



THE Mail Bag NEWS

★ SOLIDARITY
★ EDUCATION
★ ORGANIZATION



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

PROUDLY REPRESENTING: AGOURA, ARLETA, CALABASAS, CHATSWORTH, FILLMORE, GRANADA HILLS, MISSION HILLS, MOORPARK, NEWBURY PARK, NORTH HILLS, NORTH HOLLYWOOD, NORTHRIDGE, OJAI, OXNARD, PACOIMA, PORT HUENEME, RESEDA, SAN FERNANDO, SANTA PAULA, SIMI VALLEY, SYLMAR, THOUSAND OAKS, VENTURA, WESTLAKE AND WOODLAND HILLS

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MEMBER: TRI-COUNTIES CENTRAL LABOR COUNCIL, AFL-CIO

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Staying Strong in the Fight to Represent You

By Ray Hill, President

In accordance with the NALC Constitution for the Government of Subordinate and Federal Branches, specifically Article 6 "Duties of Officers, President" I respectfully submit the following Term Ending Report for the just concluded 2018, 2019, 2020 and January 1, 2021 through March 18, 2021 Term.

As you are all painfully aware, the year 2020 was unprecedented in history of Branch 2902 and for the entire world as well. In March of 2020, much of the state of California (and the entire world) began "shutting down" due to restrictions necessitated by COVID-19. On March 11, 2020, NALC President Fredric V. Rolando wrote a letter to NALC Branch and State presidents granting dispensation for any branch that decided to postpone or cancel any events dictated by branch by-laws that were scheduled in calendar year 2020 due to the coronavirus outbreak. On March 16, 2020 the federal government advised that individuals and organizations should cancel or postpone in-person events that consist of 10 or more people throughout the U.S.

On March 18, 2020, President Rolando wrote a follow-up letter to branch and state presidents that extended the dispensation granted in his March 11 letter to include, "...the postponement or cancellation of gatherings of any kind, including but not limited to branch and state association meetings...." We cancelled our

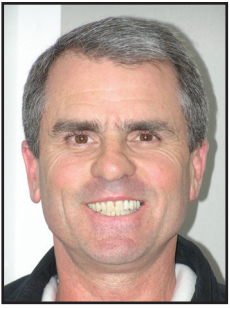
March 20, 2020 Branch Meeting due to the COVID-19 restrictions and cancelled our Executive Board (EB) meeting, as well. Due to these restrictions, we have had no meetings at the Union Hall since our EB meeting on March 6, 2020.

In July of 2020, our Branch 2902 Webmaster, Larry Orcutt, talked to me about the possibility of the branch holding meetings via Zoom. With Larry's invaluable assistance, we started having branch Zoom meetings in August of 2020 and have continued doing so since then. A million thanks to Larry Orcutt for suggesting the idea to hold Zoom meetings and for

coordinating and assisting with those meetings every month.



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Staying Strong

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There is a silver lining to every cloud and I think the Zoom meetings have actually made it much easier for some of our members who live far away from the Union Hall to attend. Eventually we

will resume having meetings at the Union Hall, but until we do, Zoom has provided a great alternative.

President Rolando also granted dispensation for branches to postpone scheduled nominations and elections. Our Branch had scheduled nominations and an election that should have been conducted in October, November and December of 2020 and they were postponed.

Normally, per branch by-laws, we accept nominations of officers from the floor of the Union Hall at our October and November meetings with the election held and votes tabulated during our December meeting. Because we were holding branch meetings via Zoom, we needed President Rolando's "blessing" to implement an alternate election procedure that would allow branch members to nominate candidates during our Zoom meetings or by mail, instead of from the floor of the Union Hall. President Rolando granted the dispensation that I requested and we accepted nominations during our December and January Zoom meetings. The results of the election were announced at our February Zoom meeting.

Branch Officers-New Term

I would like to thank the membership of Branch 2902 for electing me and our current leadership team to another term, albeit by acclamation. Instead of our normal three-year term, this term will be less than three years due to the postponement necessitated by the COVID-19 restrictions. We did have an election for the five branch Trustee positions and the results are published in this issue of the *Mail Bag News*. Congratulations to the following new Branch Officers: Mary Stanley, who is our new Financial Treasurer/Secretary, Marcella Cruz, who is our new Assistant Health Benefits Representative and Rochelle Harvey, who is a new Branch Trustee.

Thanks to President Emeritus Frank Salazar for his work as a Branch Trustee during the past term. I was also able to drag Frank out of retirement to help in the Reseda office when there was no Steward there and he cleaned up a grievance backlog in that office. Thanks for your years of service to the Branch, Frank. Be sure to let me know if you are ever looking for work; we can use you.

I want to thank our NALC National Director of Safety and Health and long-time friend of the Branch, Manuel "Manny" Peralta, for installing the Branch officers at our March Zoom meeting. Due to an oversight that I was entirely to blame for, Manny's invitation to install us was extended by me at

the last minute and violated normal protocol. I have known Manny for 30 years and consider him a good friend and he gladly accepted my last minute, "protocol violating" invitation to install our officers. Thanks Manny, you are much appreciated.

2018 Through Present

Paul Drapkin started the 2018 term as our Executive Vice President (EVP) and he retired and left his position as EVP effective February 1, 2019. It was great working with Paul at the Branch Office and I was sorry to see him retire because I knew it would be extremely difficult replacing him and all of the knowledge he took with him into retirement. I thank Paul for the outstanding work he did for our Branch during his almost two years as our EVP and also as a long-time Steward in the Woodland Hills office. Paul has been our editor of the *Mail Bag News* for many years and he has, thankfully, continued in that role since his retirement. I extend the same invitation to Paul that I extended to Frank; let me know if you are looking for work.

