldin going to stand up to General Patton? It seemed impossible. Not quite. Mauldin, it turned out, had an ardent fan: Five-star General Dwight D. Eisenhower, supreme commander of the Allied forces in Europe. Ike put out the word: Mauldin draws what Mauldin wants. Mauldin won. Patton lost.

If, in your line of work, you've ever considered yourself a young hotshot, or if you've ever known anyone who has felt that way about himself or herself, the story of Mauldin's young manhood will humble you. Here is what, by the time he was 23 years old, Mauldin had accomplished: He won the Pulitzer Prize. He was featured on the cover of Time magazine. His book "Up Front" was the No. 1 best-seller in the United States. All of that at 23. Yet when he returned to civilian life and he grew older, he never lost that boyish Mauldin grin, he never outgrew his excitement about doing his job, he never big-shotted or high-hatted the people with whom he worked every day. I was lucky enough to be one of them.

Mauldin roamed the hallways of the Chicago Sun-Times in the late 1960s and early 1970s with no more officiousness or air of

haughtiness than if he was a copyboy. That impish look on his face remained. He had achieved so much. He had won a second Pulitzer Prize, and he should have won a third, for what may be the single greatest editorial cartoon in the history of the craft: his deadline rendering, on the day President John F. Kennedy was assassinated, of the statue at the Lincoln Memorial slumped in grief, its head cradled in its hands. But he never acted as if he was better than the people he met. He was still Mauldin the enlisted man.

During the late summer of 2002, as Mauldin lay in that California nursing home, some of the old World War II infantry guys caught wind of it. They didn't want Mauldin to go out that way. They thought he should know that he was still their hero.

Gordon Dillow, a columnist for the Orange County Register, put out the call in Southern California for people in the area to send their best wishes to Mauldin; I joined Dillow in the effort, helping to spread the appeal nationally so that Bill would not feel

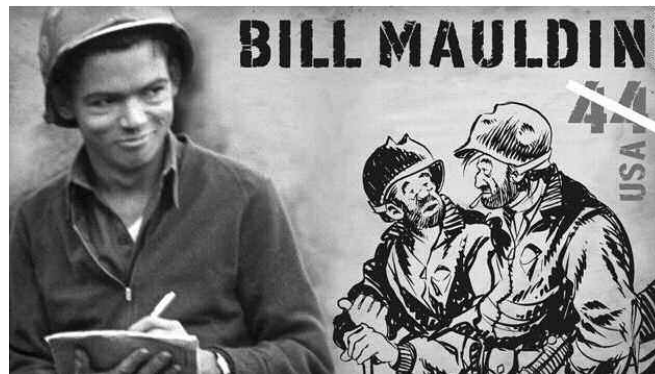
so alone. Soon more than 10,000 letters and cards had arrived at Mauldin's bedside. Even better than that, the old soldiers began to show up just to sit with Mauldin, to let him know that they were there for him, as he, long ago, had been there for them. So many volunteered to visit Bill that there was a waiting list. Here is how Todd DePastino, in the first paragraph of his wonderful biography of Mauldin, described it: "Almost every day in the summer and fall of

2002 they came to Park Superior nursing home in Newport Beach, California, to honor Army Sergeant, Technician Third Grade, Bill Mauldin. They came bearing relics of their youth: medals, insignia, photographs, and carefully folded newspaper clippings. Some wore old garrison caps. Others arrived resplendent in uniforms over a half century old. Almost all of them wept as they filed down the corridor like pilgrims fulfilling some long-neglected obligation."

One of the veterans explained to me why it was so important: "You would have to be part of a combat infantry unit to appreciate what moments of relief Bill gave us. You had to be reading a soaking wet Stars and Stripes in a water-filled foxhole and then see one of his cartoons."

Mauldin is buried in Arlington National Cemetery. This month, the kid cartoonist makes it onto a first-class postage stamp. It's an honor that most generals and admirals never receive.

What Mauldin would have loved most, I believe, is the sight of the two guys who are keeping him company on that stamp. Take a look at it. There's Willie. There's Joe. And there, to the side, drawing them and smiling that shy, quietly observant smile, is Mauldin himself. With his buddies, right where he belongs. Forever.



The NALC Health Benefit Plan

2011 Benefits At-A-Glance - Certain deductibles, copayments and coinsurance amounts do not apply if Medicare is your primary coverage (pays first) for medical services.

