



# THE Mail Bag NEWS

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

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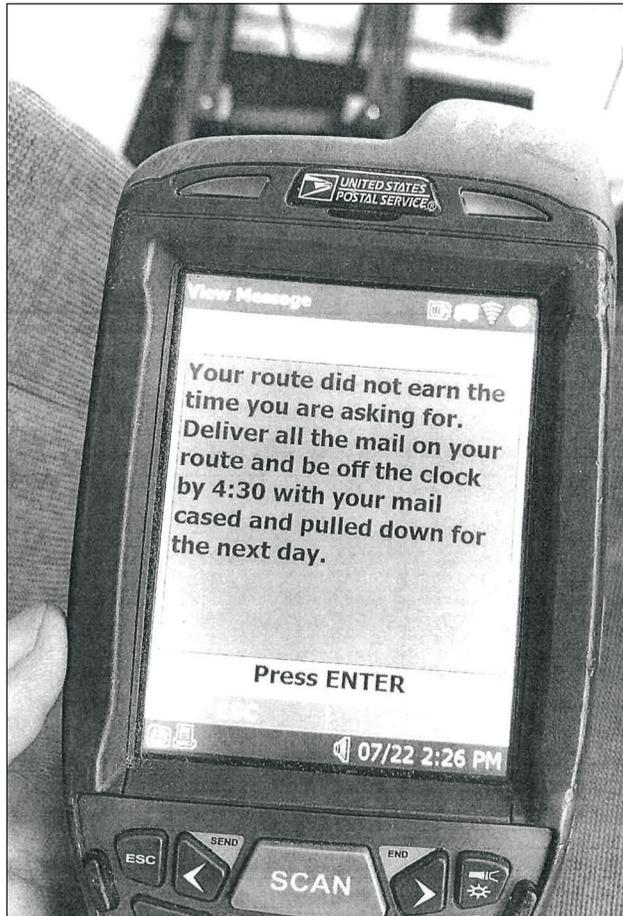
## The Fox Has Scattered the Hens

By Ray Hill, President

**W**ith year 2020 being the unofficial 35<sup>th</sup> anniversary year of Branch 2902 as it is currently comprised, I had planned to dedicate this issue of the *Mail Bag News* (MBN) to Branch 2902 history. However, the *extreme dysfunction* displayed by Sierra Coastal District (SCD) management forced me to scrap that plan. In the last issue of the MBN, I asked the question, "Is the Fox guarding the hen house?" in reference to our new Postmaster General (PMG), Louis DeJoy. By the time you received that issue of the MBN, all hell had broken loose in the USPS hen house and fear of the fox (PMG DeJoy) had scattered the hens, causing them to run around as though their heads were cut off. As our carriers bravely do their best to keep a positive attitude while working during the COVID-19 pandemic, SCD Management has responded by heaping as much stress as possible on them. It is apparent that fear of our new PMG's carving knife has caused SCD management to go berserk and shirk their basic managerial responsibilities, including their responsibility to provide carriers with reasonable expectations and clear instructions that are possible for the carriers to follow.

### Exactly What are Management's Instructions?

The Handbook M-41 reads as follows, in relevant part:



131.4 *Reporting Requirements*

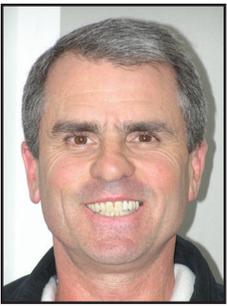
131.41 *It is your responsibility to verbally inform management when you are of the opinion that you will be unable to case all mail distributed to the route, perform other required duties, and leave on schedule or when you will be unable to complete delivery of all mail.*

131.42 *Inform management of this well in advance of the scheduled leaving time and not later than immediately following the final receipt of mail. Management will instruct you what to do (emphasis added).*

I now know that the authors of the Handbook M-41 should have elaborated on that last sentence and added that, "Management will provide you with non-conflicting instructions that are possible to follow!"