At the time Paul retired, James Perryman moved up from his position as branch Senior Vice President (SVP) and stepped into the role of Branch EVP. In the two-plus years I have worked with James, I have been very impressed with his work as Branch 2902's newest full-time officer. James has handled every task assigned to him with no problems or complaints and he is doing an excellent job as our EVP. The branch is very fortunate to have him.

When James became our EVP, Alex Lopez moved into the SVP job vacated by James, and Albert Reyes moved into the Vice President (VP) job that was vacated by Alex Lopez. Both Alex and Albert have been designated as Formal A Representatives in their respective offices, the Thousand Oaks (Alex) and San Fernando (Albert) Installations. Albert has also stepped up and helped in the Woodland Hills office where there is currently no Steward. I thank Alex and Albert for their outstanding work both as Branch Officers and Chief Stewards in their offices and for their assistance in processing grievances at the Formal A Level.

Our Branch Recording Secretary, Laura Rowe, works at the Branch office on a "half-time" basis (40 hours every other week) and her assistance in the office is invaluable. Laura answers the majority of the phone calls to the branch and has the contractual knowledge necessary to answer most questions asked of her during those calls. Laura also helps with Steward work in Ventura and some of our offices that currently have no Steward, including Ojai and Pacoima. Retiree Greg Gaddis has also been a great asset to the Branch during the three days per week that he works for us, handling a sizable grievance workload crammed into those three days. Thanks to both Laura and Greg for their work representing the Branch.

I also want to thank the other elected Branch Officers for their work representing the Branch. These officers include our Director of Retirees, Bev Sucich, our MBA/NSBA Representative, Chris Alessi, Health Benefits Officer, Joe Gutierrez, Assistant Health Benefits officer, Mary Stanley, Sergeant-at-Arms, Bob Golden and Trustees Greg Gaddis, David Hyman, Louis Rodriguez, Frank Salazar and Walter Williams. Thanks to all of you.

Thanks also to all of our Stewards for their work fighting the good fight for Branch members. The job of a Steward is difficult and often thankless and their jobs have been even more difficult during the COVID-19 pandemic. To all of our Stewards, thank you for your hard work and dedication and know that I really do appreciate all of you and the thankless, difficult work that you do for the membership you represent.

I would also like to extend my sincere thanks to our National Business Agent, Bryant Almario, and his staff of Regional Administrative Assistants (RAAs), including James Henry, Allan Rios, Jeff Frazee, and Calvin Brookins. I have Calvin's phone number on speed dial and he is my go-to guy for any and all contractual head scratchers that I can't decipher myself. Thanks to all of you for your support this past term.



Pictured above is newly retired Carrier Berj Basmadjian out of the Northridge P.O. as he shows off his Branch 2902 Retirement Watch. Congratulations Berj and enjoy that retirement.

Finances

We have continued to exercise fiscal responsibility in the expenditure of Branch funds and I am pleased to report that the Branch continues to operate in excellent financial condition. We have continued to avoid debt and we have maintained a contingency fund in excess of \$411,000.

Our out-going Financial Secretary Treasurer, Dan Gorman continued during this past term to do an *outstanding* job in keeping the books and preparing and finalizing workable budgets to keep the Branch financially strong. Dan always made his job look easy and the Branch was *really fortunate* to have him as our Financial Secretary Treasurer forever, since Branch 2902 was born. Good luck to Dan in his well-deserved retirement.

Currently, Branch 2902 has a total active membership of 1,204 members, with 1,176 of them paying dues. Branch 2902 does not bill members for dues while they are off work in Leave without Pay (LWOP) status; we currently have 28 members on LWOP status. It is difficult to keep up on the actual membership numbers of active Carriers due to the fluctuations with regards to the hiring, firing and resignations of our City Carrier Assistants (CCA's). Sometimes CCA's quit so fast their membership paperwork doesn't even have a chance to be processed. Branch 2902 currently has 471 retired members and I have no doubt that this number will keep rising as our membership continues to age and grows increasingly tired of the daily grind involved in working at the USPS.

Organization

Branch 2902 is currently 95.43% organized. Considering the fact that NALC is an open shop, that is a really impressive number. Of course our goal is, and always will be 100% membership and we will continue to pursue that goal. The Stewards and officers of the Branch must ensure that we all make an effort to educate the non-members and the new employees about the benefits of union membership. I am pleased to report that recently we have had some long-time non-members join NALC. To all of them, as well as to all of the new hire members, I say welcome aboard. We are pleased to have you in our membership. As of this writing Branch 2902 is "officially" 95.43% organized. I truly believe we are at least 96% organized at this time, but, as written above, it is difficult to keep up on the membership numbers due to the fluctuations with regards to the hiring, firing and resignations of our CCA's.

Charity and the Golden Rule

Branch 2902 continues to support the official charity of NALC, the Muscular Dystrophy Association (MDA). Our Branch held our annual MDA Bowl-A-Thon in 2018 and 2019 but we were unable to do so in 2020 because the COVID-19 pandemic forced the closure of bowling alleys in both

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Ventura and Los Angeles counties. I believe that bowling alleys will be re-opening in the very near future and am hopeful that we will be able to resume our Bowl-A-Thon in the fall of 2021. Thanks to our MDA coordinator, Sandy Dearborn, for her efforts in raising money for the MDA during the past term.

