



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

MEMBER: LOS ANGELES FEDERATION OF LABOR, AFL-CIO

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

VOLUME 64, NO. 1

CIRCULATION 2,500

JANUARY - FEBRUARY 2022

Show Us the Money

By Ray Hill, President

As we begin a New Year, why not begin this column with some good news? We started earning the first of our “non-retroactive” general wage increases on November 20, 2021. You can find the new Letter Carrier Pay Schedule printed on page 22 of the December Postal Record, showing all the various pay rates. The 1.3% pay raise comes on the heels of the Cost of Living Adjustment (COLA) we received on August 28, 2021, which boosted our annual wages by \$1,934. The history and importance of COLAs was the subject of NALC President Fred Rolando’s December Postal Record Column and I found it so interesting and informative we printed it in this issue of the *Mail Bag News*. Regarding the \$1,934 annual increase we received in the August 28 COLA, President Rolando wrote as follows, in part:

“...Over the past 12 months, prices in the United States have increased by 6.2 percent, triggering the largest COLA adjustment (in dollar terms, though not percentage terms) in our bargaining history: \$1,934 annually, effective August 28, 2021. Once again, the COLA clause has protected us against the impact of external events beyond anyone’s control...” So, the good news is that we received the money provided by the COLA; the bad news is that prices and inflation are sky rocketing, which is never good for our economy. I have been around a long time yet I was ignorant of the history of our COLA’s, which were explained in President Rolando’s December Column, printed in this issue of the *Mail Bag News*; I urge you all to read it.

Juneteenth Holiday

On November 30, NALC.ORG provided the following update on the Juneteenth Holiday:

“President Biden signed into law the Juneteenth National Independence Day Act on June 17, 2021, making June 19 a federal holiday commemorating the end of slavery in the United States. However, the law did not apply to the Postal Service.

NALC is aware of an internal Postal Service communication indicating that the holiday will be observed beginning in 2022 for full-time and part-time career employees. We have had informal discussions about the Juneteenth holiday with the Postal Service and will continue to discuss additional issues related to the observance of this holiday for all city letter carriers.”

We have received calls from some members wanting to know if USPS will be granting a future day off with paid administrative leave for the 2021 Juneteenth Holiday, which has been done in the past when a U.S. President died. The answer to that question is no, because at the time President Biden signed the law last June, it did not apply to USPS and was not one of our ten contractually bargained Holidays. However, per the NALC.ORG update, it appears that this will become a Holiday for career employees (Regulars and PTFs) beginning in 2022.



What the Hell Are We Doing?

In the last issue of the *Mail Bag News*, I voiced my complaints about USPS loaning carriers from our understaffed offices to work in other offices, many miles away. Why are we allowing carriers to leave their assignments to work in other Installations when we need all the help we can get here? Recently, we have had Branch 2902 carriers loaned to work in the Sonora and Salinas Post offices, both hundreds of miles away.

On November 1, 2021, NALC Executive Vice President (EVP),

continued on page 2



Show Us the Money

Brian Renfro, signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with USPS re: Temporary Details to Other Installations – City Letter Carrier Craft. The MOU (M-01968) can be read at NALC.ORG, and reads as follows in part: “...The Postal Service will determine the number of carriers, location and duration of detail

needed. The Postal Service will solicit volunteers for a defined period. The parties at the Headquarters level will review those that volunteer for a detail and jointly select city letter carriers to be detailed. Full time, part-time flexible and city carrier assistant city letter carriers are eligible to volunteer. **Consideration will be given to the potential impact on staffing in the losing installations...**” Emphasis added).

In Region 1, the Presidents were upset when we read the MOU for many reasons. In our opinions, the MOU violated portions of the following provisions of our National Agreement: Article 8, Article 12 and Article 41. After reading the MOU, I sent an email to President Rolando, EVP Brian Renfro, NBA Bryant Almario and a few other NALC Resident Officers for the purpose of offering my negative opinion of the MOU.

In response to the negative Region 1 reaction, EVP Renfro held a Web Meeting with the Presidents on November 9 to explain why the MOU was signed and why it was good for the membership. NALC National would now have a say in the details and local branches would also have a say in the matter; if a local said no to a potential detail, that would be the end of it. Although I was still opposed to the MOU, at least we now had some clarity regarding NALC’s intent when agreeing to it. On November 30, one of our stewards called me to tell me that he had been on annual the prior week and when he returned to work, he discovered that a carrier from his office had just been detailed outside the Installation to an office in Los Angeles (LA). The steward said that his station manager told him that there was an MOU now, so it was OK to detail the carrier to LA. I explained that the MOU required the parties at the headquarters level to review the names of volunteers and jointly select carriers to be detailed. I also explained that, per EVP Renfro, the local branches were to have input and if we said no to a potential volunteer, that would be the end of it. I found out later that day (November 30) that 2 other carriers from the same installation had been detailed to LA. Locally, we were never asked for input as to whether we would agree to the details and, had I been asked, I would have simply said, **HELL NO, THEY CAN’T GO!** These three carriers come from a poorly staffed installation where non-odl carriers are routinely required to work their non-scheduled days. I requested the names of carriers from our branch that had been approved by headquarters for details and, as expected, the answer was that there were no approvals. As of December 9, NALC headquarters had not agreed to any details however, as written above, at least three of our carriers have been detailed without NALC approval. The ink was not yet dry on the MOU before USPS began violating its terms. What about the MOU requirement that headquarters jointly reviews volunteers and selects them? What about input from the local branches? What about consideration being given to potential impact on staffing in the losing installations? Of course, we are filing grievances locally in response to these details, and

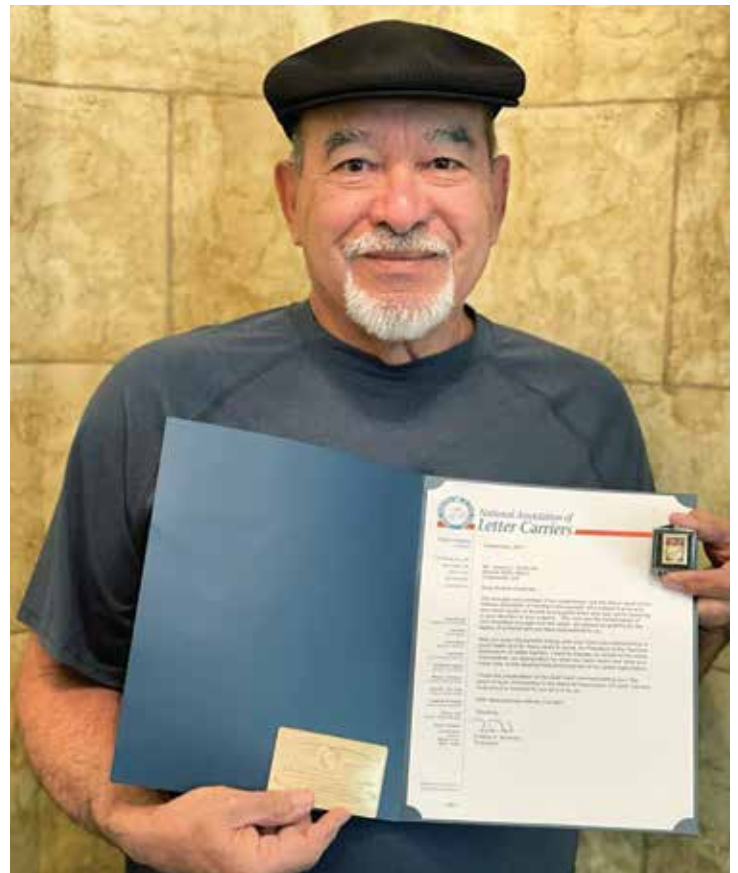
continued from page 1

I am hopeful that NALC at the National Level will respond swiftly to USPS violating the MOU with impunity while thumbing their collective noses at us as they do so. The second to last sentence of the MOU reads as follows: “...**This agreement is effective from the date of signature, however, either party may terminate this agreement by providing 30 days written notice to the other party...**” My wish is for NALC to invoke this clause and terminate the agreement. I will provide an update on this matter when one is available. To be continued...

Dues Increase

There will be a biweekly dues increase for the year 2022 due to the increases in letter carrier wages negotiated in the 2019-2023 collective bargaining agreement – including the November 2019, November 2020 and November 2021 general wage increases and the January 2020, July 2020, January 2021 and July 2021 COLA’s. The dues changes took place in Pay Period 1 of 2022 (Dec. 18, 2021 - Dec 31, 2021) and will be reflected beginning with the January 7, 2022, paycheck. Our dues will be increased \$2.13 per Pay Period, from \$27.72 to 29.85. Please be aware that I am reinforcing my suit of armor, the better to absorb the anticipated slings and arrows that will be directed my way as a result of this news.

In closing, thanks to all of you for toughing it out through another peak season and for all you do for the customers you serve. NALC truly appreciates your efforts. Happy New Year to you all.



Pictured above is Joe Gutierrez, retiree from Woodland Hills (and still currently Branch 2902 Health Benefits Representative), as presented with his 50-year Gold Card. Congratulations Joe and thanks for your years of union membership and support.

Understanding our COLA clause



**Fredric V.
Rolando**

This past summer marked the 50th anniversary of postal collective bargaining. In our first contract, we negotiated a very modest cost-of-living adjustment (COLA) clause that accounted for just 12 percent of that agreement's overall wage increase, because it was capped at a fixed amount. In the following 1973-1975 contract, we negotiated an improved COLA clause that remains in our contract to this day. It provided twice-a-year inflation adjustments that made up slightly more than half the wage increases provided by that agreement—which protected us against a

spike in inflation caused by an unforeseeable war in the Middle East that disrupted world oil markets.

By the end of the 1970s, the COLA clause really proved its value to NALC members when the country experienced inflation averaging 10.7 percent annually between 1979 and 1981. COLAs accounted for more than 70 percent of our total pay increases in the 1978-81 National Agreement. All told, COLAs account for about half of all of the wage increases we've earned since 1971.

I give you this little history lesson because most active members have never experienced that kind of inflation and may not have fully appreciated the COLA clause in our contract—until now. Over the past 12 months, prices in the United States have increased by 6.2 percent, triggering the largest COLA adjustment (in dollar terms, though not percentage terms) in our bargaining history: \$1,934 annually, effective Aug. 28, 2021. Once again, the COLA clause has protected us against the impact of external events beyond anyone's control.

The COVID-19 pandemic has so disrupted the global economy (and the international supply chains that make it work) that prices for oil, semiconductors, foodstuffs and shipping services have soared. In the latter case, the cost of sending a single container of goods or parts from Asian manufacturing hubs to the United States has increased from \$3,000 last fall to \$25,000 today. Making matters worse, there are widespread labor shortages in the trucking and warehousing industries, causing a pileup of con-

tainers in our ports and a backlog of ships waiting offshore to unload their cargoes. The lack of parts for domestic companies is causing a shortage of all sorts of goods, but especially of cars and other manufactured goods. So as our economy has recovered—we've added 5 million jobs this year and unemployment has plunged to below five percent—demand for goods is far outstripping supplies. That means higher prices for virtually everything.

When we were bargaining for a new contract in 2019, the rate of inflation was hovering around 2.0 percent annually. Since then, it has tripled. Based on our long collective-bargaining history, we knew two years ago that this kind of unexpected development can happen. So, as we have for 50 years, we fought to defend and extend Article 9, Section 3 of our National Agreement—the COLA clause—during the 2019 interest arbitration. Then we renewed the clause when the arbitration was halted and bargaining for a voluntary agreement resumed.

Although we value COLAs, we do not welcome high inflation for two reasons. First, currently a fifth of our active membership—non-career city carrier assistants (CCAs)—do not receive COLAs. Since 2013, CCAs have received an extra 1 percent general wage increase instead of COLAs—which only works well when inflation is modest. Second, while our COLA clause protects all career city letter carriers against inflation, it is applied proportionally by Step, and it does not offset 100 percent of inflation. It usually offsets about 55 percent of general price increases. For these reasons, we are generally better off with low inflation.

But the bottom line of 15 rounds of collective bargaining is clear: The regular combination of negotiated general wage increases and flexible COLA adjustments, which serve to take the sting out of unexpected inflation and to prevent sudden losses of purchasing power, has served the membership and the Postal Service well.

Our experience over the past six months demonstrates in stark fashion not only the value of COLA clauses, but also the value of collective bargaining itself. It gives workers a way to protect themselves against unforeseen developments such as a pandemic. Without a COLA clause, a surge in inflation could significantly damage the standard of living of letter carriers.

In this, our 50th year of collective bargaining, let us celebrate the power it gives us to have a seat at the table so we can help shape our working lives. And as we navigate another period of high inflation, let us recognize the importance of the humble COLA clause in our National Agreement.



Things Have Changed Over The Years

By James Perryman, Executive Vice President

I have been a Letter Carrier since May 3, 1986, and in my over 35 years of experience I have never seen it this bad. Usually I try to keep it positive but things are changing rapidly and getting worse. When I started my career we didn't have Delivery Point Sequencing (DPS) or Flat Sequencing System (FSS) machines. Mail was cased manually, letters vertically, flats horizontally and routed in sequence when pulling down. Most carriers in my office had stacks of trays of mail on their letter tray racks that looked like the "Skittles Rainbow Candy" which had color tags representing each day of the week that the mail was scheduled for delivery.

Back in the good old days the Post Offices were better staffed and overtime was available. However, mandatory overtime was far less frequent. We started work earlier, usually from 6:00-6:30 am, and completed our deliveries by 5:00 pm with overtime in some cases. I was able to go to Junior College and take night courses. Additionally, I was able to play basketball in the Van Nuys District Postal Basketball League (now California 3), along with other after work social activities. Even though the work was hard, having money to play hard was quite enjoyable. Believe it or not, Letter Carriers actually had enough time to have a life after work, even those who worked overtime, including me. What happened to the quality of life for Letter Carriers? And, what should the USPS do now?