BENEFIT	YOU PAY	
	PPO	Non-PPO
Preventive Care		
Annual Routine Physical Exam, age 3 or older	Nothing	30% after \$300 deductible
Adult Routine Immunizations & Tests	Nothing	30% after \$300 deductible
Well Child Care (up to age 2)	Nothing	Any amount over Plan allowance
Routine Immunizations (up to age 21)	Nothing	Any amount over Plan allowance
Inpatient Hospital Care (precertification required)		
Maternity	Nothing	30% after \$350 per admission copay
Medical/Surgery		
Room, Board & Other Services & Supplies	\$200 copayment per admission	30% after \$350 per admission copay
Mental Health/Substance Abuse		
Room, Board & Other Services & Supplies	\$200 copayment per admission	30% after \$350 per admission copay
Outpatient Hospital		
Medical/Surgical	15% after \$300 deductible	35% after \$300 deductible
Emergency Medical	15% after \$300 deductible	15% after \$300 deductible
Chiropractic Care		
Initial office visit	\$20 copayment	30% after \$300 deductible
Initial set of spinal x-rays	15% after \$300 deductible	30% after \$300 deductible
Spinal manipulations (12 per calendar year)	15% after \$300 deductible	30% after \$300 deductible
Physician Care		
Office visits	\$20 copayment per visit	30% after \$300 deductible
X-rays, other diagnostic services	15% after \$300 deductible	30% after \$300 deductible
Laboratory Services		
LabCorp or Quest Diagnostics	Nothing	
Other lab facility	15% after \$300 deductible	30% after \$300 deductible
Maternity Care (complete)	Nothing	30% after \$300 deductible
Accidental Injury	Nothing within 72 hours	Any amount over the Plan allowance within 72 hours
Surgery	15%	30% after \$300 deductible
Mental Health and Substance Abuse		
Office visit	\$20 copayment per visit	30% after \$300 deductible
Other diagnostic services	15% after \$300 deductible	30% after \$300 deductible
Dental		
Accidental dental injury (to a sound natural tooth)	15% within 72 hours	30% within 72 hours after \$300 deductible
	Network	Non-Network
Prescription Drugs		
<i>This is a mandatory generic program with a 30-day limit at local retail</i>		
Retail Pharmacy	1st and 2nd fill 20% of cost for generic / 30% of cost for brand	Full cost at time of purchase - 45%
Mail Order Program		
60-day supply	\$8 generic/\$43 brand name	
90-day supply	\$5 NALCSelect generic/\$12 generic/\$65 brand name \$7.99 NALCPreferred generic	
Specialty Drugs		
Mail Order	\$150 30-day supply / \$250 60-day supply / \$350 90-day supply	
Note: You may purchase up to a 90-day supply (84-day minimum) of covered drugs and supplies at a CVS Caremark Pharmacy through our Maintenance Choice Program. You will pay the applicable mail order copayment for each prescription purchased.		
Catastrophic Limits		
Medical/Surgical/Mental Health & Substance Abuse	You pay nothing after coinsurance expenses total: \$5,000 per person or family for services of PPO providers/facilities \$7,000 per person or family PPO/non-PPO providers/facilities combined	
Prescription	You pay nothing for covered prescription drugs after coinsurance amounts for prescription drugs purchased at a network retail pharmacy and mail order copayment amounts for specialty drugs (only) total \$4,000 per person or family.	



Happy Thanksgiving and a Very Merry Christmas from the MBA

By Chris Alessi, MBA/NSBA Representative

How fast this year has gone by and how fast life goes by too. As we close in on the end of another year, it is a good time to take a look at your insurance needs and your finances for the upcoming year. If someone depends on you financially, you probably need life insurance. Some examples of specific life stages or life events that might trigger the need for life insurance are:

You are currently married or getting married soon. Many families depend on two incomes to make ends meet. If you died suddenly, would your spouse have enough money to cover your funeral costs, credit card balances, outstanding loans and daily expenses?

You are a parent or about to become one. If you died tomorrow, would your spouse have the financial means to provide your children with the opportunities you have always dreamed they would have? Even parents who don't work outside the home need Life Ins because they provide services that would be expensive to replace, such as child care, transportation, and household chores. Single parents need Life Ins more than anyone because their children rely on them for everything.