Branch 2902 continues to be actively involved in the annual Letter Carrier Food Drive. In the just concluded three-year term, our Branch collected 718,132 pounds of food that was distributed to local charities and food banks from Studio City to Ojai. This food was collected during the 2018 and 2019 food drives because the COVID-19 crises caused NALC to cancel the annual Food Drive for 2020. The 2021 Food Drive has been postponed with a new date not yet announced.

In addition, Branch 2902 has raised funds for the CSALC Saxsenmeir Scholarship fund and we continue to support the Special Olympics and the Los Angeles County Federation of Labor Turkey and Toys campaign. I want to thank retiree Fred Shaw and his wife Lisa Guravitz for creating and funding the Guravitz-Shaw annual scholarship that provides \$1000 to a child of members of NALC to attend CSUN. Thanks, Fred and Lisa.

Legislation

During the past three-plus year term, Branch 2902 has remained involved in the political arena. Branch 2902 retired members, Ernestine Hernandez, David Hyman and Bob Golden remain actively involved in legislative matters, even in their retirement.

We have a lot of work to do in our on-going effort to educate our membership regarding the importance of donating to the Letter Carriers Political Fund (LCPF). Our LCPF Coordinator, James Perryman, is doing an outstanding job trying to get the membership to buy into the importance

of the LCPF with regards to job security. Currently, we have 5.29% of our total membership contributing to the LCPF, which is not enough to ensure protection of our wages and benefits from the whims of the politicians. I understand that many of our members are of the opinion that because they are paying dues to the union they should not have to contribute to the LCPF. However, it is illegal for NALC to use dues money to donate to politicians and that is why voluntary donations to the LCPF are so important. Many of us have become complacent and think that our wages and benefits, including our Thrift Savings Plan (TSP) and Retirement benefits, are etched in stone and completely untouchable. Nothing could be farther from the truth. Everything we currently have can all be taken away through the stroke of a legislative pen. In the grand scheme of things, five bucks a pay period isn't too much to ask to protect our precious benefits and livelihoods.

Grievance Activity

Grievance activity remains high and constant, with large numbers of both disciplinary grievances and contractual grievances being filed over the past three years and no end in sight. I have not been able to accurately tabulate the *final* grievance numbers for the past three years due to a lag in receiving some of our resolved grievance files here at the Branch Office. Our Stewards normally turn in their resolved grievances at the Union Hall during our meetings but we have held no meetings here since March of 2020 and, consequently, the lag. I will report the final tally for disciplinary and contractual grievances filed and resolved during the past term in the next issue of the *Mail Bag News*. On a side note, call me a fool but I find it very disappointing and disheartening that grievance activity has not waned and there is no end in sight to contractual violations or discipline being issued. Our Stewards fight a constant battle with management over getting time to process grievances and the absences caused by the COVID-19 pandemic only added to the time battle. I am *trying* to take a more proactive approach to dealing with issues before they become grievances, instead of waiting for violations to occur and filing grievances afterwards. Yes, call me a fool but nothing ventured, nothing gained and I can dream, right? We have a saying here at the Branch Office that no workload is too much for us; all it takes is time. I only wish we had more time to handle our workload.

In summation, I feel that the past three-plus-year term was mostly a very successful one, in spite of the COVID-19 pandemic and I can assure you that the officers of this Branch will strive to improve conditions for our membership in the next three years and beyond. Until next time, thanks again to all of you for your continued support.

***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.**



Hear No Evil, See No Evil, But Please Report The EVIL

By James Perryman, Executive Vice President

Letter Carriers throughout the country go to work each day with the commitment of a “fair days’ work for a fair day’s pay.” In most offices they clock in and perform their normal duties with no problems from their Supervisor, then they clock out and go home. In these Post Offices, Letter Carriers find the work environment to be acceptable and they enjoy coming to work. However, in some offices, Letter Carriers are being subjected to mistreatment by their Supervisor during their normal course of duties and this results in a poor working environment. Carriers’ state that they hate coming to work in these situations because of the mistreatment and the way it makes them feel. These types of environments are labeled as hostile or toxic. If Management is demonstrating an unrelenting attack on Letter Carriers in your office IT MUST BE STOPPED!

In some Post Offices throughout the country, managers treat Letter Carriers, and/or allow Letter Carriers to be treated in ways that create a work environment which is unhealthy and unacceptable. Such work environments are often labeled as hostile and/or toxic. The mistreatment of Letter Carriers will not be allowed by the NALC. However, the union will need your assistance. Letter Carriers need to look out for one another. Those of you that witness misconduct towards a fellow Letter Carrier should speak up. In other words, keep your eyes and ears open, be a good co-worker and if you witness this bad behavior on the part of management, we should help protect each other from this kind of abuse. It’s imperative to have your fellow union members back.

Management’s treatment of Letter Carriers sometimes violates one or more contractual provisions of the National Agreement, which includes Postal Handbooks and Manuals. When this happens, Letter Carriers should speak to their Shop Steward **immediately**. However, some Letter Carriers won’t stand up for themselves out of fear of retaliation. Some Letter Carriers may also have a fear of embarrassment when admitting that they are being bullied or harassed. Too often, some managers make these Letter Carriers feel powerless with no hope in sight. This may be happening to you. If so, speak up and let your Shop Steward know about the mistreatment towards you **immediately**. In order to stop to this kind of behavior, the union must be notified and it may have to start with you. Moreover, if you hear and/or witness your co-worker being bullied or harassed let the Shop Steward know as well.