COVID-19, Poor Planning, Unreasonable Future Man-date

One can argue that the combination of all the above may have contributed to the negative impact and issues that the Postal Service is now facing. Although, COVID-19 did not affect the United States of America until about March 2020, it adds to the problems of poor staffing at some delivery units throughout the Postal Service. You would think that management had an emergency plan of action to deal with the adverse impact caused by the pandemic.

First, let's take a look and consider the decision by the Postal Service to roll back service standards. The work of Letter Carriers is vital to the American people. It is essential that the Postal Service maintains a safe and healthy work environment for its employees while having the resources necessary to function and fulfill its service to the public. The USPS is an essential service provider that is mandated by federal law to deliver all mail to the American people during the pandemic. While many people are forced to stay home, including Postal workers due to the crisis, USPS is experiencing an increase in package volume. The Postal Service is required to deliver and collect mail regardless of adequate staffing or not. One may ask, is this the reason why the Postal Service rolled back service standards, which delays the delivery of mail to many Americans throughout this nation. And, why would the Postal Service compromise the

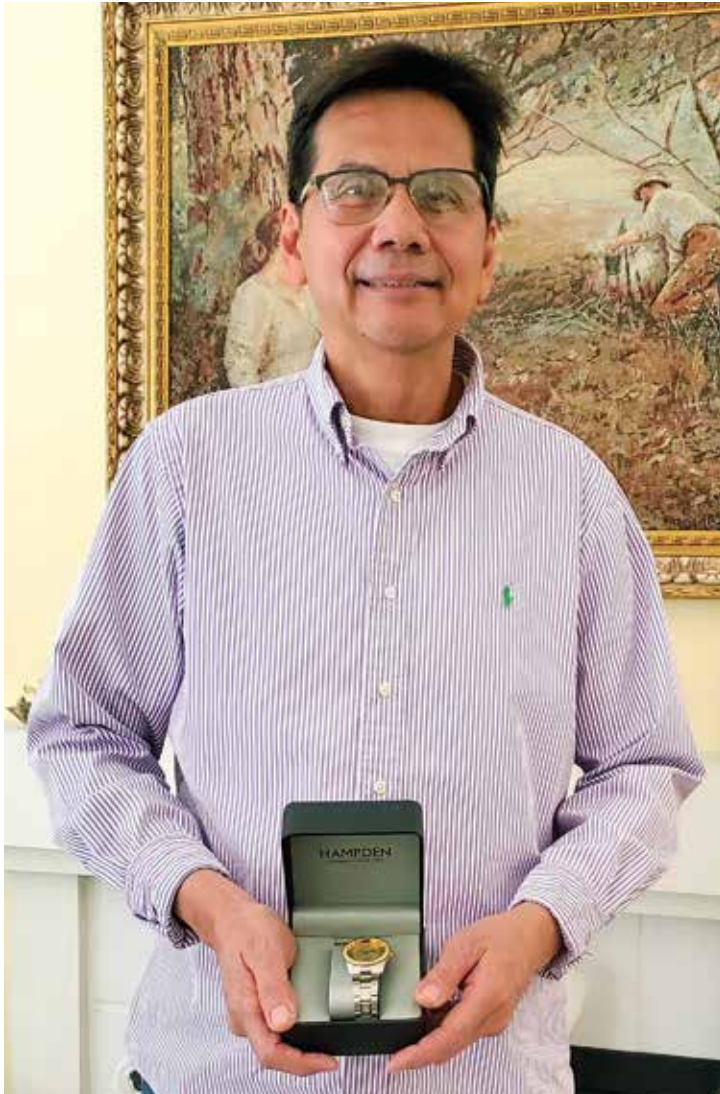
quality of service that we provide to our customers in a way identical to when UPS delayed the delivery of many holiday parcels and packages for their customers about two seasons ago? Furthermore, I have to ask, did the Postal Service consider the hiring shortage in the decision making when rolling back service standards and what it would cost in over-time hours? I think not. In my opinion this is an ass-backward way of doing business. It appears that rolling back delivery standards is making it difficult for the service to follow the above mentioned federal mandate without a severe cost to the operation, employees, and customers.

Second, why would a new hire want to work for the Postal Service? Unlike Amazon, which pays about \$20 per hour and pays for college tuitions (in some cases), the Postal Service pays less than \$19 per hour and offers the following incentives: Disrespect from management, long routes, unrealistic expectations, long hours, and wait for it, **NO DAYS OFF!** And let's not forget about the other benefits the Service has to offer such as: Expensive health care benefits or none, earned annual leave hours which **cannot** be used to take off work, and no retirement benefits. I'm sure these types of incentives will attract many applicants to the Postal Job Fairs...**NOT**. Now, I'm not implying that the Postal Service doesn't have some incentives to offer new hires. Rather, I'm just pointing out what we hear at the local branch office when most CCAs inform us their reasons for quitting. I'm aware that not every new applicant may qualify to work at the Postal Service, especially in the Letter Carrier craft. However, most new hires that recently worked at the Post Office within our branch have quit and did not have a positive experience that made them inclined them to stay. We don't expect these ex-employees to run out and tell their friends and family to apply for a Postal position, again, especially in the Letter Carrier Craft; which will make it difficult for the service to recruit new employees. You know the old saying, "What you put out is what you get back in return." If you offer nothing and treat employees like shit, you'll get it right back in return. Am I right? It seems that everyone understands these clichés, but not the Postal Service. In my opinion, this is one of the reasons for the lack of CCAs and poor staffing at some of the Post Offices, especially where? Answer: **In the Letter Carrier Craft.**

How will the above-mentioned self-destruction affect the Postal Service and Letter Carriers? Well, for many, the answer is on your paycheck stub, lots of **overtime pay**. Carriers are being mandated to work overtime, whether desired or not due to overburden routes and staffing issues. While it's a welcome sight for some on the Overtime Desire List, Non-OT Carriers are growing frustrated when constantly being mandated. Please believe me; I understand the negative impact and frustration of Carriers when required to work undesired overtime and/or required to work on non-scheduled days continuously, and how it can affect the quality way of life outside of work. Many carriers

are getting burned out. In fact, Carriers with years of experience are retiring earlier than expected or just quitting out of frustration. I empathize with those who are upset about the current situation and I don't know how long the service can sustain the operational cost of paying so much in overtime hours without going bankrupt. However, the union is doing everything in its power to address this concern, which will be discussed further in this article. In the meantime, and I'm sorry to be blunt, but the mail still has to be delivered and collected by Letter Carriers, it's our job. So please continue to be patient, and hang in there.

The union has shouted from the mountain tops that the USPS's current game plan on hiring and/or the employee retention has failed miserably by their own numbers. Since 2016, USPS employee attrition rates have been around and/or in excess of 50%. With management's unrealistic projections, and unrealistic route adjustments, this poor planning is not rocket science nor should the Postal Service look to the stars for answers. If what you have been doing doesn't work, change it rather than continuing to run endless circles around the rings of Saturn. The NALC will continue to monitor and navigate through the incompetence to find solutions that protect the well-being of Letter Carriers while sustaining the success of the United



Pictured above is Jose Lara, retiree from the Sylmar P.O. as he is presented with his Union Retiree Watch. Congratulations Jose and wear that watch in good health for many years to come.

States Postal Service. In order to obtain success it starts with co-operation from the Service to comply within the 2019-2023 National Agreement as follows (in-part): "Complement and Staffing" on page 167; "City Carrier Assistant Conversion to Career Status" on pages 160-161; "Part-time Flexible Conversions" on page 159; and the "City Delivery and Workplace Improvement Task Force" on pages 232-234.

Third, The USPS has net losses on its balance sheets, but not because of its operation costs. The underlying financial problem was the 2006 Postal Accountability and Enhancement Act, implemented by congress in 2006, which put an absurd, onerous, and unheard-of burden that no other company and no other agency has to face. The Postal Service actually makes a modest profit based on its current operating revenue and costs, but the Postal Accountability and Enhancement Act forced the USPS to start funding retirees' health benefits in advance for the next 75 years, funding for employees who are not even born yet.

These retirement savings were also mandated to be invested in low-yielding Treasury bonds, which have earned less interest than even the standard Thrift Savings G-fund plan. This law also makes the USPS the third-largest creditor of the U.S. Treasury, which can force the USPS into bankruptcy and null and void all **Collective Bargaining Unit Contracts**.

Moreover, the current laws that govern the operations of the Postal Service hinder its ability to raise the price of goods and service needed to sustain the overhead cost of running the actual operation. The ridiculous pre-funding mandate for future retiree health care, which the Postal Service does not have the funds to pay, along with the governing restrictions placed on the service contributes to limited incentives for new hires, out-dated equipment including vehicles such as LLVs that are being held together with duct-tape.

Lastly, the NALC believe there are many creative and proactive ways to expand on the Post Office services and add streams of revenue. The Post Office could return to offering Postal banking that can cash checks, provide international money transfers, facilitate bill payments, and offer American's a simple bank account.

The USPS has additional possible roads for expansion, including participating in the growing demand for vote-by-mail ballots, offering printing services and wire-less internet, and in some locations approve hunting and fishing licenses or electric-car charging stations. If the Postal Service is willing to apply the above-mentioned possibilities, it could provide a path to success. Moreover, the Postal Service would have the necessary resources to hire with realistic incentives, and reduce excessive use of overtime. However, the implementation of these ideas rest on the willingness of the Postmaster General, the Postal Board of Governors, and the political leaders in Washington D.C.

Letter Carrier Political Fund

The House of Representatives and the Senate have reached an important phase with regard to Postal re-form. The House advanced the Postal Service Reform Act (H.R. 3076) out of the Committee on Oversight and Reform, as reported in the Postal Record. The Senate companion bill (S. 1720), which

continued on page 6

Things Have Changed

continued from page 5

mirrors (H.R. 3076) is being led by Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs Committees (HSGAC) Chairman Gary Peters (D-MI) and Ranking Member Rob Portman (R-OH). The bill includes three important provisions: a reform of the Federal Employees Health Benefits (FEHB) Program that would allow the Postal Service and its employees and retirees to maximize savings on health insurance costs via integration with Medicare on a prospective basis; a repeal of the retiree health pre-funding mandate (as provided by the USPS Fairness Act); and a provision to make six-day delivery of mail and packages a statutory obligation (currently, it is enforced by an appropriations bill that must be renewed annually). With the partisan makeup of the Senate evenly split 50-50 and the legislation needing 60 votes to overcome a filibuster, having ten Republicans as co-sponsors is an important accomplishment. If all the Democrats support this critical legislation, it could be signed into law.

The Letter Carrier Political Fund contribution pays for the NALC to lobby Congress to prevent the Postal Service from bankruptcy, which includes lobbying for the passing of bi-partisan bills such as H.R. 3076 and S. 1720. This will help secure the rights of Letter Carriers to have good paying jobs, health benefits, and retirement benefits. All of the gains that the union has fought for, 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, regardless of political affiliation, who support issues important to Letter Carriers such as H.R. 3076 and S. 1720. Only NALC members can contribute to the Letter Carrier Political Fund, it's our Political Action Committee (PAC).

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 per pay period or \$10.00 per month, which is a very inexpensive way to insure a great future and way of life for Letter Carriers and their families. Active, retired, and CCA Letter Carriers can make campaign contributions to the LCPF by using PostalEASE, Electronic Funds Transfer, OPM Annuity, Check and Cash.

There are applications available online 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 help you get started.

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 and return Letter Carriers to a quality way of life outside of work.

Thanks, to all who make campaign contributions to the Letter Carrier Political Fund. Stay well, Happy New Year, and God Bless you all.



Pictured above is Manuel (Manny) Feliciano, retiree from Studio City as he is pictured accepting his 50-year Gold Card. Enjoy that free membership Manny for many years to come.



Pictured above is Everardo Perez, retiree out of the Pacoima P.O. as he accepts his 50-year Gold Card. Enjoy that free lifetime membership for many years to come Everardo.



New for 2022, IDI

By Chris Alessi, MBA/NSBA Representative

Happy New year Brothers and Sisters, The new insurance plan by your MBA called **Individual Disability Income (IDI)** has just been rolled out for our active members of the NALC. This plan has been coming for many years. The last time we had this plan was in the early 90s.

This insurance helps ensure that you have money you need to continue the lifestyle that you worked for if you become too sick or too hurt to work. IDI is available for our active members from age 18 to 59. Spouses and family members are not eligible.

This policy will pay a monthly benefit amount of \$650, \$1,350, or \$2,000 for a period of six months or 12 months, based on your choice and need at the time of purchase. There is a 14-day elimination period before benefits start, and you must have a total disability, which means you can not perform your normal material duties of your occupation and you are under a doctor's care and that you are not working for any wage or profit.

There is a pre-existing condition limitation that benefits will not be paid unless you have gone for a period of one year while the

policy is in force without receiving any medical advice or treatment for that condition. Some of the exclusions that this policy will not cover are; act of war, normal pregnancy, alcoholism, drug addiction, illegal occupation or activity, attempt to commit a felony, aviation other than as a fare-paying passenger on a scheduled or charter flight operated by a scheduled airline, suicide or self-inflicted injury or cosmetic surgery unless deemed medically necessary by a doctor.

IDI is guaranteed to be renewable until age 65. The MBA cannot change any benefits or refuse to renew your policy as long as your premiums are paid on time. You can acquire this insurance for as little as \$8.25 biweekly.

You can go on the NALC web site and click on member services scroll down to the MBA and you can view and download the brochures and applications.

In closing I wish all of our members and their families a Very Good Year Ahead, GOD BLESS YOU.