Carriers have long fought the 3996 battle when requesting overtime; that is nothing new. In the past, when management denied a carrier's request for overtime, the carrier was required

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## The Fox Has Scattered the Hens

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to call from the street for authorization. The carrier would call and, after much annoying hemming and hawing, management told the carrier to “finish delivering your route but the time is not authorized.” That was all the carrier needed to hear; it is well-established through past grievance resolutions that, once management instructs a carrier to complete delivery of their assignment while on overtime, the overtime is authorized. Now carriers request additional time to complete their assignments via text on their MDD Scanners. The problem is that once they do so, management fails/refuses to provide the carrier with non-conflicting instructions that the carrier is able to follow. One carrier sent a text that read, “I will need 30 minutes to complete route. Should I finish route or bring mail back?” As you can see, management responded, “Your route did not earn the time you are asking for. Deliver all the mail on your route and be off the clock by 4:30 with your mail cased and pulled down for the next day.” Another carrier texted, “I need clear instructions what to do, finish route or bring mail back?” Management responded, “Handbook M-41; Section 112.24; Display a willing attitude and put forth a conscientious effort in developing skills to perform duties assigned.”

What kind of a **bullshit response** is that for management to give to a carrier who simply wants to know if they should complete their assignment or return to the office with undelivered mail? How the hell is this allowed by SCD management? I don't believe that the fox himself, PMG DeJoy, would consider this kind of response acceptable to an employee seeking guidance from management. I can only imagine how angry I would be if I had to deal with that kind of response while I was on the street working in the heat, wearing a mask, fearful of COVID-19 and simply asking if I should complete my assignment or return to the office with undelivered mail.

After our carriers are subjected to the horrible management tactics described above, they are placed in a damned if you do, damned if you don't situation. To add insult to injury, if the carrier delivers all their mail, management charges them with unauthorized overtime and issues them discipline. If the carrier brings mail back, they are charged with delay of mail and issued discipline. Is this really the manner in which SCD management wants to treat their carriers working through the COVID-19 pandemic? Rest assured NALC finds this behavior totally unacceptable and we will do our best to put a stop to it as quickly as possible.

### NALC.ORG Issues Statement

You are all aware of the changes in service, including widespread delay of mail, that have been implemented since PMG DeJoy took office. The following statement dated 08/03/2020 was issued on the NALC.ORG website addressing these issues:

*The National Association of Letter Carriers (NALC) thanks the American people for their long-term support and appreciation of the service our members provide to homes and businesses throughout the country. Letter carriers value their relationship with the public, and take great pride in serving their customers. As they risk their health each day along with other front-line essential workers, letter carriers have become angry, frustrated and embarrassed by various USPS management initiatives that are now resulting in delayed mail and undelivered routes in many areas of the country. The Postal Service must provide reliable service to postal customers, particularly during the pandemic when our role is more essential than ever. We will continue our engagement with Postal Service management and Congress as we work through a transition in USPS governance, the effects of COVID-19 and the consequent need for financial relief. We appreciate the patience, support and continued confidence of the American people.*

These negative changes have not gone unnoticed by Congress. House Speaker Nancy Pelosi and 174 other House Democrats sent a letter to PMG DeJoy urging him to halt the changes resulting in delayed and undelivered mail. Senate Democrats also sent a letter to PMG DeJoy, expressing frustration at the changes that appear to be aimed at slowing mail delivery.

I urge you to check the NALC.ORG Website frequently for updates on changes affecting the timely delivery of mail and the response from Congress to these negative changes.

### Happy Anniversary Branch 2902

Year 2020 marks the unofficial 35<sup>th</sup> anniversary of Branch 2902 as it is currently comprised. In 1985, several small local branches in the Tri-Valley area merged with Branch 2902, including North Hollywood, Oxnard, Reseda, Simi Valley, Thousand Oaks, Ventura and Woodland Hills. Of course there were other branches that later merged with Branch 2902, but 1985 was really the year the Branch was born. I was a rookie in North Hollywood when the merger was approved and I recall the veteran North Hollywood members being ecstatic after it was official. Our Branch would now have full-time union representation and we were blessed to have Jon Gaunce as our President and full-time officer.

Jon was a 30-year-old Carrier from the Thousand Oaks office and he was the mastermind behind the mergers of the Branches. I first met Jon during one of his station visits to North Hollywood. Jon had a calm demeanor about him and management personnel in my office treated him with the utmost respect, probably because his presence scared the hell out of them. Of course Jon's later battles with Postmaster Dale

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# Something Old, Something New, And Something Borrowed

By James Perryman, Executive Vice President

For some time now Letter Carriers have been faced with many challenges. The COVID-19 pandemic and occurrences of civil unrest have posed an increased safety risk for all Postal employees. As always, Letter Carriers continue to rise to the challenge and provide extraordinary service to the public. Although, it may not always be business as usual for the Postal Service, the show must go on and the delivery and collection of mail is ever-changing.