Under no circumstance is there ever a legitimate reason for a Letter Carrier’s Supervisor to treat him or her in any way which lacks dignity and respect. Additionally, there is never a situation that would justify such unprofessional mistreatment towards employees at the Postal Service.

There are several common factors that contribute to some Supervisors’ mistreatment of Letter Carriers through harassment, intimidation, or bullying as follows:

- Pressure to make the numbers and meet workload projections.
- Unhappiness with a carrier’s performance.
- A supervisor’s personal dislike of the individual.
- Poor management skills or simply a lack of respect for others.

A Supervisor solely relying on DOIS projections to determine a carrier’s daily workload and using that information to harass or intimidate Letter Carriers into making those projections is an example of abusive behavior. Whatever the situation may be, there is never a reason for a Supervisor to belittle, bully, or treat Letter Carriers without dignity and respect.

The underlying premise addressed in Handbook M-39 requires management to maintain an atmosphere of mutual respect as follows:

115.4 **Maintain Mutual Respect Atmosphere**

The National Agreement sets out the basic rules and rights governing management and employees in their dealings with each other, but it is the front-line manager who controls management’s attempt to maintain an atmosphere between employer and employee which assures mutual respect for each other’s rights and responsibilities.

Management has the right to manage, but they also have the *responsibility* and *obligation* to set the tone as to how all employees will be treated. Management **must** maintain an atmosphere of dignity and respect. If confronted with mistreatment and/or unprofessional conduct from management, whether as an employee and/or a witness, do **not** engage in the confrontation. Walk away if necessary, and let your Shop Steward know immediately.

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Letter Carrier Political Fund

The power of LCPF is used to help elect House and Senate candidates who will protect the interests of Letter Carriers, but we cannot do it without your help. Federal law prohibits union dues from being used to support candidates for political office, so the NALC relies 100% on voluntary member contributions to the Letter Carrier Political Fund (LCPF). LCPF may accept contributions only from NALC members and family members. With the help of Letter Carriers, we have the opportunity to build the electoral and legislative power required to ensure that decisions affecting Letter Carriers' lives are made with our best interests in mind. Through the LCPF, we are able to amplify our voices and send a strong message to lawmakers seeking re-election and candidates who seek to join the halls of Congress. That message is that we will support those who support us, regardless of political party. LCPF is NALC's non-partisan political action committee (PAC), which is authorized to accept voluntary political donations from NALC members. Using these collective funds, the NALC can amplify our message on Capitol Hill, promote our priorities and identify those who will champion Letter Carrier issues in Congress.

It takes a lot of money for a candidate to campaign for office and the table of any given candidate's financial backers can be very broad and have a wide range of issues on which they want support. They can range from labor unions to environmental groups, from defense contractors to health care companies, or from agricultural interests to billionaires with pet projects. Many of these people and organizations have very deep pockets and

are difficult to compete with. The LCPF is a small yet effective piece of the puzzle and ensures that Letter Carriers are at the table, as opposed to being on the menu. To be there, we need to rely, as all unions do, on our power in numbers, and we need all of our members there with us to make a difference.

Most donors, who give to the LCPF, sign up for automatic withdrawal of a small amount of money from their paychecks each pay period through PostalEASE. Automatic payroll deduction spreads your donation across the year, while giving the Political Fund a steady source of support. The steady funding helps the Political Fund by allowing it to plan how to best use the funds in each two-year election cycle.

Career Letter Carriers and City Carrier Assistants (CCA's) may sign up for LCPF donations through payroll deductions. CCA's must sign up following each five day break in service, and former CCA's who have converted to career status must sign up again following their conversion to career status.

Active or retired Letter Carriers also can easily arrange for automatic deductions from a bank account or annuity. NALC members also have the option of making one-time contributions, or of supplementing their automatic donations by writing a check to the Letter Carrier Political Fund. To sign up or to get more information on how to donate, visit nalc.org/pac or contact me, I will be happy to assist you. All that we ask for is \$5.00 a pay period or \$10.00 a month. It's a very inexpensive way to secure the quality way of life that we have grown accustomed to. Thanks, to all who make campaign contributions to the Letter Carrier Political Fund. God bless you and stay well.

Treasurer's Report

3/16/2021 - 4/10/2021

General Account

Previous Balance	\$181,830.15
Receipts	<u>\$18,265.44</u>
Sub-Total	\$200,095.59
Disbursements	<u>(\$28,848.42)</u>
Total-on-Hand	<u>\$171,247.17</u>

Payroll Account

Previous Balance	\$180,886.77
Receipts	<u>\$6,000.000</u>
Sub-Total	\$186,886.77
Disbursements	<u>(\$16,450.11)</u>
Total-on-Hand	<u>\$170,436.66</u>

Convention Fund

Checking Acct #7 .15% rate-USPS-C.U.	
Total of Convention Fund	<u>\$120,620.74</u>

Contingency Fund

C.D. 6 mos 1.391% rate-Premier C.U.-#1	\$88,626.82
C.D. 6 mos 1.341% rate-Premier C.U.-#2	\$11,989.42
C.D. (1) year 2.227% rate Premier C.U.- #3	\$112,741.54
MM Cert #21 26 wks 1.75% rate-USPS-C.U.	\$25,525.56
MM Cert #18 26 wks 1.50% rate-USPS-C.U.	\$23,462.60
MM Cert # 19 26 wks 1.50% rate-USPS-C.U.	\$69,024.83
MM Checking # 8 26 wks .50% rate-USPS-C.U.	\$46,541.52
C.D. 6 mos .380% Priority One C.U.	\$33,799.57
Shares acct USPS-C.U.	<u>\$7.11</u>
Total of Contingency Fund	<u>\$411,718.87</u>

Retiree Fund

\$11,771.19

Daniel A. Gorman
Financial Secretary-Treasurer



I LOVE MY JOB!