National Association of Letter Carriers

Fredric V. Rolando
President

100 Indiana Ave. NW
Washington, DC
20001-2144
202.393.4695
www.nalc.org

Brian Renfro
Executive Vice President

Lew Drass
Vice President

Nicole Rhine
Secretary-Treasurer

Paul Barner
Asst. Secretary-Treasurer

Christopher Jackson
Director, City Delivery

Manuel L. Peralta Jr.
Director, Safety & Health

James W. "Jim" Yates
Director, Life Insurance

Stephanie Stewart
Director, Health Insurance

Dan Toth
Director, Retired Members

Board of Trustees:

Larry Brown Jr.
Chairman

Michael J. Gill
Mack I. Julion

December 6, 2021

Re: Extension of dispensation for branch and state meetings and elections due to coronavirus

Dear branch or state president:

On December 10, 2020, I issued a letter granting dispensation to all branches to utilize alternative electronic meeting methods, such as video conferencing, through calendar year 2021. This letter recognized that the ongoing coronavirus pandemic had not abated; if anything, it had gotten worse. I also acknowledged the possibility that postponement of in-person events might continue to be necessary to protect the health and safety of our members.

Although there has been some improvement in the overall situation, the pandemic continues to pose significant risks to safety and health. Accordingly, in order to adhere to the requirement to hold monthly meetings, this letter extends the previous dispensation for all branches to utilize alternative electronic meeting methods through calendar year 2022. Branches may also consider other options, which would be consistent with this dispensation. For example, Branches can conduct in-person meetings for those who show proof of vaccination, while allowing all other members to participate by video conference. Alternatively, the Branch may conduct an in-person meeting for everyone, while enforcing COVID protocols such as distancing and masks and may also allow exemptions from masking requirements for members who provide proof of vaccination.

As stated in my previous letter, alternative electronic meeting methods may be used for approval of branch expenditures, deciding appeals, addressing merger proposals, amending By-laws, and conducting other routine branch business that doesn't require secret voting. Alternative electronic meeting methods should include call in features to ensure all members are able to participate. In all instances, appropriate notification should be provided to the members.

Branches and state associations that have postponed nominations and elections that normally are conducted at in-person meetings should implement alternative procedures for conducting nominations and elections expeditiously. This letter extends my previous grant of dispensation to all branches and state associations to conduct nominations and balloting by mail. Branches must send appropriate and timely notice of the procedures to be followed in nominating and electing officers and delegates by mail to all active and retired members.

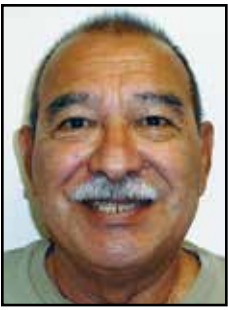
Branches and state associations may continue to request dispensation from me to implement different procedures. Assistant Secretary-Treasurer Paul Barner may be contacted for advice on using alternative methods of conducting nominations and elections.

Finally, we are continuing to monitor the overall situation, and I may modify this dispensation letter at some point in the future.

Once again, on behalf of the entire NALC Executive Council, I want to thank you for everything you do representing our members.

Sincerely and fraternally,

Fredric V. Rolando
President



Telehealth Virtual Visits, Access to Medical Help, Anywhere, Anytime

By Joe Gutierrez, Health Benefits Representative

Hello everyone and Happy New Year. I know this is a little late, but that is what happens every year we have a Health Benefits Seminar. This year the Health Benefits Seminar was done virtually. I was unable to view it until it became available at a later date. This being my first virtual seminar I didn't know what to expect. It turns out it was very well done and easy to follow.

In today's article I will speak on one subject the Seminar covered and I will follow up with more in future articles. This year you will be able to enroll in virtual Telehealth. You fill out your application online and no matter where you are in the U.S., you call the toll-free phone number and within a few minutes, you will be connected to a medical person to discuss your illness. This service is for minor injuries or cold and flu symptoms, sinus problems and minor wounds and abrasions. The cost is \$10 dollars per visit. The

great thing about this program is you can be visiting family or on vacation away from home and if you have a medical problem, it can be addressed on an immediate basis. As an example, you may be camping and get an insect bite such as that of a tick and need advice on exactly what to do. With the Telehealth service, you can be connected with a medical professional who will advise you on what to do. If you need medication, a prescription can be sent to a pharmacy near your location. You will also be advised if you should go to the hospital or urgent care, all for \$10.

I encourage all NALC members to join. There is no cost to join. Now no matter where you are you have a medical doctor just a phone call away within 24 hours. Just one of the many features that the plan has for our members. Now that open season is over I hope you made a wise decision. Hopefully you joined our union, non-profit plan which is owned and operated for all union members.

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.



Pictured above is Michael Loisides, retiree from the North Hollywood P.O. as he accepts his 50-year Gold Card from the NALC.

Management & Employee Responsibilities Regarding Weingarten Rights

M-01667 USPS Letter
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 or tell the employee not to answer the question. If that happens, postpone the remainder of the meeting and consult you manager or Labor Relations immediately.

4. You may begin the interview, if appropriate, by saying:
 - A. You are going to be asked a number of specific questions concerning (specify the issue causing the interview);
 - B. You are subject to disciplinary action if you refuse to answer or fail to respond truthfully to any questions; Your steward may advise you and participate in the interview (assuming the employee has requested a steward).

Weingarten Rights

Federal labor law, in what is known as the Weingarten rule, gives each employee the right to representation during any investigatory interview which he or she reasonably believes may lead to discipline. (NLRB v. J. Weingarten, U.S. Supreme Court, 1975) (M-01789)

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.

An employee has Weingarten representation rights only where he or she reasonably believes that discipline could result from the investigatory interview. Whether or not an employee's belief is "reasonable" depends on the circumstances of each case.

The steward cannot exercise Weingarten rights on the employee's behalf. And unlike "Miranda rights," which involve criminal investigations, the employer is not required to inform the employee of the Weingarten right to representation.



**We are happy to announce that
The Mail Bag News was awarded 3rd place for
General Excellence, Large Branch at the
(canceled) August 2020 NALC National Convention.**

**The 2020 award for General Excellence
will be presented to the Branch at the
2022 National Convention in Chicago.**

Coronavirus

How to Talk to Your Children

It's not always easy to protect our kids from troubling news. Now with the flurry of stories about coronavirus hitting the media on every device, along with schools temporarily closing to help halt the spread, there's no hiding from reality. It's time for parents to talk honestly to kids about the pandemic. Psychologists and health experts suggest several tips for starting the conversation. **Here are a few to keep in mind during this crisis:**

- **Get your facts straight.** We're all being bombarded with information; it's a lot to process & comprehend even as adults. Before you try to explain things to your child, be sure you have a clear understanding of the scope and risks. The Center for Disease Control ([cdc.gov](https://www.cdc.gov)) is a great place to find reliable, up-to-date info.
- **Talk to your child at their age level.** The best advice for kids of all ages is to begin the conversation by asking questions. Find out what they've already heard at school and what they're worried about. Then try to speak just to their specific concerns and questions. Avoid filling them with details they don't need to hear that may cause more worry. Some kids want to talk it all out, others not so much. Don't force the conversation but let them know you're ready to listen and talk when they are.
- **Help your child take control.** Nothing is more stressful to a child than feeling helpless. While it's important to reassure your child that you, along with doctors, nurses and other professionals, are working hard to help keep everyone safe, it's also important to also teach your child how to help themselves. Simple lessons like proper hand washing (singing Happy Birthday two times while they soap and rinse), being a good germ catcher (cough or sneeze into the crook of your arm instead of your hand), and practicing healthy habits like eating good foods and getting plenty of rest, give children a sense that they can be part of the solution.
- **Try not to stray from the family routine.** This may be a challenge as school districts, restaurants and other venues close temporarily as a precaution. Still make an effort to do all you can to keep to your family's regular routine. Even if your child is off school, keep the days structured, and maintain the same mealtimes and bedtimes. And, of course, keeping busy and active keeps little minds off worrisome things.
- **Above all, keep calm and carry on.** As the adult, your job is to be a calming and reassuring presence in your child's life. When you talk to them about coronavirus, be honest but try not to let your inner worries come out. In that same calm voice, let your child know that they can always come to you if they feel afraid of what they hear or see...and that they can count on you for honest answers.

This is an emerging, rapidly evolving situation. For the latest information visit [CDC.gov](https://www.cdc.gov).

As always, your EAP is here for you and your family. Whether you are staying home or continuing your routine, there are a variety of ways to connect with your EAP including: by telephone 800-327-4968 (800-EAP-4YOU), TTY: 877-492-7341, online at [EAP4YOU.com](https://www.EAP4YOU.com), through video, by live chat or text message. Reach out to us to learn more about the many options you have to receive support from your Employee Assistance Program.



CALL US TODAY: 800-327-4968
800-EAP-4YOU | TTY: 877-492-7341
[WWW.EAP4YOU.COM](https://www.EAP4YOU.COM)



PMG on Thin Ice?

By David Hyman, Branch 2902 Trustee & Political Liaison

Greetings Sisters & Brothers! Hopefully Postmaster General Louis DeJoy's days are numbered. President Biden has nominated Daniel Tangherlini and Derek

Kan to replace two current Board of Governors members that had recent terms expire. Pending Senate approval of these two nominees, the board will consist of five Biden appointees and the nine-member bi-partisan Board will continue to have four Democrats, four Republicans and one independent. The President is committed to the Postal Service and these two new members will not be as supportive of the current PMG as the members they are replacing.

Congress recently passed the Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act and it was signed by President Biden. This \$1.2 trillion investment in our infrastructure will create more jobs for Americans to rebuild our country. There will be \$110 billion to rebuild 173,000 miles of roads and 45,000 bridges. Also included is \$65 billion to expand broadband internet access, mostly in rural areas. Safe and clean water is also included with \$55 billion and there is \$15 billion to replace lead pipes. This is a big deal for the AFL-CIO since most of these jobs will be good union jobs.

Labor is hoping to finish the job by also passing the Build Back Better Act. This legislation potentially will include an

extension of the Child Tax Credit, \$2.5 billion for the USPS to get electric vehicles, expanding the Affordable Care Act (ACA), funds to help solve the climate crisis, closing the Medicaid coverage gap (in the 12 states that have not already expanded it), paid family and medical leave of up to four weeks, bringing down prescription drug cost, fund home care and hearing aids. Potentially it will be funded by establishing a 15% corporate minimum tax for businesses earning more than a \$1 billion and increase taxes on higher income households. The House has passed this measure and it is now seeking passage in the Senate. Chances are the Senate will tweak the House version so there most likely will be changes made to the bill should the Senate pass it.

Congress passed a bi-partisan resolution that will fund the government until February 18, 2022. House members voted 221-212 and Senators voted 69-28. This February 18 deadline gives Congress time to focus on moving the Build Back Better Act.

The NALC Lobby trip is scheduled for February to help persuade our House members to co-sponsor our bills and resolutions if they have not already done so. Congressman Brad Sherman is on all our bills and Congress members Julia Brownley, Tony Cardenas and Mike Garcia are only on a couple bills each, so Bob Golden and I will have our work cut out for us.

Be well and booster up!

Treasurer's Report

11/15/2021 - 12/14/2021

General Account

Previous Balance	\$164,118.33
Receipts	<u>\$35,031.74</u>
Sub-Total	\$199,150.07
Disbursements	<u>(\$35,598.34)</u>
Total-on-Hand	<u>\$163,551.73</u>

Payroll Account

Previous Balance	\$162,314.23
Receipts	<u>\$21,000.00</u>
Sub-Total	\$183,314.23
Disbursements	<u>(\$22,327.86)</u>
Total-on-Hand	<u>\$160,986.37</u>

Convention Fund

Previous Balance	\$144,188.27
Checking Acct #7 .15% rate-USPS-C.U. (Active & Retirees 1675 x \$2 per By-Laws)	\$3,350.00
Total of Convention Fund	<u>\$147,538.27</u>

C.D. 6 mos .350% rate-Premier C.U.-#1	\$88,841.77
C.D. 6 mos .250% rate-Premier C.U.-#2	\$12,012.91
C.D. (1) year .598% rate Premier C.U.- #3	\$113,225.71
MM Cert #21 26 wks .200% rate-USPS-C.U.	\$25,663.30
MM Cert #18 26 wks .250% rate-USPS-C.U.	\$23,506.50
MM Cert #19 26 wks .250% rate-USPS-C.U.	\$69,157.78
MM Checking #8 26 wks .250% rate-USPS-C.U.	\$46,628.62
C.D. 6 mos .380% Priority One C.U.	\$33,864.01
Shares acct USPS-C.U.	<u>\$7.11</u>

Total of Contingency Fund **\$412,887.71**

Retiree Fund **\$12,881.60**

Mary Stanley
Financial Secretary-Treasurer



Hermance Law

ESTATE PLANNING & CRISIS PLANNING ATTORNEYS



Daughter of a Letter Carrier

THE TRUTH ABOUT ESTATE PLANNING, WILLS, TRUSTS & PROBATE

- A Will alone does **NOT** avoid probate court. A Trust **DOES** avoid probate court.
- Probate is **VERY** expensive and the fees are set by statute. Example, an estate of \$500,000 (FMV Home \$490,000 and \$10,000 in bank accounts) has **statutory fees of \$26,000**. This can be avoided with proper planning including a Trust.
- If you don't have a legal plan, everything **does not** automatically go to your spouse or kids. It passes via intestate law which may not be what you would want.
- If you don't have a legal plan and you can't make decisions for yourself, a judge will decide who gets to make decisions for you and it is expensive to go through.

WILLS | TRUSTS | PROBATE (SOMEONE PASSES AWAY) | TRUST ADMINISTRATION

DISCOUNTS FOR LETTER CARRIERS

(805) 518-9633

Serving San Fernando Valley,
Santa Clarita and Ventura County

www.HermanceLaw.com

4476 Market St. Suite 602, Ventura, 93003

*Legal Advisory

Hey,

Have We Met Yet?