You are A Homeowner. If you are like many people your home is your most significant asset. Life Insurance can protect your investment and spare your family the disruption of being forced to find a new and less expensive place to live.

You or your spouse are changing jobs. If you or your spouse/partner have recently been promoted or started a new position, it's a good time to re evaluate your life insurance coverage. You may not realize it, but when your income rises, your spending tends to rise too. Updating your life insurance coverage can help make sure your family would be able to maintain its new and improved life style if something were to happen to you.

You are retired or planning for retirement. If your children are on their own, and your mortgage is paid off, you might feel your need for Life Ins has passed. But if you died today your spouse could outlive you by 10, 20, or even 30 years. Would your spouse have to make drastic lifestyle adjustments to make ends meet? Adequate Life insurance coverage can help widows and widowers avoid financial struggles in retirement.

You are Single. Many single people don't have a need for life insurance because no one depends on them financially. But there are a few exceptions. If you're providing financial support for aging parents or siblings, or if you're carrying significant debt you wouldn't want to pass onto family members, you may want to consider life insurance.

When considering life insurance Your MBA has great policies at affordable costs because the MBA is a non-profit organ-

ization that is backed by our National Union and passes the savings on to its members.

MBA products are available for all NALC Members, spouses, grand-children, great grand-children up to a \$100,000 Death Benefit. The MBA has six Individual Life Insurance plans:

Whole Life Plans

MBA-20 Pay whole Life Plan

MBA-paid up at age 65

MBA-paid up at age 90

Independence {Single Premium}

Term Life Plans

MBA 10 Year Renewable & Convertible

Universal Life Plans

MBA Universal Life Plans

Please Note: **The New Interest Rate** on all Maturity Income plans, qualified, non qualified Ira's and all deferred annuities will now be at 5% through Sept 30th 2011. This is a great return on your investment.

All these plans have a 30 day return policy that after you review the plan and you're not satisfied for any reason, you may return them for a full refund of all premiums paid. These plans can be purchased through easy bi-weekly payroll allotment, monthly, or annual premiums.

For more Information you can contact the MBA directly at (202) 638-4318 or on the web at: WWW.NALC.org. Click on the Life Insurance & Annuity Department.

In closing I would like to wish all our National and local officers and their families, along with all the brothers and sisters of Tri- Valley Branch 2902 a great Holiday Season filled with peace, happiness and love.

God Bless you.

In Memoriam

Lavon H. Robinson
Retired Carrier- Pacoima

John W. Pittman
Retired Carrier- Santa Paula

FOR THE GOOD LIFE

By Bev Sucich, Director of Retirees



Hello to all. Hope all the retirees had a good summer doing whatever you love to do. We had some really hot 3 digit temperature days so make sure you drink lots of water when it gets that hot for future

summer years.

First of all Ed Smith had a heart attack a week after he received his 50 year gold card from the union. Mike Longress was hospitalized sometime in June. We wish both fellows a speedy recovery.

I apologize for this late announcement but we lost one of our 50 year gold card members, John Pittman from Santa Paula a few months back. My sincere condolences to his family and friends. Bill Everett also out of Santa Paula will soon receive his 60 year pin.

As you have all read lately, the Postal Service is in some deep financial debt. The PMG wants us to go to a 5 day or even a 4 day delivery from our usual 6 day delivery. We can not let that happen. So I am urging all retired and non-retired members to donate to COLCPE if you have not done so already. We need to help save our Brothers and Sisters jobs that are still working and not jeopardize the retiree's benefits. So please donate to COLCPE today. Thank you.

Thanks for all who donated to the food drive. It was a success.

Our branch is participating in this year MDA Bowl-a-Thon on November 7th at 8:00a.m., at Brunswick Bowl in Simi Valley on Stearns and Cochran. If you do not bowl, you may participate

by pledging for someone that you know who is going to bowl.

Now for our luncheons, July 15, 2010 held at Simi Valley Home Town Buffet we had 23 members and 11 guests. Joe Gutierrez, a fellow retiree from Las Vegas donated quite a few door prizes.