We have been getting a lot of calls at the Branch and many have expressed concerns during station visits about the tool that management is using to estimate the daily workload and expectations of City Carriers. Recently, the NALC received notification from the USPS of a change to the Delivery Operations Information System (DOIS). USPS informed the NALC of its intent to reduce the amount of time allocated to parcel delivery from 90 to 60 seconds per parcel when DOIS estimates a route's street time. What does that mean for Letter Carriers you may ask, in my opinion, NOT A DAMN THING, SAME OLD CRAP.

Over the years, the Postal Service has developed various tools to estimate the daily workload of Letter Carriers. These tools have been misused by some front line supervisors for years and have been the subject of multiple grievances that have risen to the national level. It is important for Letter Carriers to understand the national level settlements pertaining to time projection tools and how they relate to the work requirements and expectations for Letter Carriers.

While the names have changed with each newly-developed tool, what has not changed are the Letter Carrier's responsibilities and reporting requirements as prescribed in the *Handbook M-39, Management of Delivery Service, and Handbook M-41 City Delivery Carriers Duties and Responsibilities*.

In the past the NALC has challenged the use of any projection tool to determine a Carrier's daily workload or as the sole basis for disciplinary actions. These issues have been resolved in several national level settlements in relevant part as follows: "NALC and USPS agreed that DOIS projections are not the sole determinant of a Carrier's leaving or returning time, or daily workload. As such, the projections cannot be used as the sole basis for corrective action."

Letter Carriers are responsible for estimating the amount of time it will take to complete their assigned duties. Additionally, Letter Carriers are required to complete and submit a PS Form 3996 to the Supervisor when the workload cannot be completed in the allotted time. Letter Carriers have the right to assess their workload to determine if he/she will need to complete a PS Form 3996 without the use of any projection tool used by management, including DOIS. There is no requirement for a Letter Carrier to meet the time standards of

any projection tool used by management, including the delivery of parcels. Likewise, management still has the responsibility to manage the workload within the handbooks, manuals and National Agreement.

A complete explanation of Handbook M-41 outlines the procedures for Letter Carriers to complete PS Form 3996 and related Supervisor responsibilities can be found in the *Letter Carrier Resource Guide* available at [nalc.org/resourceguide](http://nalc.org/resourceguide).

## Expedited to Street/ Afternoon Sortation (ESAS)

At the time of writing this article, the Postal Service has introduced a new initiative called Expedited to Street/ Afternoon Sortation (ESAS). Per management, this program is an enhancement of the current Expedited Preferential Mail (EPM) Delivery Program which reduces morning office time to allow Carriers to get on the street earlier. Upon returning from the street, the Carriers will work any unsorted mail into delivery sequence for the next day delivery. City Carriers will only sort First Class AFSM flat tubs, local newspapers, and SPRs during the morning operation. Upon returning from the street delivery, City Carriers will sort all mail, as directed by management. During this time they will also handle any ancillary duties previously performed in the morning (edit books, hold mail, etc.).

Here we go again, another and new unilateral test by Postal management. The last initiative that was introduced, (Consolidated Casing), was disastrous at best to both Letter Carriers and management in most cases. The results of this test created a negative impact on work performance, emotional stress, and the physical wellbeing of all employees that were affected.

Thankfully an agreement was reached to put an end to this test initiative before it impacted any offices represented by our Branch. Nevertheless, a new horror story continues and with new unilateral test initiatives by management, comes new problems.

In some of the ESAS test site offices, Carriers have been improperly instructed to begin tour, immediately clock on to street operation, check vehicle, retrieve accountable mail, SPR's, parcels, DPS, FSS, proceed to load vehicle and leave to deliver. The Carriers were not allowed to clock into office time operation until they return from delivering the mail. These instructions are in a direct violation of Postal Handbooks M-39 and M-41. Except for the loading and delivering of mail, the above mentioned instruction should have been done on office time. If this is happening in your office, see your Shop Steward immediately.