We are U. S. Postal Service Federal Credit Union

Join U. S. Postal Service Federal Credit Union for:

- Cash Bonus for switching your checking account over
- Loans that will save you money
- VISA® Platinum & Platinum Rewards Credit Cards with 1.6% Cash Back
- Investments that will make you feel good about your future
- 24/7 Account Access through our Online and Mobile Banking Services
- Free Access To Cash to over 72,000 Surcharge-Free ATM's
- Access your account at over 5,000 Shared Branch locations nationwide

Join Today!

from: **USPS FCU**



117 N. Macneil St.
San Fernando, CA 91340-2993
Toll Free: 800 USPS-FCU (877-7328)
www.uspsfcu.org



We do business in accordance with the Federal Fair Housing Law and the Equal Opportunity Act. It is illegal to discriminate against any person because of race, color, religion, sex or national origin.



We deliver.



Serving Postal Workers Since 1933

- **Get paid two days early!** Your USPS paycheck delivered to you TWO DAYS EARLY with direct deposit*
- **PostCity Perks!** program with loan rate discounts and more
- Low auto loan rates with 100% financing
- FREE checking and Visa® debit card with mobile wallets
- Over 30,000 fee-FREE ATMs and 5,300+ shared branches
- FREE mobile and online banking with bill pay
- Platinum Visa® with rewards and NO annual fees
- Mortgage and home equity loans

If you work for, or are retired from the USPS call **(877) 337-2728**, visit any of our convenient branches or join online at www.postcitycu.org.

*Please visit www.postcitycu.org for complete rates and terms.



AMERICAN SHARE INSURANCE

Your savings insured to \$500,000 per account. By members' choice, this institution is not federally insured, and if the institution fails, the Federal Government does not guarantee that depositors will get back their money. The credit union is not insured by any state government.



BRANCH #2902 OFFICERS

PRESIDENT

- Ray Hill

EXECUTIVE VICE PRESIDENT

- James Perryman

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

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.

SHOP STEWARD LIST

Agoura Hills Chief S.S.	Greg Gaddis
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
Oxnard Chief S.S.	Johnny Boyd
	Kathi Albritten
	Pablo Galvan
Alternate S.S.	Louie Tanglao
Pacoima Chief S.S.	Call Office
Reseda Chief S.S.	Oscar Cortez
San Fernando Chief S.S.	Albert Reyes
M.C.A.	Albert Reyes
North Hills	Albert Reyes
Sylmar / Main Office	Martin Diaz
	Robert Tracy
Santa Paula Chief S.S.	Marcos Aldrete
Simi Valley Chief S.S.	Sal Lopez
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
Alternate S.S.	Rochelle Harvey
Newbury Park S.S.	Alex Lopez
Ventura Chief S.S.	Laura Rowe
East Ventura S.S.	Anthony Casian
Woodland Hills Chief S.S.	Call Office

THE MAIL BAG NEWS

NALC BRANCH 2902

21540 PRAIRIE STREET, #C
CHATSWORTH, CA 91311
(818) 700-9615 FAX (818) 700-9755
union@nalcbr2902.com
www.nalcbranch2902.org

Address Service Requested

NON PROFIT ORG.

U.S. POSTAGE

PAID

PERMIT NO. 41

Canoga Park, CA

RETIREEES LUNCH

RAFFLE AT 12:30

JANUARY

Where: Golden Panda
1825 Madera Rd., Simi Valley
When: Tuesday, January 18, 2022
Time: 11:00 am to 1:00 pm

FEBRUARY

Where: Golden Panda
1825 Madera Rd., Simi Valley
When: Tuesday, February 15, 2022
Time: 11:00 am to 1:00 pm

Brookfield® Uniforms
UNION MADE

Lori Stewart
Retired Letter Carrier & NALC Branch 2902 Shop Steward
– 35 years of service –

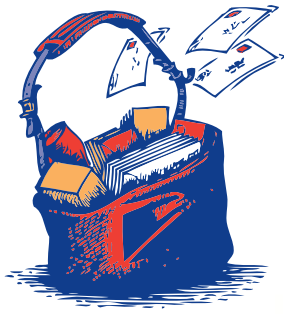
Moorpark, CA 93021
Email: Lschultz@aol.com

Office: 805.368.0444
Toll Free: 800.527.0606

Calendar of Events

- | | |
|---------------|---|
| JAN 17 | Martin Luther King Jr Day - Holiday |
| JAN 18 | Retiree Lunch 11:00 am
Golden Panda - Simi Valley |
| JAN 20 | Regular Branch Meeting 7:00 pm
Union Hall - Chatsworth
(Subject to COVID-19 restrictions) |
| FEB 3 | Executive Board Meeting 6:00 pm
Executive Council Meeting 7:00 pm
(Subject to COVID-19 restrictions) |
| FEB 14 | Valentines Day |
| FEB 15 | Retiree Lunch 11:00 am
Golden Panda - Simi Valley |
| FEB 17 | Regular Branch Meeting 7:00 pm
Union Hall - Chatsworth
(Subject to COVID-19 restrictions) |
| FEB 21 | Presidents' Day -
Holiday |
| MAR 3 | Executive Board Meeting 6:00 pm
Executive Council Meeting 7:00 pm
(Subject to COVID-19 restrictions) |
| MAR 13 | Daylight Savings Time Begins-
Set clocks ahead one hour |
| MAR 15 | Retiree Lunch 11:00 am
Golden Panda - Simi Valley |
| MAR 17 | Regular Branch Meeting 7:00 pm
Union Hall - Chatsworth
(Subject to COVID-19 restrictions) |





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

MEMBER: LOS ANGELES FEDERATION OF LABOR, AFL-CIO

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

VOLUME 64, NO. 2

CIRCULATION 2,500

MARCH - APRIL 2022

A Nation Politically Divided

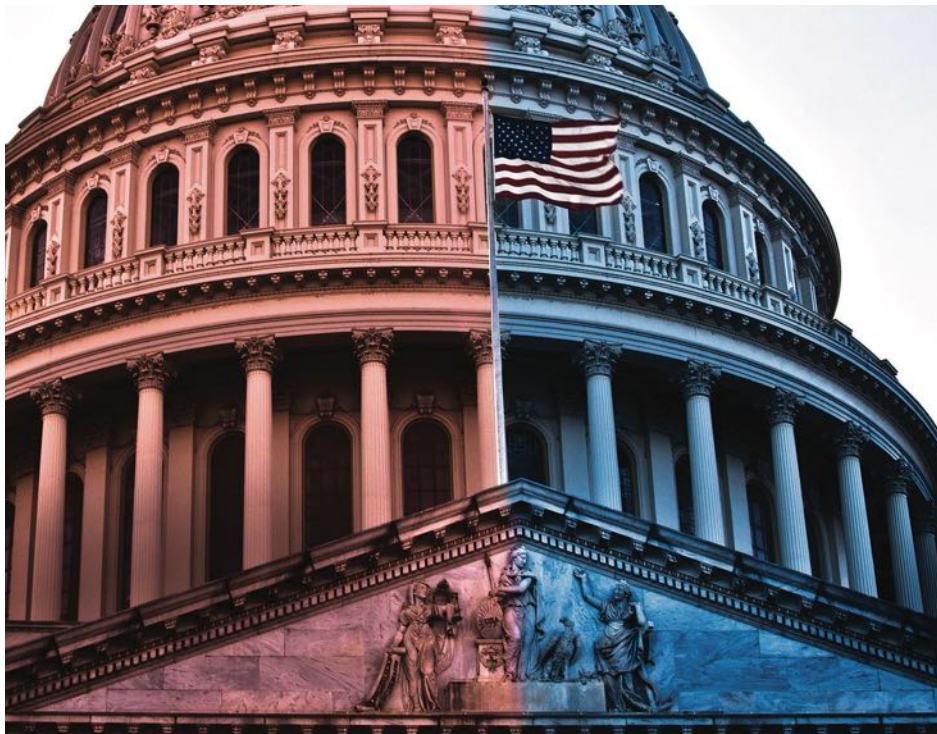
By Ray Hill, President

The February issue of *The Postal Record (PR)* honors NALC members who contribute to the Letter Carriers Political Fund (LCPF). Branch 2902 is listed with 4.83% of our members having contributed an average of \$101.77 for the past year. These numbers are nothing for

Branch 2902 to be proud of. The LCPF supports both Republicans and Democrats and it was heartening to see the bipartisan support that that H.R. 3076 received in the House of Representatives when it overwhelmingly passed on February 8. In his February PR column titled "Restoring faith in our democracy," President Fred Rolando wrote in part, "...Sadly, as we go to press, much of the country is bitterly divided and fearful about the future of

our democracy. A recent poll by National Public Radio found that 64 percent of Americans believe 'our democracy is in crisis and at risk of failing.' Some 60 percent of Americans polled by Pew Research said they are 'dissatisfied with how democracy is working in the U.S. A survey by CBS found that

a shocking 36 percent of Americans believe political violence 'is sometimes justified,' up from just 13 per cent in 1995. These polls, taken one year after the attack on the U.S. Capitol on January 6, 2021, reveal a deep pessimism and bitter partisan division in our country...."



No disrespect to President Rolando intended, but I must say, thank you Captain Obvious. Count me among the pessimistic and those fearful about the future of our democracy. Although I vote Democrat, I do so for mainly selfish reasons having to do with my economic well-being, and certainly not because I agree with everything Democrats do. I have grown weary of the "wokeness" currently infecting some of the party and am fearful of the results of the November

2022 mid-term elections that are only nine months away. In those elections, all 435 seats in the House of Representatives and 34 of the 100 seats in the Senate will be contested. The

continued on page 2



A Nation Politically Divided

continued from page 1

balance of power could easily flip and that would not be beneficial to letter carriers and our livelihoods. Democrats spouting politically toxic ideas about defunding or abolishing the police will not win any new friends for the party and makes them appear to be buffoons who can't be taken seriously. On the flip side, the Republican party has more than their fair share of buffoons, many of whom *still* believe that the election was stolen from Donald Trump. Every morning I drive past an angry looking man in a giant dually truck with a banner stretching from cab to tailgate declaring in bold letters that "TRUMP WON." Sadly, he is far from alone in this wacko belief and more than a few NALC members reading this believe it as well. It is sad but true; we live in a nation politically divided.

Speaking of buffoons, I am most fearful that Donald Trump will return to the White House in the next term, which gives me an eerie, anxious feeling, not unlike the feeling I get when thinking about the next big earthquake due in California. Hopefully I am wrong about Trump's return to the White House and I am wrong about my expectations of the magnitude of our next earthquake. If not, may God help us all!

Good News – Bad News, Yet Again

In the last edition of the *Mail Bag News*, we printed President Fred Rolando's December Postal Record column where he discussed the history of the Cost Of Living Adjustment (COLA) clause that remains in our current National Agreement. I bring this up because the Fifth COLA included in our current National Agreement has been finalized and, with a little help from NALC.ORG., I have summarized it as follows:

5th Contract COLA: \$1,331

The fifth regular COLA under the 2019-2023 National Agreement is \$1,331 following the release of the January 2022 Consumer Price Index (CPI).

On February 10, 2022, the Bureau of Labor Statistics announced that the CPI for Urban Wage Earners and Clerical Workers (CPI-W, 1967=100) stood at 823.000 in January, 77.624 points above the base level of 745.376 in July 2019. The 5th COLA stood at 64 cents per hour or \$1,331 annually. Per our National Agreement, this Fifth COLA is payable the "second full pay period" after the February 10th release of the January 2022 CPI. Therefore, we started earning this COLA on February 26, 2022 and it will be reflected on the paychecks we receive on March 18, 2022. The good news is that we get an increase in pay from the COLA; the bad news is that we received this increase in pay due to inflation.

For retirees, here is information on your COLAs:

2023 Retiree COLAs Projection: 2.9% as of January 2022

The 2023 COLAs for CSRS and FERS benefits are based on the increase in the average CPI-W between the third quarter of 2021 (268.421) and the third quarter of 2022 (TBA).

Based on the January 2022 CPI-W (1982-84) of 276.296, the 2023 CSRS and FERS COLAs are currently projected to be 2.9%. The 2023 retiree COLA calculation will be finalized in October 2022 with the release of the CPI-W for September 2022.

CSRS annuities receive full COLAs; COLAs for FERS annuities are payable for retirees 62 and older and may be reduced by up to one percentage point from the increase in the CPI.