The winners were Hal Grunland a Coldstone gift card, Don Minster, a clock, Maynard Owens a hat, Joe Majzel a clock, Mary Wallin, a Cheese Grater, Ed Smith, a Subway gift card, Jim Dearborn, a hat, Sonny Castellano, 3 small matching dishes, June Tipton, a Ralph's gift card and John Qualizza-telephone/address book.

At the August 19, 2010 Home Town Buffet in West Hills we had 17 members and 9 guests.

The winners were Rudy Hernandez, a HTB gift card, A.M. Fitz, a HTB gift card, and Cynthia from Valley Village, a Coldstone gift card.

At the September 16, 2010 HTB in Simi we had 26 members and 12 guests.

The Winners were, Jim Stevens, a Coldstone gift card, June Tipton, she likes those Ralph's gift cards, and Lee Leighton, a Chili's gift card.

I would like to thank Sue Degenhardt and Debbie Riggs for helping me with the union dinners and I want to thank Dan Gorman for helping me to purchase all the fixings and drinks for the union meetings and dinners. I could not do it without them.

I just want to wish everyone a safe and happy Thanksgiving, A Festive Christmas, a wonderful holiday season no matter what you celebrate and a prosperous New Year 2011.

UNION JACKET ORDER FORM

To satisfy continuing demand, we're ordering Tri-Valley Windbreaker jackets again. This is a limited time offer, so act now! Please fill in your order for the size you want & mail to the Union Hall along with your check (made out to Branch 2902) for the total amount. **All orders must be in by January 28, 2011.**

As usual, these are top quality made in America, **Union Made jackets.** The windbreaker comes in royal blue or black with the gold Branch 2902 NALC logo on front & back. They are lined, with snap front available in adult sizes. The cost is \$45.00 & you can add your first name silk screened on the front in gold for an additional \$5.00.

AVAILABLE SIZES:

Small	Medium	Large	X-Large	2X-Large	3X-Large
_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
				Add \$3	Add \$6.

Name on jacket: _____ Color: Royal Blue / Black (circle one)
(Please print - if selected)

Full Name: _____

Full Address: _____

Post Office _____ Phone #: _____

Jacket @ \$45.00. each _____
 2X or 3X Large Size _____
 Name(s) @ \$5.00 Each _____
 Grand Total \$ _____

Please list your name & phone # in case we have any questions about your order. Thanks, the Union Apparel Committee. **THERE WILL ONLY BE ONE ORDER SENT FOR THE BRANCH.** Clip order form & send with your check to:

**Branch 2902 - Jackets / Attn: Lori Stewart
21540 Prairie St. #C
Chatsworth, CA 91311**

The Leather Satchel

By Edwin Lurssen, newly retired Carrier

Believe it or not, we all had leather satchels one time, a long time ago. Mail bags that had to endure the inclemency of time, rain, sun etc. were our companions. Those mail bags would smell like time. I had to use one. I was trained and worked my first years as a Letter Carrier when the tubs were half the size of today's. So much has changed since then.

Seems like it was last week, however, it's been over 32 years. Now on my way out towards retirement I can recall and analyze that experience, along with driving those jeeps in hot summer months trying to finish the route late in the day.

I can still remember that first day in September of 1978 when I made my initial entrance into a Postal facility work floor. 5 o'clock am, Monday. The smell of fresh letters and catalogs of the time, welcomed me that summer morning. Luis Larios my first immediate Supervisor greeted me with a sentence: "Welcome, hope you're a lifer with us", which sounded like a jail sentence.

This 32 plus years, had been quit a trip. It has been a real honor for me to share experiences and hard working days with all my professional brothers and sisters. Delivering mail is not easy. It's a miracle. We all pull these enormous tasks. It's amazing how a vehicle completely full of packages, letters, magazines, circulars, and in what seems like total chaos, all find their proper and correct way to their respective owners in a short period of time, under the hardships of conditions at the end of the day. And it's done everyday. An outsider would see this as an impossible act. I consider myself very lucky to have shared these years, and to have been part of this family of dedicated and responsible individuals. No one in this world is capable of doing what we do.

Today on my way out, I salute all of you, trying to hold my tears of emotion and sadness because part of my life is ending. I salute you and thank you, because you all made my days, more bearable. You made everyday, seems like it was Friday, even though it was a Tuesday after a holiday.

The Letter Carrier is a special kind of breed. We are a very responsible, dedicated, hard working and optimist group of workers. We earn every single penny with a sweat drop on our front head every single day.