By Albert Reyes, Vice President

There are many things to be thankful for as a Letter Carrier! Being represented by the NALC is definitely at the top of the list. The opportunity for overtime isn't bad. Generous customers throughout the year especially the holidays are rewarding. Bidding on newly-posted assignments by seniority is also great. Rotating days off are nice and not to mention the farmer tans. Yes, just a few things to be thankful for!

What I love most about my job is the opportunity to work off the clock! Yes, work for free! What's not to love about working for free! I show up to work 15-20 minutes early every day. I slyly walk over to collect my redis then head straight to pick up my FSS grab some chunkies on my way back and start casing. I look so cool doing it too. The way I blend in with the rest of the Carriers when it's time to clock in is genius.

At my current pay scale, I'm giving up \$10.50 for every 20 minutes that I work off the clock. Awesome, right? Because I do this five to six times in a service week I'm giving up around \$60.00 a week. On average there are four weeks in a month so that \$60.00 is now about \$240.00 a month. And that's not even clocking out in the PM for the "meet and greet." There are 12 months in a year so now my time off the clock adds up to \$2,880.00. I was born for this position!

Supervisors see me walking to the redis case but will not say a word. My game is tight. I'm a natural-born leader. I have over 20 years of seniority so the younger newly-converted CCA's see me working off the clock and want to be like me. "Often imitated never duplicated". I create my own rules. I got it like that. I challenge anyone to question me while I'm working off the clock. I love my job!

I am having fun working off the clock. Supervisors are friendly to me, and I pretty much get my way. Thanks to the NALC and the membership for ratifying the step increase effective April 10, 2021. Now I am making an additional \$1.06 an hour. I do not care about this pay increase because I work for free. \$32.33 an hour down the drain because looking cool working off the clock is more important to me.

Route inspections will soon come to my zone. I do not get office credit for casing FSS and casing off the clock, period. FSS is not caseable mail, but I am cooler than a six-pack on ice. I case it anyways. My tactics are ninja-like. I stand motionless in front of my case... casing one address at a time. I have twenty minutes before I clock in, so every minute casing off the clock is precious, no time for games. I'll conduct my vehicle inspection

after I clock in with everyone else, you know to blend in. The integrity of the route has now been compromised. Of course, I still love my job!

Management can question my office time all they want. Because during route inspections, there is an analysis period that management will compare my average time. When the office time of my route is more than the analysis period, management will discuss this with me and record it on Form 1840-B. This discussion is my time to shine as I proudly and confidently share that I have been working off the clock throughout the year. Head high, shoulders back, chin up! The look on management's face when I drop this information is going to be priceless. Timing is everything.

- a. "Compare average time used on each day during analysis period with the same day during the count. Determine whether office time and street time are more or less for comparable days. If the office time or street time during the count period is more than the analysis period, discuss with the Carrier to determine the reasons and record the reasons given under Comments on Form 1840-B. When the time during the count and inspection period is substantially greater than the analysis period, the manager must compare the mail volume for the periods where available. If there has been no substantial increase in mail volume, it is possible the Carrier has regulated his or her performance, and time during the count must then not be allowed.
- b. When the manager concludes that the time used during the week of count and inspection does not truly represent the time required to serve the route as substantiated by the comparative analysis, corrective action must be taken concerning the Carrier's performance. Consideration must be given to factors disclosed and whether a special count and inspection are necessary."

Does anyone believe management will give me twenty minutes back towards my office time working off the clock? Does this mean the time that I have been working off the clock will magically appear on Form 1840-B for my route inspection? What about paying me for the additional time? Minutes, hours, days, weeks, and months working off the clock can add up to

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Election Report

Prepared by Laura Rowe, Election Committee Chairperson

- 1,730 ballots were mailed to members at their last known address on Thursday February 4, 2021.
- 439 ballots were received by the committee and accepted for the count.
- 30 ballots were returned as undeliverable as addressed for various reasons.
- 3 ballots were received late and/or without return labels and were not counted.

The cost of the election totaled \$2,990.94. These costs were for postage, envelopes, printing of envelopes and the rental of a post office box.

Office Voting Numbers

Agoura	7
Chatsworth	14
Fillmore	1
Moorpark	3
North Hollywood	80
Northridge	30
Ojai	4
Oxnard	25
Pacoima	17
Reseda	11
San Fernando	80
Santa Paula	3
Simi Valley	26
Thousand Oaks	88
Ventura	21
Woodland Hills	29

Election Results

Trustees: 5 positions (# of votes received)

Greg Gaddis (290)	Walter Williams (208)
David Hyman (230)	Rochelle Harvey (199)
Louie Rodriguez (229)	

Thank you to the volunteers who helped stuff, seal, open and count ballots: Sue Degenhardt, Jeff Ross, Paulette Dyer, Dan Gorman, Bev Sucich, Angel Hale and Alex Lopez.

I Love My Job!

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thousands of dollars lost. I love my job so much I believe they will do it just for little old me! I am pretty much setting myself up for unnecessary confrontation regarding the wrong office time after the route has been inspected. But who cares when all I need to do is bid off the assignment. Or better yet, retire.