27 Pay Periods in 2022 Leave Year - Additional Annual Leave Earning

The following is taken directly from the "latest news" page at NALC.ORG:

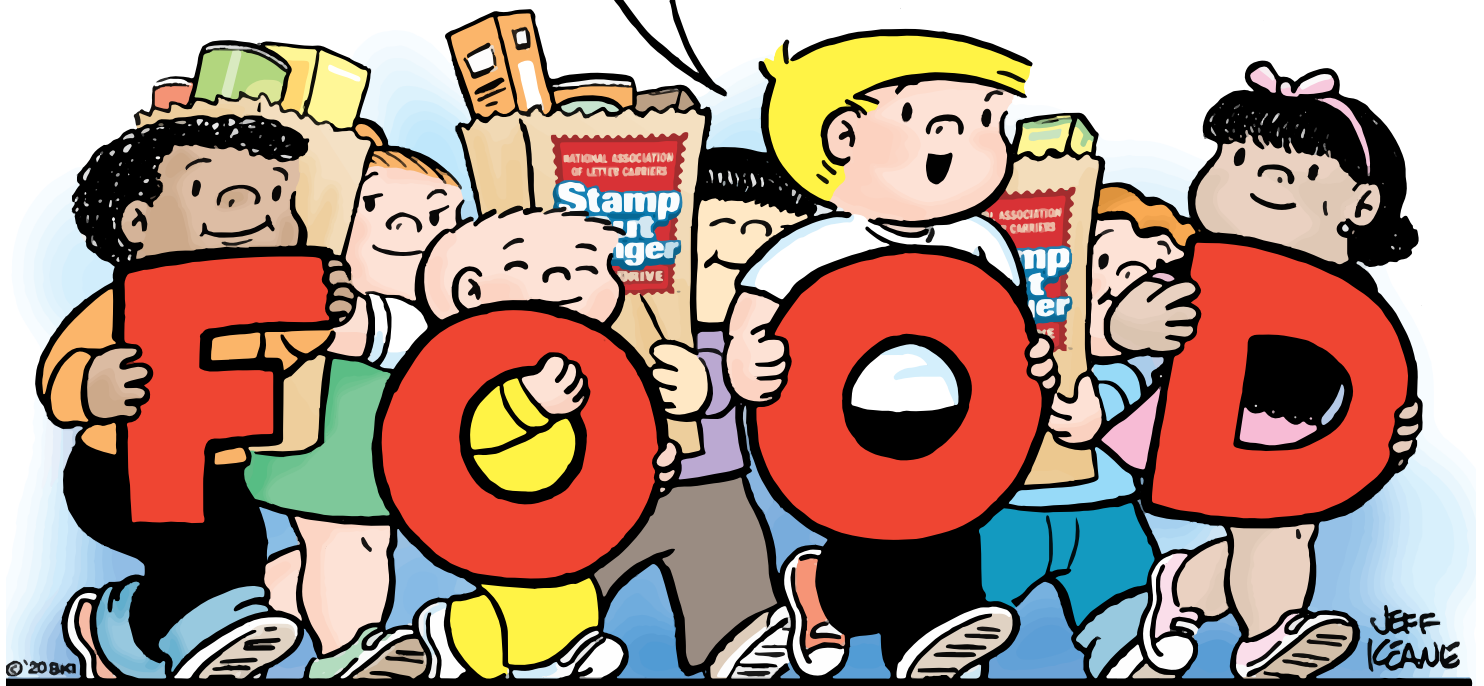
"Each year, the leave year begins with the first day of the first complete pay period in a calendar year and ends on the day before the first day of the first complete pay period in the following calendar year. For the year 2022, the leave year began

continued on page 11



Pictured above is retiree Jim Stevens from the North Hollywood P.O. as he is presented with his 55-Year Union Membership Pin at the February Retiree Luncheon.

THIS SPELLS
HELP FOR LOTS OF
FAMILIES THIS
YEAR!



LETTER CARRIERS'
FOOD DRIVE



Protect Yourself to Help Protect Others

By James Perryman, Executive Vice President

How many times when a hurricane or blizzard is predicted, we see people rushing out to the grocery store to buy enough water and milk or food to last a month or more without a thought of others who might want enough to last a couple of days? Sometimes in extreme emergencies, we often see the generosity of others, but why does it take a catastrophe to open our eyes to another's needs? Our society (today) does not make it easy to consider others, as we are constantly bombarded with false information (such as what is sometimes presented on social media) along with ads that encourage us to buy more, think only of ourselves and to live for the pleasure of the moment.

Here at the Union Hall, we continue to receive phone calls regarding the non-compliance of wearing the face mask covering by employees when it is required. The non-compliance concerns not only apply to letter carriers not wearing the face mask covering, it also applies to supervisors and clerks in some of the offices who are not wearing the face mask covering as well. Regardless of how anyone may feel about the face mask policy, while at work, it must be followed. Whether you agree or disagree, this is not a debate nor a dispute, it's a rule that must be followed for the safety of yourself and others.

Some may have issues with getting vaccinated for COVID-19 while others don't have a problem with being immunized for the disease, including myself. Now, I'm not advising anyone on what he or she should do about their health situations and/or concerns. However, I will express my opinion about immunization. What I don't understand is why people who have been immunized for many diseases throughout their lifetime, chose not to get vaccinated for COVID-19, which I will explain further in this article.

While waiting at the doctor's office to get my Shingles vaccination, I met a person who partly overheard my conversation with the receptionist about getting vaccinated. The part that he heard was "I'm not letting them put that shit in me so that I can get infected." The gentleman concurred and tells me that he feels the same way. Further, he continued to state that he's not getting vaccinated for COVID-19, assuming that I felt the same.

Even though, the gentleman had it all wrong, and I usually ignore comments from strangers about not wanting to get vaccinated for COVID-19, once again, I felt compelled to educate the naive individual about my opinion on this matter as I have done many times with family, friends, and associates.

I explained to him that the comment that I made to the receptionist was in reference to a statement from a co-worker who was infected by the Shingle virus; and he wished that he had received the vaccination when it was offered to him approximately one year earlier. My co-worker stated to me: "About a year ago I was offered the Shingles vaccination, but I was like, I'm not letting them put that shit in me..." I described in detail about what my co-worker experienced while being off work for about six months due to the pain and agony that he suffered after being infected, which may have been prevented if he was vaccinated.

I continued to express my opinion about the importance of being vaccinated for all diseases (including COVID-19), if possible, for his own safety, and to prevent the spread of the virus to others, especially to those who may have high health risk concerns which includes death if exposed.

Furthermore, I mentioned that throughout this pandemic we have been hearing the infection rate numbers go up and down. We hear opinions at work, on social media, on television, and

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.

at home about what is real and/or not real. Even though, there may be inconsistencies from the scientists and our political figures on how to address the current pandemic, the fact still remains that people are dying from COVID-19, which currently has the highest death rate, especially among those who are not vaccinated with underlying health conditions. Like any dangerous virus, we should do all that we can to stop the spread of this life-threatening disease to save ourselves and the lives of others.

Moreover, how many times have you heard parents swearing at their children for using foul language? This sounds hypocritical right? This is the same as someone that spreads false propaganda against getting vaccinated for COVID-19, which comes from the same person who is vaccinated for diseases and other viruses as well. These type of conflicting opinions do not help the ongoing issues and concerns cause by the pandemic. Again, in my opinion, the pandemic will not end until we do our part to educate and police ourselves to comply with safety protocols to get back to a normal way of life.

Lastly, as I mentioned earlier in this article, during a catastrophe people rush out to get what they think they need to survive, while sometimes helping others in the process. Therefore, during catastrophes we should act within the rules of caution. And, the same emergency thought process should be applied during



Pictured above is John Braden out of the North Hollywood P.O. as he accepts his Union Retirement Watch from Director of Retirees, Bev Sucich. Congratulations John and wear it for many years in good health.

the COVID-19 pandemic. This will allow everyone do everything possible to protect the lives of all.

OWCP Claims for COVID-19

Per the NALC website: A letter carrier who contracts COVID-19 while in the performance of their job duties would have the full coverage of the Federal Employees Compensation Act for related medical treatment and for wage loss or disability related to that condition or associated complications.

Letter carriers who have been diagnosed with the COVID-19 virus and are suffering symptoms related to the virus may file claims with the Office of Workers' Compensation Programs (OWCP). You should submit factual evidence concerning exposure as well as supporting medical evidence. The Postal Service will be expected to provide OWCP with any information they have concerning the alleged exposure and to indicate whether they are supporting or controverting the claim. If the Postal Service supports the claim including that the exposure occurred and the CA-1 is filed within 30 days, you are eligible to receive Continuation of Pay for up to 45 days. OWCP will then develop the claim and review evidence provided by you and the Postal Service concerning work-related exposure and a COVID-19 diagnosis. Should the claim be accepted for COVID-19, you are entitled to receive all medical services, appliances or supplies which a qualified physician prescribes or recommends, and which OWCP considers necessary to treat the work-related injury.

Exposure to COVID-19 alone does not constitute a work-related injury. You must actually be diagnosed with COVID-19 to potentially be afforded coverage. To establish coverage, you must submit a medical report from a qualified physician reflecting a positive test result for COVID-19, based on established work-related exposure to COVID-19. Letter carriers claiming an injury due to contact with COVID-19 that was contracted while in the performance of duty when exposed, are to be covered by OWCP. You have the same burden of proof to establish the basic requirements of coverage as other injured workers and must submit medical evidence in support of an identifiable injury in the performance of your letter carrier duties, and any related period of disability.

OWCP requires letter carriers exposed to the COVID-19 virus provide a detailed statement that explains:

How you were exposed to the virus; When the exposure occurred; How long and how frequently were you exposed; and where and why the exposure occurred. You should also explain if other individuals and co-workers were exposed.

continued on page 6

You should provide a timeline of activities for the days leading up to your exposure or the onset of your symptoms. The Postal Service will be required to provide similar documentation, such as comments from a knowledgeable supervisor on the accuracy of your statements, whether the agency concurs, and if possible, confirmation of a positive COVID-19 test result for any co-workers or customers.

If exposure to COVID-19 arose out of and in the course of your employment, it is generally said to have occurred in the performance of duty. The facts in your case must show that a work factor or requirement gave rise to the resulting COVID-19 diagnosis.

Proof that you have been exposed to an individual who has tested positive for COVID-19 in the office or out on the street will be necessary. Postal Service tracking data; TACS, RIMS and scan records should be requested and submitted to OWCP to support proof of exposure.

You will also need a medical report from a qualified physician reflecting that the positive COVID-19 diagnosis resulted from a work-related exposure while in the performance of your duties. You must explain the nature of your work exposure to your physician and make sure it is referenced in a medical report.

OWCP will only pay for the COVID-19 test up front (prior to accepting a case), if a claimant was exposed to a person with a confirmed diagnosis of COVID-19 in the performance of duty. Otherwise, OWCP will pay for the test, if the case is accepted, through a reimbursement.

Due to the rapid onset of COVID-19 symptoms, it is in your best interest to register in OWCP's electronic claim filing portal, ECOMP prior to exposure or diagnosis. You can register in ECOMP here and find directions on how to use the ECOMP web portal on the Injured on the Job page at nalc.org.

Letter Carrier Political Fund

At the time of writing this article, in a 342-92 vote the House of Representatives passed the Postal Service Reform Act of 2022 (**H.R. 3076**). NALC President Fredric Rolando called the passage "a huge victory for the American people, who rely on the Postal Service for affordable and high-quality universal service."

The strongly bipartisan bill includes key measures to strengthen the Postal Service, including provisions that eliminate the mandate on the Postal Service to pre-fund its retiree health care benefits decades in advance and that codify the requirement to provide six-day mail delivery. It also includes provisions to

reduce postal health care costs by maximizing participation in Medicare on a prospective basis.

NALC President Fredric Rolando states: *"With House passage, we are one step closer to dramatically improving the financial stability of the Postal Service. We call on the Senate to debate and pass H.R. 3076 as soon as possible—and then to send it to President Biden for his signature."*

The Letter Carrier Political Fund contribution pays for the NALC to lobby Congress to prevent the Postal Service from bankruptcy, which includes lobbying for the passing of bipartisan bills such as H.R. 3076 and S. 1720. This will help secure the rights of letter carriers to have good paying jobs, health benefits, and retirement benefits. 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, regardless of political affiliation, who support issues important to letter carriers such as H.R. 3076 and S. 1720. 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 or \$10.00 per month which is a very inexpensive way to insure a great future and way of life for letter carriers and their families. Active, retired, and CCA Letter Carriers can make campaign contributions to the LCPF by using PostalEASE, Electronic Funds Transfer, OPM Annuity, Check and Cash.

There are applications available online that are user friendly to help you set up to make campaign contributions. If you have any questions or need my assistance, please contact me. I am the LCPF Coordinator for our Branch and I will be happy to help you. 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. Stay well and God Bless you all.

Group Life Insurance

By Chris Alessi, MBA/NSBA Representative



In February of 1985 the NALC and the MBA established a \$5,000 basic group Accidental Life Insurance G-001 policy. Currently all active and retired NALC members are provided this benefit at no cost to the members or the branches. Branch members are not required to pay any premiums for this policy. The NALC pays for all the premiums for basic G-001 accidental death policies.

In addition to coverage under the basic G-001 policy, **with a majority vote from the floor of your local union meeting the MBA offers supplemental group insurance policies to the branches that elect to provide additional accidental death benefits and/or term life insurance for their active branch members, including CCAs.** No physical exams or individual insurance applications are required for a member to be covered by any of MBA's group G-001 Policies.

MBA's G-001 **Supplemental Accidental Life Insurance Plan** will insure the active branch members for as little as **3 cents/month per member for every \$1,000** worth of coverage and as much 75 cents per month per member for \$25,000 worth of accidental death coverage. There is no accumulated cash value attributed to either of the G-001 policies. Death benefits are paid when the death is a result of direct bodily injuries sustained

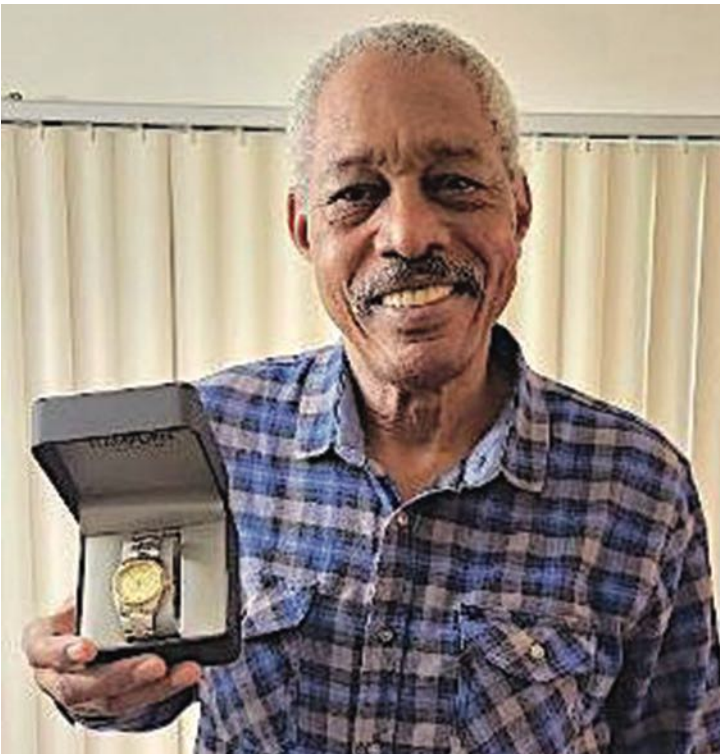
by an accident based on documentation from the pronouncing physician, the coroner's office, or the medical examiner, the MBA does not determine the manner of death.