Management's action and instruction does not end here. Carriers at some of the above mentioned ESAS test sites

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and non-test sites are expected to complete the assignment within eight hours or by the expected end tour time based on DOIS projections. When the Carrier request additional time to complete the route, in most cases it's denied by the Supervisor and the Carrier is instructed to call from the street to request again for the disapproved time. When the Carrier calls from the street, as instructed, to inform the Supervisor of his/ her inability to complete the route within the (DOIS) projected time, he/ she is given another instructed to complete the route within, **you guessed it**, the (DOIS) projected time. Regardless of the Carriers request and/or disposition, no other instruction is given by management. The Carrier is now force to make a decision to deliver the mail, work past the DOIS projected time, or stop delivering and bring the mail back to end tour by the DOIS projected time. Regardless of the Carrier's decision in this situation, the Supervisor's improper, conflicting, and confusing instruction placed the employee is a no win situation, which can be viewed as an entrapment.

## Unauthorized Overtime/Earned Time

Some managers have informed Carriers that they are instructed to complete their assignments, but the request for overtime is disapproved. This is another improper instruction borrowed from management's playbook of the past that failed. When Carriers inform management of the inability to complete the routes in eight hours and the instruction is given to complete their routes, without expressing authorization for overtime, the permissions is inherent in the authorization to complete the route. This means the overtime time is approved. This issue was resolved as follows:

### The Step 4 Grievance Settlement (M-00326) States in relevant part:

*"...the grievants did inform management of their inability to complete their routes in eight hours. Further, it was demonstrated that they were ordered by management to complete their routes. (Although there was no expressed authorization to complete the delivery of the mail on an overtime basis, the permissions would be inherent in the authorization to continue delivery after notification that the grievants were unable to complete the routes.)..."*

If this is happening in your office, request to see your Shop Steward immediately.

It appears that the NALC and USPS are headed towards another grievance(s) for another Postal unilateral test and inappropriate instructions. One would think that management would have learned from previous grievances and stop borrowing the same old playbook. The more the Postal Service changes, the more the union's position remains the same; enforcement of contractual compliance of the National Agreement.

Although Letter Carriers are required to follow management's instructions, management must provide instruction that allows for the employee to properly complete his/her duties without unnecessary conflict and confusion. The union advises Carriers

to do their best to follow management's instruction and file a grievance (within 14 days of the incident date) if necessary, when given ridiculous expectations and improper instructions to complete an assignment within unreasonable time limits. If unable to complete the assignment within the DOIS projected times, notify management; provide the estimated time needed to complete the assignment. If management continues to be difficult, unreasonable, and non-objective when requesting time, complete the assignment as soon as possible. Do **not** bring the deliverable mail back to the office unless instructed to do so by management. This also applies when Carriers are told that they didn't earn the time requested to complete the assignment and/or when instructed to deliver all the mail but the overtime requested is disapproved.

Additionally, Carriers are not required to earn time in order to request for time needed to complete an assignment. Understand that the so called "earned time" is based on the DOIS and/or other projections, which does not determine the leave time or return time for the assignment. Again, if this is happening in your office request to see your Shop Steward immediately.

## Letter Carrier Political Fund

NALC President Fredric V. Rolando provides relevant information that illustrates what the Letter Carrier Political Fund (LCPF) represents and how it's used in his June 15, 2020 statement in part as follows:

*"On July 2<sup>nd</sup>, Senators Susan Collins (R-ME) and Dianne Feinstein (D-CA) introduced the "Postal Service Emergency Assistance Act" (S. 4174). The bill would provide \$25 billion in direct relief to the agency through establishment of a "Postal Service COVID-19 Emergency Fund" to make up the difference between revenue and expenses during the pandemic, making the fund available through September 30, 2022. Notably, the bill makes clear that the \$10 billion Treasury loan approved in the CARES Act, would be subject to the terms and conditions agreed to in the note purchase agreement between the Postal Service and Federal Financing Bank from September 29, 2018. The inclusion of these terms would be far more favorable than the rumored terms and conditions that the Department of Treasury is insisting on but refusing to make public in order for the Postal Service to access the funds.*

*There is rising support from Senate Republicans to pass another stimulus, but it remains to be seen exactly how it will go. NALC is hopeful that the bipartisan and bicameral calls for immediate financial relief will be part of the conversation between House and Senate leadership and the White House when negotiations over the next relief package resume later this month.*

*These two provisions of the Senate bill are consistent with NALC's immediate priorities related to COVID-19 funding and are similar to provisions contained in the HEROES Act,*