Tucked quietly in the JCAM (a supplement to the national agreement), is Article 41.3.K. It reads "Supervisors shall not require, nor permit, employees, to work off the clock." If the Supervisors are not saying anything then it's okay, right? All fun aside, NO! It's not okay. Having to address this with Carriers daily is just unbelievable. For some reason, they think they have the right to work for free. Some of you reading this are probably shaking your head in disbelief. Who would want to work for free?

Let's not forget NALC has been representing Carriers during some of our most historical trying times, such as the Great Depression, Pearl Harbor, World Wars. The Great Postal Strike of 1970, earthquakes, hurricanes, fires, floods. Mass shootings, riots, 9/11 terrorist attacks, pandemics, presidential, state, and city elections, four impeached presidents (twice since 2019), and Carriers still want to work off the clock.

There are a handful of Supervisors that will confront and question Carriers for casing off the clock. Again, only a handful

because they know it's wrong and a violation. Other Supervisors just blindly look the other way. Sad, but true. It isn't like management doesn't know what time Carriers start in their zones. Carriers will also look the other way trying not to get in fellow Carrier's business. Seriously, why would anyone be silent when they see their fellow Carriers working off the clock?

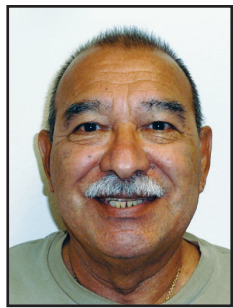
I am disappointed when Supervisors do not address Carriers working off the clock. Whatever the reason is for working off the clock you're not fooling anyone, only yourself. It's a shame to give away free money. What's most discouraging is that Carriers will read this article and will continue to work off the clock. It's already a hard habit to break. Preserve the Letter Carrier craft. See your Steward if you're aware of Carriers working off the clock. If you haven't done so already download the NALC app. Be safe out there!

Know Your Rights

204b's BIDDING FOR BARGAINING UNIT POSITIONS

M-00016 Pre-arb, NC-NAT-8581

Letter Carriers temporarily detailed to a supervisory position (204B) may not bid on vacant Letter Carrier Craft duty assignments while so detailed.



Happy New Healthy Year

By Joe Gutierrez, Branch 2902 Health Benefits Representative

I want to thank the Branch membership for re-electing me to be your Health Benefits Representative for another term.

I also want to thank Mary Stanley for being an excellent Assistant Health Benefits Representative and wish her well as our new Treasurer. Thank you Dan Gorman for your many, many years of outstanding work as the Branch Treasurer. You will be hard to replace but Mary will be a great replacement and I wish her well.

A new year is upon us now and I will go over the usual messages. New deductibles are due, authorizations have to be obtained for all surgeries and procedures. Cat scan x-rays, MRIs, etc all need authorizations too. The plan has a new way of paying your medical bills.

There is a new program called the Wellness Incentive

Program for high option members. Members will receive a debit card and once you sign on you will earn anywhere from \$10-50 dollars for losing weight, stopping smoking or even just getting your annual flu shot. Perform these and/or a few others programs and money will be added to your debit card to use for medical services not covered by your health insurance. Examples are dental treatment, eye glasses, and over the counter medications. I will be gathering more information on this plan and report on it at a later date.

Be sure to take advantage of the free items the health plan offers such as flu shots, physicals, etc.

I want to thank all of you who stayed with the union plan Health Benefit Plan and I want to welcome all our new members. Soon the Covid issue will be in our rear view mirror and we will have the ability to have union meetings again, which I really miss. Until then I wish you all well and be sure to get the COVID-19 vaccination when it is your turn.



Time to Move-On

By Mary Stanley, Treasurer/Financial Secretary

I would like to take this opportunity to say THANK YOU to all my brothers and sisters for supporting me for so many years as your Branch 2902 NALC Assistant Health Benefits Representative.

A special THANK YOU goes to Joe Gutierrez (Health Benefit Officer) for his guidance and support at the beginning of my involvement and throughout the years with the NALC HBP. I have held the position for 10 years. The time had come for me to pass on the responsibilities to a younger member. Marcela Cruz, congratulations to you on your new responsibilities as Assistant Health Benefits officer. Call upon Joe any time, as you will find that he is extremely informative. Whenever I did not know or was unsure of something, I called on Joe. As Joe was there for me, I will be there for you. I will continue to strongly support and recommend our NALC health plan to all members (new, senior, and soon to retire).

As many of you already know from the last issue of the *Mail Bag News* because President Ray Hill mentioned it in his article, it was time that I moved on to a long-awaited position as Treasurer/Financial Secretary. About three to five years ago, I went up to Dan "The Money Man" (I like that) and made a statement to him that "I want your position". At first, he looked surprised and speechless.

Then he chuckled. Then I told him, I was serious. I told him that I was not ready at the time, but that I will be. That time had come.

A little about myself and my accounting experience. My first exposure to accounting was back in the mid-70's. I worked part-time for a CPA, preparing income tax files for the clients. I learned how to file 1040-EZ (Short form) at that time. I moved on to Book-keeping Accounting and balancing the books (as we called it then). Back then it was all on paper and pencil. Dan remembers that (as he mentioned). Then along came the Post Office in 1990 and the rest is history.