MBA'S G-001 **Supplemental Term Life Insurance Plan**, on the other hand, pays a death benefit no matter what the cause of death is. Branch members can have extra protection at the rate of **44 cents/month per active member for every \$1000, not to exceed \$20,000 of term insurance.** When a branch purchases one or both of the G-001 supplemental life insurance plans, it must provide coverage for all of its **active members** for the same amount of coverage through the MBA.

After a branch member retires or their branch group coverage terminates, under the G-001 supplemental insurance plans, there is no need to worry. The MBA has a conversion period for retiring members, or membership cancellation of the group supplemental term life plans by a branch. Members previously under these plans have a 31-day option period to convert to an individual insurance policy with the MBA without taking a physical exam by providing a written application to the MBA. The conversion amount of insurance cannot exceed the elected amount of coverage that the branch has or had covering its active members. Under the conversion option, premiums are based upon the individual insured's age at time of conversion.

Branches can also benefit from electing to give their members this added protection, because a pro-rated portion of all unused premiums is refunded annually to the participating branches as an experience refund. Since 1985 the MBA has paid over \$6 million in basic accidental claims. The member does not pay any premiums for the supplemental group plans; the branches pay the whole premium for its active members.

In closing, I also want to give a tribute to the founder of our branch, brother "Jon Gaunce" He was a dedicated leader in keeping our branch strong and always fighting hard for the betterment of all Letter Carriers. He never stopped fighting for us. He kept all the officers and members informed on important step four decisions and the latest MOU's between our union and management. He would always go out of his way to step in when management was harassing the Carriers and resolved these type of militaristic style managers. He always kept all of us informed on political issues that involved important matters related to the Post Office and our jobs. Jon passed away 26 years ago on April 10, 1996. He would have been 67 years old this year. Until we meet again brother, I miss you! In Solidarity always, GOD BLESS YOU.



Pictured above is Bennie Smith from the San Fernando P.O. as he accepts his Union Retirement Watch. Good luck in that well-deserved retirement Bennie.

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

—Henny Youngman, American Comedian (1906-1998)

Great News from DC

By David Hyman, Branch 2902 Trustee & Political Liaison



Greetings Sisters & Brothers! The first week of February, Bob Golden and I spent three cold days in DC pacing the halls of the Capitol pursuing Congressional support from numerous members of Congress. The Postal Reform Act of 2022, H.R. 3076 was 15 years in the making and repeals the mandate for the pre-funding of health care benefits 70 years in advance.

This mandate billed the Postal service \$5 billion a year which represented 84% of the Postal deficit. Absent this burden, the Postal Service would be showing a profit most years. This bill also maximizes medicare participation among FEHBP-covered Postal employees and annuitants. H.R. 3076 also contains language to continue six-day delivery, something that has been added annually to appropriation legislation. The package

coalition and Postmaster General De Joy also supported this legislation.

Postmaster De Joy's support helped in getting more GOP support for this bill which passed 342-92 while Bob and I were on this lobby trip. Bob Golden lives in Minority Leader Kevin McCarthy's district and McCarthy voted for the bill as did our freshman representative, Mike Garcia, who was one of the first to sign on to this bill. All the Democrats supported us on this legislation as did most Republicans.

We had strong bi-partisan support on this bill and it goes to the Senate for passage there. There are at least 13 co-sponsors on this bill from both main parties and this will prevent a filibuster from being used against it in the Senate. It also might get fast-tracked as President Biden waits to add his signature on it.

Many of us had been encouraging our local members of Congress to get on board as a co-sponsor on two resolutions that we have been pushing each new Congress.

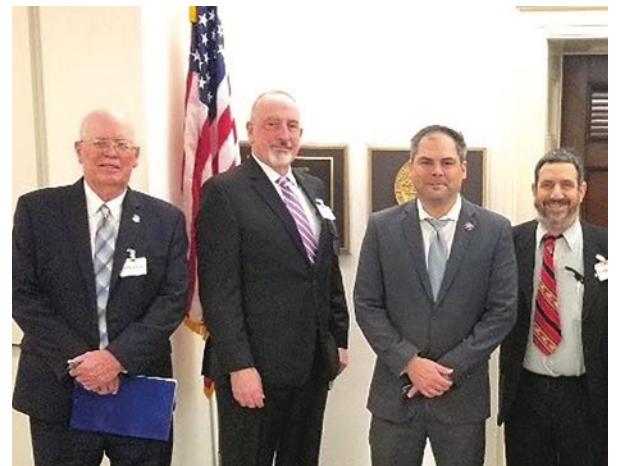
Those bills cover restoring delivery standards and preserving door delivery from being replaced with cluster boxes. So far, only Brad Sherman is on these resolutions. There are five other bills the NALC is following and we've had mixed success getting our four local representatives on these bills. They are all non-partisan bills. With the lack of passing the Build Back Better bill, Labor is hoping to pass certain segments of it piece by piece.

No updates at this time of the replacement of the current PMG, especially since his support of H.R. 3076 helped pull in more GOP votes.

Spring training is here and here's to hoping our Dodgers can continue their winning ways despite the loss of some big-named talent.



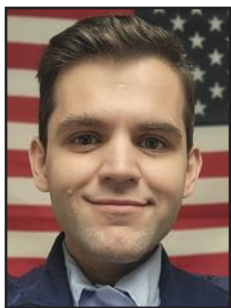
Pictured above is our very own Bob Golden as he meets with Congressional Representative Jim Costa in front of the Capitol Building in Washington DC.



Pictured above is Bob Golden (far left) with political Liaison Paul Jeffery, Congressional Representative Mike Garcia and David Hyman (far right).

Where is Everyone?

By Durim Kamburi, Simi Valley Shop Steward



Hello Brothers and Sisters. Serving as a Shop Steward for the National Association of Letter Carriers (NALC) in Simi Valley has been an

absolute experience. I was certified as a

Shop Steward by President Ray Hill in August, 2019. When Simi Valley Chief Shop Steward, Salvador Lopez, first found out I was certified as a Shop Steward, he jokingly stated to me in private, “Are you ready to be a Shop Steward for the City (Letter) Carriers, Clerks, Rural Carriers, Custodians, Supervisors, and shit, sometimes the Postmaster?” Being a new Shop Steward, I was confused by this question, so I gave him a technical response, “Uh... I’m only certified for the City Letter Carrier Craft.” He chuckled.

I found out quickly that everyone, and I mean EVERYONE, has their unique question... and for whatever reason, they direct those questions towards us, the NALC Shop Stewards.

At first, those questions didn’t come to me; I was a City Carrier Assistant (CCA) when I became a Shop Steward, and boy, I cannot describe the looks I received when the veterans of our craft found out a CCA was their Shop Steward. I’ll admit, it was not pleasant. Carriers would joke with me, “I’ve carried mail longer than you have been alive.” and “You were in diapers when I began carrying mail.” and “Your birthday is my seniority date.” In the moment, I couldn’t

help but laugh at those comments because they were technically true. Though after a quick laugh, I snapped back and I gave them all the same succinct response, “Why didn’t YOU step up and become a Shop Steward while I was in diapers?” ...Crickets.

Now? I get too many questions. I extend this challenge to all of our membership; become proactive in our Union! That doesn’t necessarily mean you need to become a Shop Steward, but start by attending our local monthly branch meetings. I can’t help but notice that our monthly union meetings have had the same attendees month after month. Our meetings are currently conducted via Zoom due to the pandemic. Meetings are conducted on the third Thursday at 7:00 pm every month. Send your name and email address to webmaster@nalcbranch2902.org to receive monthly meeting invitations.

Without solidarity, Unions cannot exist. Without Unions, our jobs and livelihoods are at risk.

On the Livelier Side of Simi

We have a new arrival in Simi Valley. Congratulations to Sister Amanda Bastian and her husband Evan Bastian on the birth of their son Cody Daniel Bastian. Cody was born at Providence Holy Cross in Mission Hills on December 23, 2021 at 12:01 p.m. weighing 8lbs., 12oz. and measuring 21.5 inches long. Baby Cody shares the same birthday with his father and isn’t letting either of his parents sleep.



Pictured above is Mike Free from the Reseda P.O. as he accepts his Union Retirement Watch. Congratulations Mike on that well deserved retirement.

Know Your Rights

LEAVE

Article 10.3.B Care shall be exercised to assure that no employee is required to forfeit any part of such employee’s annual leave.

Leave carryover. A letter carrier may carry over up to 440 hours (55 days) of accumulated annual leave from one leave year to the next. Any amount beyond the carryover maximum is forfeited.

Avoiding forfeiture of annual leave. Supervisors should exercise care to assure that no bargaining-unit employees have to forfeit any part of their annual leave. For their part, employees must be sure to submit sufficient leave requests. Stewards should encourage carriers to keep a watchful eye on their leave balances and vacation plans.



Up to the Challenge

By Mary Stanley, Treasurer/Financial Secretary

Hello to all. At the end of March, it will be one year since I took over for Dan as Branch Treasurer. I've got to share this with all of you.

"Dan, you've got some big shoes to fill!!" There have been plenty of times that I found myself tripping because the shoes didn't fit. As with any new job, practice gives us the experience we need to improve our skills. Although I've had plenty of accounting classes

from the Moorpark College, the book studies are quite different than the actual reality of it.

Recently, I was asked if I knew what I was getting into, would I have thought twice about it. Immediately I answered "Yes!" My thoughts were that I should have done it sooner. I'm really enjoying my responsibilities, although there are times when I do find them challenging. To all of you, Thank You for giving me this opportunity. God Bless and Stay Safe.

Treasurer's Report

1/19/2022 - 2/14/2022

General Account

Previous Balance	\$137,842.77
Receipts	\$36,996.55
Sub-Total	\$174,839.32
Disbursements	(\$47,746.58)
Total-on-Hand	\$127,092.74

Payroll Account

Previous Balance	\$134,977.80
Receipts	\$28,000.00
Sub-Total	\$162,977.80
Disbursements	(\$39,699.77)
Total-on-Hand	\$123,278.03

Convention Fund

Previous Balance	\$150,858.27
Checking Acct #7 .15% rate-USPS-C.U. (Active & Retirees 1660 x \$2 per By-Laws)	\$3,320.00
Total of Convention Fund	\$154,178.27

C.D. 6 mos .350% rate-Premier C.U.-#1	\$88,886.91
C.D. 6 mos .250% rate-Premier C.U.-#2	\$12,017.99
C.D. (1) year .598% rate Premier C.U.-s#3	\$113,321.51
MM Cert #21 26 wks .200% rate-USPS-C.U.	\$25,646.22
MM Cert #18 26 wks .250% rate-USPS-C.U.	\$23,516.33
MM Cert #19 26 wks .250% rate-USPS-C.U.	\$69,182.89
MM Checking #8 26 wks .250% rate-USPS-C.U.	\$46,648.10
C.D. 6 mos .380% Priority One C.U.	\$33,895.46
Shares acct USPS-C.U.	\$7.11

Total of Contingency Fund

\$413,123.52

Retiree Fund

\$12,343.26

Retiree Luncheon

Mary Stanley
Financial Secretary-Treasurer

Know Your Rights

MAXIMUM DAILY HOURS

The maximum daily hours an employee may be required to work is controlled by ELM 432.32 and Article 8, Section 5. The maximum depends upon whether an employee is part-time or full-time and on whether a full-time employee is on the overtime desired list.

ELM Section 432.32 applies to all employees working in the letter carrier craft (including casuals, TEs and part-time flexibles), even during the month of December. It provides:

432.32 Maximum Hours Allowed. Except as designated in labor agreements for bargaining unit employees or in emergency situations as determined by the PMG (or designee), employees may not be required to work more than 12 hours in one service day. In addition, the total hours of daily service, including scheduled work hours, overtime and mealtime may not be extended over a period longer than 12 consecutive hours. Postmasters, Postal Inspectors, and exempt employees are excluded from these Provisions

Article 8.5 provides that:

F. Excluding December, no full-time regular employee will be required to work overtime on more than four (4) of the employee's five (5) scheduled days in a service week or work over ten (10) hours on a regularly scheduled day, over eight (8) hours on a non-scheduled day, or over six (6) days in a service week.

April 16, 1985

The 12 hours per day and 60 hours in a service week are to be considered upper limits beyond which full-time employees are not to be worked.



For the Good Life

By Bev Sucich, Director of Retirees

Hi to all the retirees of Branch 2902. Happy New Year to all. We had 42 members and guests at our November 2021 Luncheon. Our

December 2021 Luncheon was dark.

With the Omicron virus, I feel that some retirees were playing it safe and not doing anything that would jeopardize their health, so our January 2022 Luncheon had only 32 retirees and guests. We had 36 attendees at the February 15, 2022 Luncheon. So we are still getting good turnouts.

One of our retirees, John Braden, received his watch and retired with 25 years of service. Another one of our retirees, Jim Stevens, finally got his name put in the Postal Record for his 55 years of membership in the Union. Jim worked in North Hollywood, but the Postal record has him working in San Fernando. I will call them to see if they can correct that.