# Discipline

By Albert Reyes, Vice President

**D**iscipline such as Emergency Suspensions, Letters of Warning, Suspensions of (14) Fourteen-Days or Less, Suspensions of More Than (14) Fourteen-Days and Letters of Removal can be issued by management at any time, for any reason. This is typically done after a fact-finding. Signing for discipline does not admit guilt. Carriers may not agree with the discipline that the supervisor is issuing. Therefore, Carriers will not sign for discipline unless a Shop Steward is present. A Shop Steward does not need to be present when signing for discipline. Carriers have 14 days from the date discipline was issued to file a grievance. See the Shop Steward at once if discipline has been issued.

In San Fernando, supervisors are telling Carriers not to worry about the discipline being issued, so of course, the Carrier believes the supervisor. Fourteen days will pass and because a grievance was never filed; discipline will now stay in the Carrier's files and records for two years. Not all supervisors are like this but one supervisor continues to tell Carriers, "This will be thrown out, just sign for it." The Carrier will do just that. Several months later the Carrier will be issued discipline again. Come to find out it was never thrown out. Had the Carrier filed a grievance on time, it could have been resolved. Again, see a Shop Steward at once.

Lately, discipline has been issued for calling out sick. According to management, if a Carrier calls out sick more than three times, discipline is issued. And yes, even during a pandemic. Also, in San Fernando, Carriers are placed on Restricted Sick Leave (RSL) for calling out three times. Immediately after being placed on RSL, supervisors are handing out (14) Fourteen-Day Suspensions like candy on Halloween for attendance. See a Shop Steward at once if this is happening. Unfortunately, the

morale in San Fernando has dropped over the years due to this practice, and others just like it.

An entire article can be written about the supervisor's trust and integrity in San Fernando but this article is on discipline. Back to discipline, Article 16.1 Section 1 states, "Discipline should be corrective in nature, rather than punitive. No employee may be disciplined or discharged except for just cause such as, but not limited to, insubordination, pilferage, intoxication (drugs or alcohol), incompetence, failure to perform work as requested, violation of the terms of this agreement, or failure to observe safety rules and regulations. Any such discipline or discharge shall be subject to the grievance-arbitration procedure provided for in this Agreement, which could result in reinstatement and restitution, including back pay."

Corrective rather than punitive, this is worth repeating, "Discipline should be corrective in nature, rather than punitive." The provisions of Article 16 do not solely apply to San Fernando Carriers but every Carrier, in every office. So why would a supervisor issue discipline rather than address and correct an issue? It just may be easier to issue discipline, mislead Carriers, and hope that the discipline sticks. Therefore, it is important to file a grievance at once. Stewards are certified to resolve grievances at the lowest level. Supervisors are not Shop Stewards. Again, see a Steward immediately.

Thanks again to all the Carriers who have sacrificed during this uncertain time. Congratulations to those who have retired. Carriers are a vital position within the Postal Service. Continue to fight for the rights and work that belongs to the Letter Carrier craft. Without the dedicated service of Letters Carriers, communities could not thrive and be the success that they are. Be safe out there and download the NALC app if not done so already.

## Letter Carrier Political Fund

By making a contribution to the Letter Carrier Political Fund, you are doing so voluntarily with the understanding that your contribution is not a condition of membership in the National Association of Letter Carriers or of employment by the Postal Service, nor is it part of Union dues. You have a right to refuse to contribute without any reprisal. The Letter Carrier Political Fund will use the money it receives to contribute to candidates for federal office and undertake other political spending as permitted by law. Your selection shall remain in full force and effect until cancelled. Contributions to the Letter Carrier Political Fund are not deductible for federal income tax purposes. Federal law prohibits the Letter Carrier Political Fund from soliciting contributions from individuals who are not NALC members, executive and administrative staff or their families. Any contribution received from such an individual will be refunded to that contributor. Federal law requires us to use our best efforts to collect and report the name, mailing address, occupation and name of employer of individuals whose contributions exceed \$200 per calendar year. Any guideline amount is merely a suggestion, and an individual is free to contribute more or less than the guideline suggests and the Union will not favor or disadvantage anyone by reason of the amount of their contribution or their decision not to contribute.