Fast forwarding to the present. Last year in preparation of taking over the Financial Secretary/Treasurer's position, I completed Introduction to Accounting, Financial Accounting, Managerial Accounting, and QuickBooks. Currently, I am taking Excel and Payroll Accounting. I will receive a Certificate of Achievement in Accounting once I have completed the present classes. I have already taken the opportunity to train with Dan back in February and will continue to do so. There are quarterly, semi-annual, and yearly reports, as well as preparing for audits. Dan, Bev and I have become very good, dear friends. I share this information if there are questions about my knowledge in accounting. I look forward to a very fulfilling experience.

Keep Healthy and Stay Safe. God Bless Us All.

HYDRATE

Your body is made up of about 60-70% water and it can be found in your muscles, lungs, and brain. It helps to transport oxygen to your cells, nutrients to your organs and tissues, and protects your joints and organs. It also assists your body to regulate its temperature.

A well-hydrated body will help you feel better, your skin will look better, and you will have more energy.

Suggestions to Help Increase Your Water Intake:

- Try mineral-added, bottled water for more flavor.
- Try club soda or carbonated, flavored water instead of soda if you need that carbonation.
- Dilute real fruit juice with half water or club soda.
- A glass of water before each meal and whenever hunger pains occur between meals may satisfy your body's need for water and help to curb excessive eating.
- Although your doctor can give you more specifics for you, drink about 8 cups of water each day. Space your intake throughout the day and drink more if you have been exercising or sweating.

Symptoms of Dehydration May Include:

- Dry mouth
- Dizziness
- Light-headedness
- Inability to concentrate
- Confusion

Proper hydration is only one aspect of living a healthy lifestyle. To learn more about changing your daily habits to live a healthy, longer, and stronger life, contact your Employee Assistance Program. The EAP website also has information, resources, calculators, and assessments that may assist you in your planning.

Make the Call!

USPS Employee Assistance Program
1-800-327-4968
(1-800-EAP-4-YOU) TTY: 1-877-492-7341
www.EAP4YOU.com

Start your healthy lifestyle today.



Memories of Brother JON D. GAUNCE

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 Great late President and founder of “TRI-VALLEY” Branch 2902 The “Jon D. Gaunce Union Hall.” The vote was unanimous among the officers in attendance. At the regular membership meeting in February 2010 it was voted on and passed unanimously also.

We made preparations to have Brother Jon’s name painted on the wall above his hand-painted picture on the 25th anniversary of our Branch. This couldn’t be more fitting for a great union leader the caliber that Jon was to his fellow Carriers. Jon passed away 25 years as of the date I am writing this (4-10-21). 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. At the time I was the Chief Shop Steward in Simi Valley Main office and I can remember that our office was under attack daily by the militant style of supervision. The harassment was so bad that Carriers were going out on stress almost weekly.

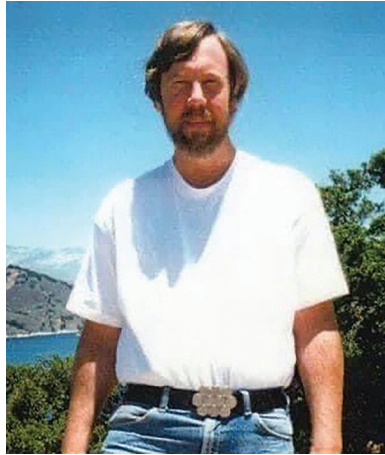
Brother Jon stepped up to the plate and formed an informational picket with Carriers and their families out in front of the Main Office for a week or so. This was enough to call attention not only to the public, but to management as well. It got so bad that it was enough for the GAO (Government Accounting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

investigation with Postal management in Simi Valley.

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 for our Letter Carriers, farm workers or 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 arbitration decisions made by top management and union leaders. The 14-point plan and the T-6 agreement were very helpful and Jon myself and other Shop Stewards at that time formed these Local agreements that were made to create peace and harmony among the Carriers, Stewards, and Management. For many years these plans helped a lot and kept the grievance numbers down and a lot less stress in our local Post Offices. Grievances were finally getting settled at the lower levels. Brother Jon was a big blessing to so many workers and an inspiration for justice.



On May 23rd, Brother Jon would have been 66 years 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, especially me. Because of your great effort and determination I was able to have a successful and rewarding career and retirement. With all my love always, until we meet again Brother Jon, In solidarity always, God Bless you.

Know Your Rights

M-01667 USPS Letter to Postal Service management October 24, 2007 (abbreviated)

USPS Supervisor Responsibilities Under Weingarten

When interviewing an Employee Where Discipline Might Result Under the Weingarten rule, you must allow each employee the following rights in conducting an investigatory interview:

1. Each employee has a right to be represented by a union steward during an investigatory interview (but not during an Article 16 “discussion”). If, before or at any time during the interview, an employee requests a union steward or in any other way indicates that he or she wants representation, you must do one of three things: (1) you must provide a steward, or (2) you must end the interview, or (3) you must offer the employee the choice of continuing the interview without a steward, or of having no interview at all and therefore losing the benefit that the interview might have given to him or her. When in doubt, it is better to provide a steward or contact Labor Relations immediately.

2. The supervisor must tell the employee and steward the purpose and subject of the meeting before the meeting begins. Then, if either the steward or the employee requests, adequate time must be given to them to talk privately before (or during) the interview.
3. During the interview, you must permit the steward to participate. He or she may ask questions, clarify the employee’s answers, comment about the questions, discuss favorable facts, suggest others who have information, and advise the employee. The steward is not allowed to disrupt the meeting.

The Weingarten rule does not apply to other types of meetings, such as:

- Discussions.
- Employees do not have the right to union representation during fitness-for-duty physical examinations.