We send our condolences to Mike Longres and Steve Garfinkle's families. So sorry for your loss.

For those of you who did not attend our January Luncheon, I gave a talk about scammers. Please be aware of ALL scammers, especially on Amazon. Make sure you keep an eye on your bank accounts, credit cards, even your Costco cards. I know a few people who were hacked on Amazon. You know the old saying, "If it sounds too good to be true, it probably is." Could easily be a scam, I know because I was a victim of one of these scams.

I saw the Letter Carrier Political Fund Donations in the Postal Record from our retirees. Congratulations to everyone who donates. Your donation not only helps active carriers but it helps us as retirees.

Hope you all have been vaccinated and had your booster shot. Also, be safe with the Omicron virus. It causes flu-like symptoms, even if you are vaccinated.

Until my next article, everyone stay safe and healthy.

A Nation Politically Divided

continued from page 2

January 1, 2022 (Pay Period 02-22) and ends January 13, 2023 (Pay Period 02-23) for a total of 27 pay periods. Therefore, employees **may** (emphasis added) earn one additional pay period's worth of annual leave during the 2022 leave year as compared to the typical 26 pay period leave year. For a full-time employee, the extra pay period amount will be four, six, or eight hours, depending on the employee's leave earning category. Part-time letter carriers earn leave based on the number of work hours during the pay period up the same amount of leave earned by full-time employees. CCAs are credited with one hour of annual leave for each twenty hours spent in a pay status during each biweekly pay period.

Although employees **may** (emphasis added) earn one additional pay period's worth of annual leave during leave year 2022, the annual leave carryover maximums will not increase because of it. Employees must use any annual leave in excess of the carryover limit that applies to them by the end of leave year 2022 (January 13, 2023) or they will forfeit the hours of annual leave that are in excess of their carryover limit. Any additional leave earned by CCA's will be paid out when they take their mandatory break in service between appointments". Notice that I have emphasized the word "may" because it is permissive and does not guarantee that we **will** earn an additional 8 hours of annual leave in leave year 2022.

After reading this information I checked my earnings statement for Pay Period 02-22 to see if I had been advanced an

additional eight hours of leave and discovered that I was only advanced 208 hours, not 216 hours. I am not sure exactly how, or if, we will be getting this additional eight hours of annual leave this year. I phone our National Business Agent, Bryant Almario, after reading this latest NALC.ORG news and he said that he would inquire during an upcoming Executive Council Meeting with the National Officers. I will provide an update on this matter when more information is available.

Northridge Post Office to be Demolished

I received a phone call yesterday (February 17, 2022) informing me that USPS had to vacate their leased building in Northridge by April 30 and that demolition of the building would start on May 1. The problem is, USPS has no where to move . Their proposed new site fell through and soon they will be homeless, so to speak. As of yesterday, the plan is to move one Northridge zone into the Reseda Post office, One Northridge zone into the Winnetka Post Office, and another Northridge zone into the Canoga Park Office. This will lead to a host of problems, including work space and parking issues. According to the Northridge officer-in-charge, these moves will be temporary, as USPS has another potential site with ample space for all three zones. I will update you on this matter as well, once we find out who is going where and when they are going.

Until next time, let us hope we have a baseball season this year.



Reaching Out for Help is a Strength

If you see someone struggling, offer them your support.

Things to know:

Do you reach out when you are feeling overwhelmed, sad, or uncomfortable? It can be easy to think,

- “I can handle this on my own,”
- “I will be fine,”
- “No one notices,”
- “I need to keep up appearances,”
- “I will just get through this difficult time”

because we feel that is what we should do.

Asking for help can be difficult. It may take time to work up courage to make the call. If you are struggling with a tough time and you don’t let anyone know, they can’t help you. Or, if you know that someone you care about is having a tough time but you don’t reach out to help them, it may weigh on your mind.

It can be tough to offer a hand to help someone, but keep in mind: sometimes it is so much tougher to be the one who is asking for the help. Let us help you and the ones you care about. Call your EAP today or visit our site for more information: EAP4YOU.com



CALL US TODAY: 800-327-4968
800-EAP-4YOU | TTY: 877-492-7341
WWW.EAP4YOU.COM



Hermance Law

ESTATE PLANNING & CRISIS PLANNING ATTORNEYS



Daughter of a Letter Carrier

THE TRUTH ABOUT ESTATE PLANNING, WILLS, TRUSTS & PROBATE

- A Will alone does **NOT** avoid probate court. A Trust **DOES** avoid probate court.
- Probate is **VERY** expensive and the fees are set by statute. Example, an estate of \$500,000 (FMV Home \$490,000 and \$10,000 in bank accounts) has **statutory fees of \$26,000**. This can be avoided with proper planning including a Trust.
- If you don't have a legal plan, everything **does not** automatically go to your spouse or kids. It passes via intestate law which may not be what you would want.
- If you don't have a legal plan and you can't make decisions for yourself, a judge will decide who gets to make decisions for you and it is expensive to go through.

WILLS | TRUSTS | PROBATE (SOMEONE PASSES AWAY) | TRUST ADMINISTRATION

DISCOUNTS FOR LETTER CARRIERS

(805) 518-9633

Serving San Fernando Valley,
Santa Clarita and Ventura County

www.HermanceLaw.com

4476 Market St. Suite 602, Ventura, 93003

*Legal Advisory

Hey,

Have We Met Yet?

We are U. S. Postal Service Federal Credit Union

Join U. S. Postal Service Federal Credit Union for:

- Cash Bonus for switching your checking account over
- Loans that will save you money
- VISA® Platinum & Platinum Rewards Credit Cards with 1.6% Cash Back
- Investments that will make you feel good about your future
- 24/7 Account Access through our Online and Mobile Banking Services
- Free Access To Cash to over 72,000 Surcharge-Free ATM's
- Access your account at over 5,000 Shared Branch locations nationwide

Join Today!

from: **USPS FCU**



117 N. Macneil St.
San Fernando, CA 91340-2993
Toll Free: 800 USPS-FCU (877-7328)
www.uspsfcu.org



We do business in accordance with the Federal Fair Housing Law and the Equal Opportunity Act. It is illegal to discriminate against any person because of race, color, religion, sex or national origin.



We deliver.



Serving Postal Workers Since 1933

- **Get paid two days early!** Your USPS paycheck delivered to you TWO DAYS EARLY with direct deposit*
- **PostCity Perks!** program with loan rate discounts and more
- Low auto loan rates with 100% financing
- FREE checking and Visa® debit card with mobile wallets
- Over 30,000 fee-FREE ATMs and 5,300+ shared branches
- FREE mobile and online banking with bill pay
- Platinum Visa® with rewards and NO annual fees
- Mortgage and home equity loans

If you work for, or are retired from the USPS call **(877) 337-2728**, visit any of our convenient branches or join online at www.postcitycu.org.

*Please visit www.postcitycu.org for complete rates and terms.



AMERICAN SHARE INSURANCE

Your savings insured to \$500,000 per account. By members' choice, this institution is not federally insured, and if the institution fails, the Federal Government does not guarantee that depositors will get back their money. The credit union is not insured by any state government.



BRANCH #2902 OFFICERS

PRESIDENT

- Ray Hill

EXECUTIVE VICE PRESIDENT

- James Perryman

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

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.

SHOP STEWARD LIST

Agoura Hills Chief S.S.	Greg Gaddis
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
Oxnard Chief S.S.	Johnny Boyd
	Kathi Albritten
	Pablo Galvan
Alternate S.S.	Louie Tanglao
Pacoima Chief S.S.	Call Office
Reseda Chief S.S.	Oscar Cortez
San Fernando Chief S.S.	Albert Reyes
M.C.A.	Albert Reyes
North Hills	Albert Reyes
Sylmar / Main Office	Martin Diaz
	Robert Tracy
Santa Paula Chief S.S.	Marcos Aldrete
Simi Valley Chief S.S.	Sal Lopez
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
Alternate S.S.	Rochelle Harvey
Newbury Park S.S.	Alex Lopez
Ventura Chief S.S.	Laura Rowe
East Ventura S.S.	Anthony Casian
Woodland Hills Chief S.S.	Call Office

THE MAIL BAG NEWS

NALC BRANCH 2902

21540 PRAIRIE STREET, #C
CHATSWORTH, CA 91311
(818) 700-9615 FAX (818) 700-9755
union@nalcbr2902.com
www.nalcbranch2902.org

Address Service Requested

NON PROFIT ORG.

U.S. POSTAGE

PAID

PERMIT NO. 41

Canoga Park, CA

RETIREEES LUNCH

RAFFLE AT 12:30



MARCH

Where: Golden Panda
1825 Madera Rd., Simi Valley
When: Tuesday, March 15, 2022
Time: 11:00 am to 1:00 pm

APRIL

Where: Golden Panda
1825 Madera Rd., Simi Valley
When: Tuesday, April 19, 2022
Time: 11:00 am to 1:00 pm

Calendar of Events

- MAR 13** Daylight Savings Time Begins-
Set clocks ahead one hour 
- MAR 15** Retiree Lunch 11:00 am
Golden Panda - Simi Valley
- MAR 17** Regular Branch Meeting 7:00 pm
Union Hall - Chatsworth
(Subject to COVID-19 restrictions)
- APR 7** Executive Board Meeting 6:00 pm
Executive Council Meeting 7:00 pm
(Subject to COVID-19 restrictions)
- APR 19** Retiree Lunch 11:00 am
Golden Panda - Simi Valley
- APR 21** Regular Branch Meeting 7:00 pm
Union Hall - Chatsworth
(Subject to COVID-19 restrictions)
- MAY 5** Executive Board Meeting 6:00 pm
Executive Council Meeting 7:00 pm
(Subject to COVID-19 restrictions)
- May 8** Mother's Day
- MAY 14** NALC Food Drive
(Subject to COVID-19 restrictions)
- MAY 17** Retiree Lunch 11:00 am
Golden Panda - Simi Valley
- MAY 19** Regular Branch Meeting 7:00 pm
Union Hall - Chatsworth
(Subject to COVID-19 restrictions) 
- MAY 30** Memorial Day - Holiday

Brookfield® Uniforms
UNION MADE

Lori Stewart
Retired Letter Carrier & NALC Branch 2902 Shop Steward
- 35 years of service -

Moorpark, CA 93021
Email: Lschultz@aol.com

Office: 805.368.0444
Toll Free: 800.527.0606



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

MEMBER: LOS ANGELES FEDERATION OF LABOR, AFL-CIO

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

VOLUME 64, NO. 3

CIRCULATION 2,500

MAY - JUNE 2022

30th Annual Food Drive

By Ray Hill, President

I am going to start this column with good news. One of the major casualties of the COVID-19 pandemic was the cancellation of our annual food drives in 2020 and 2021.

As you all know, we will be having our food drive this year on May 14. This marks the 30th year that NALC has partnered with USPS for this wonderful, worthy cause. Wow, 30 years has flown by.

I vividly remember the first food drive in 1992 and how the patrons on my route were really into it, filling my LLV with food by the time the day was done. However, there were problems getting the food collected by the food banks in some Branch 2902 Post Offices on that first food drive day, resulting

in the food having to be brought to the Branch 2902 Union Hall where it filled the meeting room to capacity. We have had other problems on food drive days over the past 30 years, most dealing with the food banks and their methods of collecting and transporting the food from the various Post Offices in the

Branch. For example, 21 years ago on food drive day in North Hollywood, the food bank did not show up to collect the food that was sitting in many, many orange hampers in the parking lot at LCCA when I returned from the street at 6:00 pm. I called Branch 2902 President Bev Mattes to let her know that no one

had shown up to collect our food and Bev asked me to drive to the church responsible for collecting the food to see if anyone was there that I could talk to and find out what the problem was. I drove to the church and found that there was not a soul in sight (no pun intended) and the church and all of the outlying buildings were locked up tighter than a drum.

I left the church, drove back to the Post Office and arrived at 7:00 pm to discover that only two people were still there, Carrier Esperanza (Espie) Padilla and Supervisor Roger (Ogie) Deguzman. I decided that the



Special thanks to (pictured above) Alex Lopez, Matt Hill, Jeff Ross, Sue Degenhardt, Mary Stanley, Louie Rodriguez, Janette Dolabson and John Burton (not pictured) for helping to get the food drive cards organized for distribution to our offices.

the Post Office and arrived at 7:00 pm to discover that only two people were still there, Carrier Esperanza (Espie) Padilla and Supervisor Roger (Ogie) Deguzman. I decided that the

continued on page 2



30th Annual Food Drive

continued from page 1

food could not sit in the parking lot over the weekend at LCCA and that it would have to be moved. The three of us proceeded to push each and every one of those *many* hampers full of *heavy* canned foods up the ramp at LCCA, through the exit door, which was closer than the ramp leading to the entrance door, and into the Post Office where the food was locked up for the weekend. Both Espie, who transferred to the Oxnard Post Office in 2003, and Supervisor Ogie Deguzman, who wisely left delivery and now works in Santa Clarita, went way above and beyond the call of duty on that food drive day.

We don't have problems like that anymore and thanks to all of your hard work things run quite smoothly now on food drive days. I can't name all of you who go above and beyond the call of duty during food drives in this article, but I must give a special thanks to our former Branch food drive coordinator, Sandy Dearborn, and to her husband Jim. Sandy went *way above* the call of duty for all of our past food drives and she has now handed the baton to our new coordinator, Mary Stanley. Sandy, your efforts over the past 30 years are much appreciated and the branch can't thank you enough. A heartfelt thanks to *each and every one of you* who have participated in this yearly event at any time over the past 30 years; without all of your stellar efforts throughout the years the annual food drive could not succeed like it has. Millions of United States residents are unsure of where their next meal is coming from, including many children and senior citizens. I read in another union publication that this will be the first food drive for over 25% of the membership. Please, do your part to ensure this food drive will be as successful as the past ones. Thanks again for your participation in this worthy event.