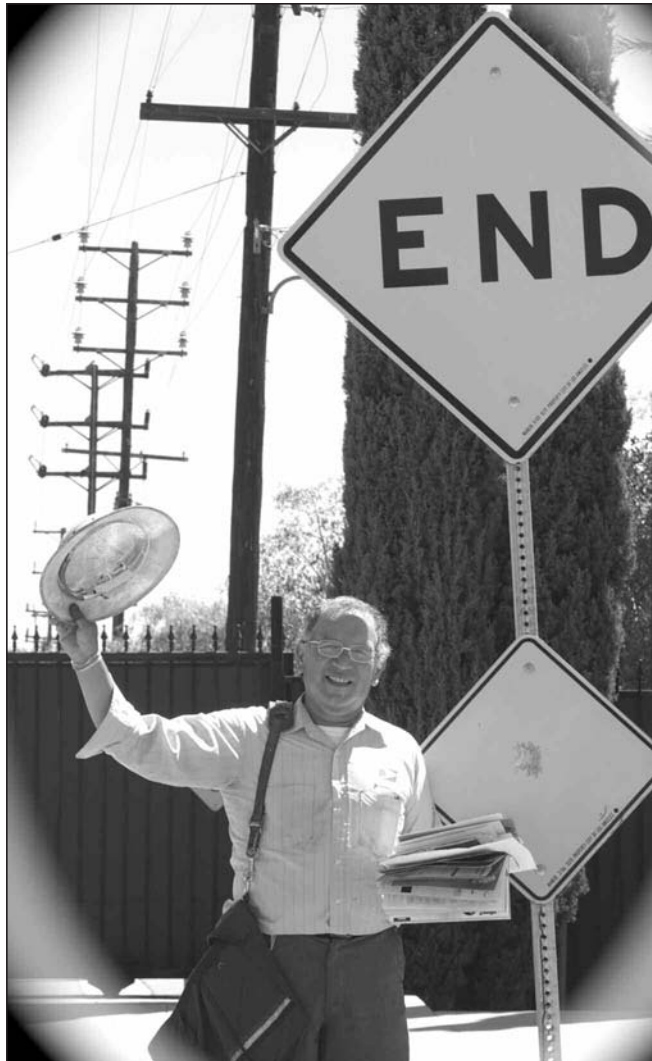
I did enjoy my Postal career. It left great satisfactions along the way. I was lucky enough to have delivered the same route for over 20 years. The route along with my customers became part of my family, part of my life. I had the chance to meet and interact with at least two generations of patrons. It wasn't my route after a while. It became my own back yard. I felt at home while walking my route. It was home.

Nothing remains the same. Everything has an end. I think it is time for my sore feet and knees to finally rest. My body doesn't feel the same anymore. The mornings were not as forgiving as they were when I was 20 years younger. My ability to recuperate was beginning to resent father time, as well as the physical demands of the job. I decided to give my body the well deserved rest, and enjoy the rest of my productive years doing something else. I won't stand still though. I need to continue the movement that my body is accustomed to. It's called "Inertia" in physical science terms. I have to thank the Postal organization for having provided me with a very healthy and fit life style, without paying for a membership of a gym. Thank you for providing me with a steady job and a decent life style. It was a fair exchange. I provided 8 hours work, for an honest 8 hours pay.

Now, the voices, laughs and comments of my coworkers that I used to enjoy every morning, seem to be fading. No more jokes, no more laughs, no

singing along with that Filipino guy that knew all the Beatles songs. No more imitating that foreign language of my foreign brothers and sisters, and laughing, because it was all done with respect towards each other. No more the taste of doughnuts, tamales, or egg rolls. Will I miss it? I am missing it already, and still 2 more weeks until retirement.

Edwin Lurssen was a Letter Carrier for 33 years. 29 of those years were spent at Chandler Station.



Written on the "Notice 11" form is the following:

INFORMATION FOR APARTMENT HOUSE CUSTOMERS

The following information is intended to help prevent the possible delay, non-delivery, misdelivery, or loss of your mail.