# Protecting Your Loved Ones with a Will

By Chris Alessi, MBA/NSBA Representative

**D**uring these very uncertain times that we are living in today, every adult needs a Will. This important document tells the state and the executor of who will receive the assets of the deceased. With a Will you will control the distribution of your property and it will protect your loved ones too.

Naming a personal **Representative/Executor** is very important. It must be someone **who you can trust** so they can carry out the instructions of your Will, make financial decisions that can affect your estate's value, make sure final bills are paid and distribute assets as you specified.

Elvis Presley's estate was worth \$10 million at the time of his death in 1977, but without the benefit of proper estate planning, 73% of the estate went towards legal fees, estate administration costs, and estate taxes, leaving only \$3 million for his daughter.

While people often think that only the elderly need to have a Will, it is advisable for adults of all ages to have one. It is especially important for parents with minor children, even if they don't have significant assets. Without a Will, the government decides who will become your children's guardian. In order to have a say in who will care for your children-should you die before they reach adulthood-you must draft a **Last Will & Testament** to state your wishes.

Even adults without families can benefit from having a Last Will & Testament. You have worked hard to earn what you have—your home, your car, your bank accounts. Shouldn't you have a say in how it will be distributed in the event of your death? Without a will, your wishes will be irrelevant, and the state will decide how to distribute your estate. Precious heirlooms, that you may wish to give to a friend upon your death, will instead be sold at auction and the money will go to the government. In order to make sure that your estate is handled according to your wishes, and that your money is given to a friend, charity, or other organizations of your choice, you must draft a will.

According to the United Way, 60% of Americans die without having a Last Will & Testament, leaving the government to decide how to decide their estate. If you want to have the final decision about how your estate is distributed after you pass on, a **Last Will & Testament is a very vital document**.

It is important to keep your Will up-to-date. If you have a new child after you draft your Will, you must update the will to include that child, even if you wish to state the child will receive no part of your estate. In most jurisdictions, if you don't name all of your heirs, they or their legal guardian(s) will have the right to contest your Will.

In order to make sure that your Will is up-to-date, you should review your will after the following events:

- You get married or divorced (change in marital status may void your Will),

- You are unmarried, but have a new partner,
- The amount of money and/or property you own changes significantly,
- You move to another jurisdiction (some states do not recognize out-of-state Wills as valid),
- Your executor or a significant beneficiary in your will dies,
- There is birth or adoption of a child in your family, or
- You change your mind about the provisions in your will.

While the legal fees associated with hiring a lawyer to draft a Will are a deterrent for many Americans, there are many do-it-yourself options that are available that eliminate this obstacle. It is now quick and easy for anyone to write their Last Will & Testament. As uncomfortable as it may be to think about it, we are all going to die. By drafting a Will, you ensure that your family is taken care of, and that your estate is handled according to our wishes-not the will of the State. Be Safe out there Brothers and Sisters. In Solidarity, God Bless you.



Pictured above, captured from a recent Zoom meeting is Fred Shaw (retired Letter Carrier from Woodland Hills) and his wife Lisa Guravitz, as they finally get to "meet" and present to Caroline Bautista The Guravitz-Shaw \$1,000 CSUN Scholarship. Caroline is the daughter of Rico Bautista, also a Carrier from Woodland Hills. Caroline is an accounting major who is on track to graduate in December of 2021. Congratulations Caroline and good luck in your continued studies.



# Thinking Open Season

By Mary Stanley, Assistant Health Benefits Representative

**B**y the time this issue of the *Mail Bag News* is delivered to your address, Open Season for Federal Employees Health Benefits (FEHB) will be just around the corner. This year Open Season is scheduled for November 9 through December 14. If you are not a member of our NALC Health Benefit Plan, I urge you to research and compare your own plan with ours. It is never too early to do your research on comparing your health plan. Our NALC HBP was established back in 1950. It is union owned, union operated and a not-for-profit plan. Its mission is to provide union members “accessibility to quality medical care while maintaining a comprehensive benefit package.”

Over the many years since I switched over to the NALC HBP, we (my family and I) have experienced excellent service from their customer service. They have always been eager to assist us in resolving any issues we encountered. We have never experienced any lengthy holds, dropped calls, recordings, confusing menus, or been passed from one department to another. They have always been very competitive in pricing the premiums so that the cost of quality service rendered is less than any of the other health plans. They have financially saved me literally many thousands of dollars since I have been with them. This brings to mind the commercial “What’s in your wallet?” For our family, it was the additional savings added to our sons’s college tuition savings account.