Help to Persuade our Representatives

By David Hyman, Branch 2902 Trustee & Political Liaison

Greetings Sisters & Brothers! The 117th Congress continues to move forward with the NALC prioritizing at least one Senate bill and at least five House bills.

The USPS Fairness Act, intended to repeal the pre-funding mandate. In the Senate, S.145 has eight cosponsors including Senator Dianne Feinstein. We need to contact Senator Alex Padilla to ask him to get onboard with this bill. The House version, HR 695 has 260 co-sponsors including our local members Julia Brownley, Tony Cárdenas and Brad Sherman. Those in the 25th District should lobby Mike Garcia on this one.

HR 82 looks to reform Social Security and correct the government offset. This bill has 121 cosponsors and is the first bill Garcia has signed on to that the NALC is pushing. Brownley and Sherman are also on this bill. We need to encourage Cardenas to get on board with this one.

There are three resolutions from previous Congresses the NALC is pushing. HRES 47 is the anti-privatization bill with 140 co-sponsors including Sherman. HRES 109 supports door delivery and none of our four members are among the 94

co-sponsors. HRES 114 maintains six-day delivery. It has 87 co-sponsors, none of which are from our districts. The NALC normally has a lobby week within six months of the November election to get Congress behind our bills but due to COVID-19, this that did not occur this year. If you have the opportunity to lobby your member of Congress, thank them for their previous years of support and encourage them to get onboard with these bills. We have made some progress with new member Garcia. He is on one of our bills.

Hopefully Postmaster General Louis DeJoy's days are numbered. In late February, nominees were nominated to fill the three vacancies on the Postal Board of Governors. The previous President nominated all of the current Board of Governor members. Four of them are Republicans and two of them are Democrats. Potentially, the three new nominees, if approved by the Senate, could remove DeJoy, if at least two of the existing board members, two of which are democrats, concur.

Be well, this could be the year the Dodgers repeat as World Champions!





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*Legal Advisory

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Where: Golden Panda
 1825 Madera Rd., Simi Valley
When: Tuesday, May 18, 2021
Time: 11:00 am to 1:00 pm

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Where: Golden Panda
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When: Tuesday, June 15, 2021
Time: 11:00 am to 1:00 pm

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SENIOR VICE PRESIDENT

- Alex Lopez

VICE PRESIDENT

- Albert Reyes

TREASURER/FINANCIAL SECRETARY

- Mary Stanley

RECORDING SECRETARY

- Laura Rowe

DIRECTOR OF RETIREES

- Bev Sucich

MBA/NSBA REPRESENTATIVE

- Chris Alessi

HEALTH BENEFIT OFFICER

- Joe Gutierrez

ASSISTANT HEALTH BENEFITS REPRESENTATIVE

- Marcela Cruz

SGT.-AT-ARMS

- Bob Golden

TRUSTEES:

- Greg Gaddis
- David Hyman
- Louie Rodriguez
- Rochelle Harvey
- Walter Williams

WEBMASTER

- Larry Orcutt

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Chatsworth Chief S.S.	Call Office
Fillmore Chief S.S.	Connie Ramirez
Moorpark Chief S.S.	Adriana Serrano
No. Hollywood Chief S.S.	Louie Rodriguez
Chandler	Greg Gaddis
Laurel Canyon	Louie Rodriguez
Studio City	Greg Gaddis
Valley Village	Louie Rodriguez
Northridge Chief S.S.	Call Office
Porter Ranch	Call Office
Ojai Chief S.S.	Call Office
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	Pablo Galvan
Alternate S.S.	Louie Tanglao
Pacoima Chief S.S.	Call Office
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San Fernando Chief S.S.	Albert Reyes
M.C.A.	Albert Reyes
North Hills	Albert Reyes
Sylmar / Main Office	Martin Diaz
	Robert Tracy
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Simi Valley S.S.	Sandra Dearborn
	Durim Kamberi
Mt. McCoy Station S.S.	Sal Lopez
Thousand Oaks Chief S.S.	Alex Lopez
	Walter Williams
	Mary Stanley
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THE MAIL BAG NEWS

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Calendar of Events

- MAY 20** Regular Branch Meeting 7:00pm Union Hall-Chatsworth
(Subject to COVID-19 restrictions)
In order to attend Zoom meeting, please send request to webmaster@nalcbranch2902.org
- JUN 3** Executive Board Meeting 6:00pm
Executive Council Meeting 7:00pm
(Subject to COVID-19 restrictions)
- JUN 15** Retiree Lunch 11:00am Golden Panda-Simi Valley
(Cancelled due to COVID-19 restrictions)
- JUN 17** Regular Branch Meeting 7:00pm Union Hall-Chatsworth
(Subject to COVID-19 restrictions)
In order to attend Zoom meeting, please send request to webmaster@nalcbranch2902.org
- JUN 20** Father's Day
- JUL 1** Executive Board Meeting 6:00pm
Executive Council Meeting 7:00pm
(Subject to COVID-19 restrictions)
- JUL 4** Independence Day
- JUL 5** Independence Day - Holiday observed
- JUL 20** Retiree Lunch 11:00am Golden Panda-Simi Valley
(Cancelled due to COVID-19 restrictions)
- JUL 22** Regular Branch Meeting 7:00pm Union Hall-Chatsworth
(Subject to COVID-19 restrictions)
In order to attend Zoom meeting, please send request to webmaster@nalcbranch2902.org