- 1 The names of all persons receiving mail through your mailbox should appear either on the outside or inside of the box.
- 2 Advise correspondents to use the apartment number and ZIP Code on all mail addressed to you, and include both in your return address.
- 3 Mail receptacles and contents are protected by Federal law, and this law prohibits attempts to pry boxes open or otherwise tamper with them. If you lose your key, apply to the building owner or manger for another one.
- 4 Failure to keep the letterbox locked at all times may result in suspension of delivery service. It is contrary to postal regulations to deliver mail, including check letters, into unlocked or defective apartment mailboxes.

**Notice 11
March 1972**

For those of you with apartment deliveries, ask your Supervisor for a supply of "Notice 11's" and carry them in your satchel. Follow the M-41 instructions written above and place the Notice 11 in the mailboxes of new tenants in the building. If you can't get the Notice 11's from Management, ask to see your Shop Steward.

The **Postal Operations Manual (POM)** discusses the rules for Directories in Apartment Buildings and reads as follows in Section 632.626:

The guidelines for apartment house directories for Postal Service use are as follows:

- a. For all apartment houses with 15 or more receptacles, maintain a complete directory of all persons receiving mail. If an apartment house is divided into units, each with separate entrances and 15 or more receptacles, each unit should have a separate directory. In addition, if mail is not generally addressed to specific units, a directory must be kept at the main unit of the building listing all persons receiving mail in the various units.
- b. Directories must be alphabetical by surname and must be maintained and kept up-to-date. The receptacle number and apartment number should always be the same, and the apartment number should appear to the right of the name in the directory. If the apartment number is different from the receptacle number, the receptacle number should appear to the left of the name in the directory. Follow the same arrangement for apartments that are either lettered or lettered and

numbered.

- c. The directory must be legible, enclosed in a suitable protective frame, and attached to the wall immediately above or to the side of the mail receptacles where it can be easily read. If mailrooms are used, the directory should be placed for the Carrier's convenience. If an attendant, such as a telephone operator, doorman, or elevator conductor, is on duty between the hours of 7:00 a.m. and 11:00 p.m., and the mail is delivered either to apartment house receptacles or in bulk for distribution by employees of the building, the employee on duty in the building may keep the directory to make it available to the Carrier on request.

Did you read that? **Any apartment building with 15 or more deliveries should have a directory.** The names should be listed alphabetically by surname (last name) and should be maintained and kept up to date.

If you have problems with apartment buildings that have no directories or the boxes are not kept locked, etc. report these problems to your Supervisor. There is another Form, PS Form 3521 that is used for reporting irregularities with mail boxes to Management. Ask your Supervisor for these forms and if you can't get them talk to your Steward.

Delivering mail is tough enough under the best of circumstances. You don't need problems in Apartment buildings to further complicate matters.

Report any and all delivery problems to your Supervisor and if they don't help you, talk to your Steward so he or she can investigate and file a grievance if necessary.

The Dodgers really, really suck. Talk to you all in two months.

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(818) 757-1852	(513) 621 -4787
(818) 344-4366	(800) 543-0379
Van Nuys, CA	Fax: (513) 621-0483
	Postal Fax: (888) 724-7882

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The Mail Bag News is the official publication of Tri-Valley Branch 2902 (Chatsworth, California) of the National Association of Letter Carriers. All opinions expressed are those of the individual author(s) and do not necessarily reflect the opinions of the NALC or its officers. The Mail Bag News welcomes articles and letters to the editor; however the editorial staff of the Mail Bag News assumes complete authority to decide which letters are presented for publication. Anonymous articles are not accepted. Permission is hereby granted to re-print articles. We just ask that you give the author and the publication appropriate credit.



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RETIREES LUNCH **RAFFLE AT 12:30**

Where: Hometown Buffet
Fallbrook Mall
6633 Fallbrook Ave.
West Hills

When: Thursday,
December 16, 2010

Time: 11:00am to 1:00pm



Where: Hometown Buffet
Vons Center
1855 Cochran Street
Simi Valley

When: Thursday,
January 20, 2011

Time: 11:00am to 1:00pm



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- Ray Hill

SENIOR VICE PRESIDENT

- Paul Drapkin

VICE PRESIDENT

- Ernestine Hernandez

TREASURER/FINANCIAL SECRETARY

- Dan Gorman

RECORDING SECRETARY

- Susan Degenhardt

DIRECTOR OF RETIREES

- Bev Sucich

MBA/NSBA REPRESENTATIVE

- Chris Alessi

HEALTH BENEFIT OFFICER

- Joe Gutierrez

SGT.-AT-ARMS

- Bob Golden

TRUSTEES:

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James Perryman
Sandy Gaunce
Greg Gaddis
Kurt Whitesell

SHOP STEWARD LIST

Agoura Hills Chief S.S.	Greg Gaddis
Chatsworth Chief S.S.	Angel Hale
Fillmore Chief S.S.	Call Office
Moorpark Chief S.S.	Lori Stewart
Alternate	Robbie Elsaleh
North Hollywood Chief S.S.	Steve Leyton
	Louie Rodriguez
Chandler	Greg Gaddis
Laurel Canyon	Steve Leyton
Studio City	Greg Gaddis
Valley Village	Steve Leyton
Northridge Chief S.S.	Onofre Varela
Shop Steward/ Webmaster	Larry Orcutt
Porter Ranch	Larry Orcutt
Alternate	Kurt Whitesell
Ojai Chief S.S.	Philip Navarro
Oxnard Chief S.S.	Ernestine Hernandez
Pacoima Chief S.S.	Steve Dickerson
Alternate	Frankie Mercado
Alternate	Rocio Fraire
Alternate	Lorie Moore
Port Hueneme Chief S.S.	Kathi Albritten
Reseda Chief S.S.	Ray Hill
San Fernando Chief S.S.	James Perryman
Alternate	Albert Reyes
M.C.A.	James Perryman
North Hills	C.C. Flatts
Sylmar / Main Office	James Perryman
Santa Paula Chief S.S.	Laura Walters
Simi Valley Chief S.S.	Sandra Gaunce
	Robbie Elsaleh
	Sandra Gaunce
Mt. McCoy Station	Jim Mette
Thousand Oaks Chief S.S.	Alex Lopez
	Walter Williams
Alternate	Mary Stanley
Newbury Park	Jim Mette
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East Ventura	Laura Walters
Woodland Hills Chief S.S.	Joe Vedder
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Only Irish coffee provides in a single glass all four essential food groups: alcohol, caffeine, sugar and fat.

— *Alex Levine*

RECREATION NEWS

SEA WORLD:

Adults: \$56.00 (Gate price \$69.00)

Child: \$49.00 ages 3-9 (Gate price \$59.00)

SEE'S GIFT CERTIFICATE:

\$12.50 (Retail Value \$16.10)

At the monthly meetings (every third Tuesday of the month) coupons and flyers for various venues are available.

My famous homemade oatmeal chocolate chip cookies are 4 for \$1.00.

PAULETTE DYER

THE MAIL BAG NEWS

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ATTENTION ALL DIRECT DUES PAYING RETIREES!

MEMBERSHIP DUES ARE DUE
AND PAYABLE, JANUARY 1, 2011

Please remit your \$24 to the branch office:

21540 Prairie Street. #C
Chatsworth, CA 91311

Attn: Dan Gorman
Financial Secretary-Treasurer

**“A man in love is incomplete until he is
married. Then he’s finished.”**

*Zsa Zsa Gabor,
in Newsweek,
March 28, 1960*

BEV SUCICH

Will be serving
TURKEY DINNER

At the **November**
Union Meeting
DINNER starts at 6pm

CALENDAR OF EVENTS

- NOV 16** Regular Branch Meeting 7pm
Union Hall-Chatsworth
Dinner served 6 pm
- NOV 18** Retiree Lunch 11:00am
Hometown Buffet-Simi Valley
- NOV 25** Thanksgiving Day-Holiday 
- DEC 1** Hanukkah Begins 
- DEC 7** Executive Board Meeting 6pm
Executive Council Meeting 7pm
- DEC 16** Retiree Lunch 11:00am
Hometown Buffet-West Hills
- DEC 21** Regular Branch Meeting-**Dark** (Happy Holidays)
Winter Begins
- DEC 25** Christmas Day-Holiday 
- JAN 1** New Years Day-Holiday 
- JAN 4** Executive Board Meeting 6pm
Executive Council Meeting 7pm
- JAN 17** Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Birthday-Holiday 
- JAN 18** Regular Branch Meeting 7pm
Union Hall-Chatsworth
Dinner served 6 pm
- JAN 20** Retiree Lunch 11:00am
Hometown Buffet-Simi Valley