The Office of Personnel Management (OPM) website has a FEHB Plan Comparison Tool <https://www.opm.gov/healthcare-insurance/healthcare/plan-information/compare-plans/>. It allows you to compare three plans at

once. Actually, its quite easy to access considering it is a government website. You can compare FFS (Fee for Service) Plans, also known as PPO (Preferred Provider Organization), with an HMO (Health Maintenance Organization) Plan. It also provides information on Member Cost with Medicare A & B Primary.

The NALC HBP coordinates effectively with their network partners to deliver the best health care possible to its members.

Here are some examples:

- First-class medical benefits in partnership with Cigna
- Exceptional mental health benefits in partnership with Optum Health Behavioral Solutions
- Preeminent prescription drug coverage in partnership with CVS Caremark
- Outstanding telehealth benefits in partnership with American Well

Check out our website for a summary of benefits under the different health plan options (High Option, Consumer Driven, and Value Option) <https://www.nalchbp.org/>. If you have any questions about our NALC HBP, please do not hesitate to contact your Health Benefits Representative, Joe Gutierrez or me. We are here for your benefit and are happy to assist you with any questions or concerns regarding the NALC Health Benefit Plan.

Wishing you all a Happy and Safe Halloween Haunt and a Happy (Gobble Gobble) Thanksgiving Day. God Bless Us All and Keep Us Safe.

## The Fox Has Scattered the Hens

Herbert would become legendary. Branch 2902 was the first large merged branch in the then Van Nuys District and I am sure Management would have preferred if the mergers never took place and they could have continued dealing with several small local branches without full-time representation. Jon had political aspirations, and he became something of a thorn in the side of NALC National President Vince Sombrotto. Actually, Jon became a big pain in the ass to President Sombrotto. Jon was an outspoken critic of the Employee Involvement (EI) program and his criticism of EI ruffled some feathers within NALC.

Jon ran for NALC National President in 1994 against Vince Sombrotto and Jon’s slate took a pretty good ass-whipping in that 1994 vote, but he took a shot at it. Sadly, Jon fell ill and passed away prematurely in April of 1996 at the age of 40. We have named our Branch Union Hall after Jon and to this day he is sorely missed by those of us who new him and worked with him.

Until next time, keep up the excellent work and hang in there; we shall overcome!

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# Inaction in D.C. on Postal Reform

By David Hyman, Branch 2902 Trustee & Political Liaison

**G**reetings Sisters & Brothers! Hope you and your families are doing well despite Covid-19. Presently there are over 170,000 fatalities nationally and the total is projected to be over 200,000 by the time you receive this.

Congress returned to inaction this summer and unfortunately did not move forward with Postal relief funding. The bills we have been following have all stalled mostly in the Senate so unfortunately, I do not have any good news on the survival of the USPS. We have a new Postmaster General, Louis DeJoy who has donated more than \$2.5 million to the Republican Party and many of their candidates. This year, prior to his appointment, DeJoy donated almost \$360,000 to a Trump Super Pac.

Operational changes imposed by the new PMG have led to delayed mail deliveries and lowered standards across the U.S. as rumors of additional cutbacks loom, fueling worries about the November election and the Postal Service playing a big part of the fall campaign.

President Obama said “Those in power are undermining the USPS in an election that’s going to be dependent on mail-in ballots.” Representative Mary Gay Scanlon (D-PA) stated “Another Friday night massacre by this administration, and this

time dealing another devastating blow to our Postal Service.” A few days ago, 23 postal executives were reassigned or displaced so the institutional knowledge in the Postal Service will be replaced by more political appointees.

We have an election coming up on November 3<sup>rd</sup>. Not only is Labor supporting Joe Biden for President, but it also took a stand on several California ballot propositions. Labor opposes Proposition 22, an initiative that would carve up the gig economy, something Labor worked so hard to pass last year to protect gig workers from being classified as contractors. Uber and Lyft will be spending millions in support of their exclusion from this legislation passed last year.

Labor supports Proposition 15—Proposition 13 reform (also know as the communities first initiative)—to provide more funding for our schools. This initiative will remove a lot of corporate properties from Proposition 13 coverage. Presently, properties such as Disneyland and the Busch Brewery are covered by Proposition 13 even though business properties do not resale often. Exempts from taxation changes: residential properties; agricultural land; and owners of commercial and industrial properties with combined value of \$3 million or less.

Vote early and often! Time for Dodger baseball!

## Something Old, Something New

*which passed the House in May. The HEROES Act includes \$25 billion in direct funding to the Postal Service, and would also repeal restrictions on the \$10 billion line of credit that was authorized by the CARES Act. But unlike the Senate bill, the House HEROES Act also contains a hazard pay provision that would include letter carriers.”*

The Letter Carrier Political Fund contribution pays for the NALC to lobby congress to prevent the Postal Service from bankruptcy. It also pays to secure the rights of Letter Carriers to have good paying jobs, benefits, and retirement. All of the gains that the Union has fought for Letter Carriers can be taken away with the stroke of a political pen.

It is up to us to have a seat at the political table, to fight for the jobs and rights of Letter Carriers. This is why it is important for every active and non-active Letter Carrier to make small campaign contributions to the Letter Carrier Political Fund. It provides a path to reach out to political figures that will protect the interest and concerns of Letter Carriers. The Letter Carrier Political Fund contributes to candidates who support issues important to Letter Carriers, regardless of which political

*continued from page 4*

party the candidate is a member of. Only NALC members can contribute to the Letter Carrier Political Fund, it’s our Political Action Committee.

Letter Carrier Political Fund contributions cannot be taken from union dues, it is prohibited by Federal Campaign Laws. We only ask that you donate \$5.00 a pay period, which is a very inexpensive way to insure the future way of life for Letter Carriers and their families. Letter Carriers can make contributions by using POSTALease, Electronic Funds Transfer, OPM Annuity, Check and Cash.

There are applications available online or at Union Hall that are user friendly to help you set up to make campaign contributions. If you have any question or need my assistance, please contact me. I am the LCPF coordinator for our branch and I will be happy to assist you in signing up.

Our political involvement can save the USPS from privatization, bankruptcy, and the loss of jobs for Letter Carriers. The LCPF provides the vehicle to secure our future and the success of the United States Postal Service.

Thanks, to all who make campaign contributions to the Letter Carrier Political Fund. God bless you and stay well.



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\*Legal Advisory

## RETIREES LUNCH

**RAFFLE AT 12:30**

**SEPTEMBER\***

**Where:** Golden Panda  
1825 Madera Rd.  
Simi Valley

**When:** Tuesday, September 15, 2020

**Time:** 11:00am to 1:00pm



**OCTOBER\***

**Where:** Golden Panda  
1825 Madera. Rd  
Simi Valley

**When:** Tuesday, October 20, 2020

**Time:** 11:00am to 1:00pm

\* Subject to COVID-19 restrictions.

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## Calendar of Events

- |            |           |   |
|------------|-----------|---|
| <b>SEP</b> | <b>3</b>  | Executive Board Meeting 6:00pm<br><b>(Subject to Covid-19 restrictions)</b><br>Executive Council Meeting 7:00pm             |
| <b>SEP</b> | <b>7</b>  | <b>Labor Day-Holiday</b>  |
| <b>SEP</b> | <b>15</b> | Retiree Lunch 11:00am<br><b>(Subject to Covid-19 restrictions)</b><br>Golden Panda-Simi Valley                              |
| <b>SEP</b> | <b>17</b> | Regular Branch Meeting 7:00pm<br><b>(Subject to Covid-19 restrictions)</b><br>Union Hall-Chatsworth<br>Dinner served 6:00pm |
| <b>OCT</b> | <b>1</b>  | Executive Board Meeting 6:00pm<br><b>(Subject to Covid-19 restrictions)</b><br>Executive Council Meeting 7:00pm             |
| <b>OCT</b> | <b>12</b> | <b>Columbus Day-Holiday</b>   |
| <b>OCT</b> | <b>15</b> | Regular Branch Meeting 7:00pm<br><b>(Subject to Covid-19 restrictions)</b><br>Union Hall-Chatsworth<br>Snacks served 6:00pm |
| <b>NOV</b> | <b>1</b>  | Daylight Savings Time Begins<br>(turn clocks back one hour)   |
| <b>NOV</b> | <b>5</b>  | Executive Board Meeting 6:00pm<br><b>(Subject to Covid-19 restrictions)</b><br>Executive Council Meeting 7:00pm             |

*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.