State Convention and Training

The California State Association of Letter Carriers (CSALC), the Region One National Business Agent's (NBA) Office and Host Branch 70 will hold the CSALC convention in San Diego April 29th and April 30th. Prior to the convention, the CSALC and NBA's office will be conducting training classes April 28th. I am writing this on April 10 and this issue of the *Mail Bag News* will be delivered after the convention and training takes place, so we will report on the convention and training in the next issue of the *Mail Bag News*.

Issues that Keep Me Awake at Night

I usually fall asleep when my head hits the pillow, but there are some issues that give me insomnia and keep me awake at night. One of those issues is my concern over the lack of union participation amongst our newer members.

In January of 2005, NALC at the National level started what was originally called the "Next Generation Leadership Training program." This new program was described in the January 2005 issue of the *Postal Record* as "NALC President William H. Young's initiative to identify and prepare leaders for the union's future." In that issue of the *Postal Record*, President Young (who is now retired) is quoted as saying, "We're looking for new people who are dedicated to the union with the potential to learn, lead and succeed." The 2005 article describes how the 30 participants for the first class were going to be chosen as follows: "The national business agent and branch presidents in each of NALC's 15 regions are being asked to recommend two letter carriers under age 40, not currently serving as officers, to participate in the program" (emphasis added). Although I and many others disagreed with the age requirement at the time, I understood President Young's logic in his wanting the "Next Generation" of leadership applicants to be under age 40. President Young's age intent with his under age 40 requirement was obviously to get some younger blood into union leadership roles as our national leaders were growing older and older and getting closer and closer to riding off into retirement.

The age requirement caused an immediate uproar, rightfully so, among the NALC local branches and the "under age 40" requirement was pretty much scrapped from the get-go and the name of the program was changed from the "Next Generation Leadership Training program" to the "Leadership Academy." I personally think the main reason why the age requirement was scrapped immediately was because those who were asked (national business agents and branch presidents) to recommend two letter carriers to participate in the program were very hard pressed to come up with two names of carriers who were under age 40 to participate in the program. The July 2005 issue of the *Postal Record* listed both the names and the ages of the first 30 participants chosen for the Leadership Academy program; 20 of the 30 people chosen for the first Leadership Academy class were over age 40 and one of the participants was 50 years old. So much for the "under age 40" requirement.

If you think about it, it's really quite pathetic that in 2005 the national business agents and the branch presidents had a difficult time coming up with two names per region of men or women under age 40 to participate in the leadership training program. In my opinion, that fact spoke volumes about the majority of our younger carriers' commitment, or lack thereof, to the union cause. In Branch 2902, we too are always looking for a few good men and women to step up and join the union cause, no matter what their age is. However, the motives of potential branch leaders must be investigated thoroughly as there is much responsibility involved in the job of a NALC representative.

Why Do You Want To Be a Steward?

This question must be asked to carriers expressing interest in becoming a Steward: why do you want to be Steward? When we ask this question, we sometimes get the right answers and we sometimes get the wrong answers from carriers indicating a desire to be a Steward. And yes, there are right answers and wrong answers to this question. The carriers who want to become Stewards for all of the wrong reasons are *always* very easy to spot. I will not discuss why they are easy to spot in this forum but rest assured that Union officers, myself included, are a perceptive bunch and we did not just fall off the proverbial turnip truck.

On the other hand, carriers who indicate a desire to become Stewards for all of the right reasons are also very easy to spot. They care about their fellow carriers and about the contract that NALC has fought so hard to obtain for the membership. They show up for work, on time, day in and day out. While working they follow the USPS rules and regulations and perform their jobs in a safe manner, day in and day out. They limit their phone usage while working to lunch, breaks and emergencies in accordance with the work rules. Imagine that! Because they show up for work on time every day, follow all of the rules and work safely, they keep *themselves* out of trouble at work and they wouldn't have to spend their Union Steward time defending *themselves* from discipline. These carriers also go out of their way to welcome and help their struggling rookie co-workers and they speak up when they see contractual violations being committed or when they see management mistreating a co-worker, because they truly care and want

to make a difference. They distance themselves from any of the bullshit gossip they hear on the workroom floor that is sometimes spouted by some of their fellow carriers or by management. These carriers are definitely Steward material!

Difficult, Yet Rewarding

The job of the NALC Steward is a difficult one, a job that is often both trying and rewarding at the same time. The Steward is the key to a strong union and shows visible evidence of the union in the workplace by policing and enforcing the contract. An effective Steward also does much more than just process grievances. The Steward builds unity among the membership in the workplace by enforcing the contract, educating the membership and promoting union activism. Sometimes I talk to carriers who have never attended a branch meeting and are asking me questions about being a Steward. I will always ask them why I have never seen them at a branch meeting, which we are currently holding via Zoom. If you have any interest in the union, attend a branch meeting. We give out lots of useful information at our meetings and you can see how a union works. I understand that all of the membership pays their hard-earned money for union dues and many members feel that should be enough. I can't argue with that sentiment but simply wish more of us would be involved. How about you?

Until next time, Happy Mother's Day to all of the mothers reading this; you are very much appreciated. I hope to see more of our members at our monthly Zoom branch meetings, held the third Thursday of each month.

Pictured at right is the Director of Retirees Bev Sucich as she is flanked on the left by Jim Dearborn from the Simi Valley Office as he accepts his 30-year Union Membership Pin and on the right by Wayne Madura from the Northridge Installation as he accepts his 35- and 40-year NALC Membership Pins. Congratulations to both members and thank you for all your years of loyal membership.





Observed Stationary Events

By James Perryman, Executive Vice President

There's a new Sheriff in town and his name is Billy Bread Crumbs (MDD-Mobile Delivery Device/Scanner). Some of you may have experienced Billy's bad ass demeanor in the form of a text message that threatens you to be prepared to explain your stationary events. So, I advise any letter carrier to request a Shop Steward before Billy's representatives (Supervisors) begin the interrogation. One may question, what the hell is the Branch EVP (James Perryman) talking about in this article. Well, let me explain in further detail.

I have been made aware that letter carriers have been receiving text messages on their scanners, in the form of accusations which state that they have been observed with excessive stationary events. Furthermore, the text messages also informed the letter carriers to be prepared to explain. It appears that Billy's representatives disguise the messages with a polite phrase such as: **"Please be prepared to explain,"** which may be an attempt to bamboozle letter carriers while using kind words, to get them to participate in a questions and answers inquiry on stationary events without union representation (in some cases). Don't fall into this rabbit hole. Protect yourself and request a Shop Steward to be present before answering any questions about stationary events.

Let's discuss reasons why letter carriers should request union representation before participating in fact findings for the above-mentioned situation. First of all, I have questions about the alleged accusation. Who conducted the observation? When did the observation occur? What was the letter

carrier doing during the alleged excessive stationary event? And, (if applicable) how was the alleged excessive stationary event corrected?

When I asked management the above-mentioned questions their response was: "I don't know, we have to conduct an Investigative Interview to find out. We received a **Stationary Event Report from Bread Crumbs GPS Tracking** that shows excessive events."

Although they called it a Fact Finding, management's response to my question appears to indicate that they are conducting a fishing expedition. Right? So, I had to ask more questions. Can Bread Crumbs tell what the letter carrier was doing to cause alleged excessive stationary events? Can Bread Crumbs

explain, (if applicable) how it corrected the alleged excessive stationary event(s)? Once again, management's responses to my questions was "Of course not, that's why we need to conduct a Fact Finding with the letter carrier."

Well, at this point, it is now confirmed. Management had established their intent to conduct fishing expeditions for excessive stationary events (aka Fact Findings). Hopefully, letter carriers understand the message that I am trying to provide in this article. You now understand that management is relying on you, the letter carrier to answer my above-mentioned questions. And, they may want you to answer these questions without union representation regarding alleged excessive stationary events.



Pictured above is a fine example of Billy Bread Crumbs at work.

Also, understand that management has a responsibility to conduct street observations with letter carriers for the following (in part):

1. Safety observations.
2. Line of travel to and from the route.
3. Observations that obvious shortcuts are being used.
4. Correct time-wasting practices. (If applicable)

Therefore, management can make an assessment, to properly address alleged excessive stationary events, (if necessary) when conducting the above-mentioned street observations. But they won't, it's much easier to conduct fact findings followed by issuance of discipline based solely on the Bread Crumbs Reports.

In my opinion, management's sole reliance on the Bread Crumbs report is because they are not physically conducting visual street observations that support alleged stationary event accusations (in most cases). There is no substantial proof that these violations occurred during physical, (in person) visual observations. Which may be the reason why some letter carriers are asked to respond to questions and answers as an attempt to find information that fits into management's excessive stationary event's accusation puzzle. **(AKA-FISHING FOR INFORMATION.)**

The Union does not condone unnecessary stationary events while in the performance of delivery. Letter carriers are advised to performed their duties as prescribed in the National Agreement which includes the Handbooks and Manuals. However, management's sole use of Bread Crumbs does not establish that letter carriers are violating a rule nor does it prove stationary time is being use excessively. Sometimes letter carriers may spend additional time at locations throughout his/her daily duties due to unforeseen circumstances. And if so, I advise letter carries to notify their supervisor as soon as practicable to try deter management from wrongful accusations. Nevertheless, the Union will investigate what appears to be a threatening message sent out to letter carriers on the MDD scanning devices regarding stationary events.

In the meantime, if this is happening in your office, notify your Shop Steward immediately. And, for the reason that I stated above, before participating with management in questions and answers regarding excessive stationary events, request union representation to be present. Without the presence of union representation, your responses to management's questions may get twisted/distorted and may lead to disciplinary action. Again, don't fall for management's Fish and Sale, protect yourself and request union representation. You are entitled to representation under the Weingarten rights

Letter Carrier Political Fund

During the time this article was written, President Biden signed the Postal Service Reform Act of 2022 (H.R. 3076) into law. The President's signature comes after the bill passed with massive bipartisan majorities in the House in February and in the Senate in March. The key provisions of this bipartisan legislation repeal the mandate to pre-fund retiree health care benefits decades in advance, and codify a minimum of six-day delivery of mail and packages into federal law. This will eliminate the need to renew the six-day requirement every year through the Congressional appropriations process. The bill also maximizes the integration of future Postal annuitants into Medicare. NALC President Fredric Rolando said, "This is a monumental victory for letter carriers and all Americans who depend on the Postal Service for affordable and high-quality universal service."

The Letter Carrier Political Fund contribution pays for the NALC to lobby Congress to prevent the Postal Service from bankruptcy, which includes lobbying for the passing of bipartisan bills such as H.R. 3076. This will help secure the rights of letter carriers to have good paying jobs, health benefits, and retirement benefits. 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 all letter carriers.

The Letter Carrier Political Fund contributes to candidates, regardless of political affiliation, who support issues important to letter carriers such as H.R. 3076. Only NALC members can contribute to the Letter Carrier Political Fund, it's our Political Action Committee (PAC). 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 or \$10.00 per month which is a very inexpensive way to insure a great future and way of life for letter carriers and their families. Active, retired, and CCA letter carriers can make campaign contributions to the LCPF by using PostalEASE, Electronic Funds Transfer, OPM Annuity, Check and Cash.

There are applications available online 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 help you. 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. Stay well and God Bless you all.



Hospital Plus Gives you Extra Money in Time of Need

By Chris Alessi, MBA/NSBA Representative

Hospital Plus is a great way to receive extra cash when you are confined to a hospital. With the Hospital Plus plan, the MBA will pay you up to \$100 per day when you are in the hospital. This confinement could also be a legally operated institution, sanitarium or clinic having accommodations for resident bed patients.

Insurance coverage pays you \$30, \$50, \$75, or \$100 per day based on your choice of coverage. Since this money is not considered income, it is not subject to federal income tax. Every cent is yours to spend the way you want to spend it. The children's coverage is **60%** of the adults, \$18, \$30, \$45, or \$60 per day. Insurance pays when the children are unmarried, legal children under the age of 19 years living with the insured, or under the age of 24 and a full-time student.

There is no medical exam required, and to claim benefits there is just one short claim form page and attaching a copy of the hospital bill. Hospital plus will pay any claim up to 365 days, that could be an adult benefit amount of \$36,500, ranging from \$210 to \$700 for a full week's stay associated with an accident, illness, surgery, or other acceptable conditions.

When an accident or illness **requires a return to the hospital**, Hospital Plus will continue. Returns that occur within six months for the same or related cause are covered up to policy's limit of 365 days. Stays that are separated by six months from an earlier event, even if related to the same cause, are considered new, and the 365 days starts counting over.

For pre-existing conditions, Hospital plus will start paying benefits for the covered person once they have gone 12 consecutive months, or one year from the time the policy became effective for the insured without any further treatment or medical advice.

Some examples of how you can use the benefits are: to pay for travel to and from the hospital, childcare, medical costs not

covered by health insurance, co-pays, and deductibles, legal fees, relative and guests offering their support staying at your home, long distance calls, and gifts to comfort them also. All these things could add up to a lot of extra expense.

Pregnancies are also a covered benefit by hospital plus plan provided the policy was in effect before the start of the pregnancy. With the family coverage the newborn will be included on the 16th day following the birth.

Mammographies are also a covered benefit, upon the referral of a physician, nurse practitioner, or certified nurse midwife providing care to the covered person and operating within the scope of practice for breast cancer screening or diagnostic purposes. Hospital Plus will pay up to \$100 for a baseline mammogram for women ages 35 to 39. Women 40 to 49 inclusive, every two years or more frequently based on the physician's recommendation, and a mammogram every year for women 50 years and older.

Payroll deductions make it easy to pay the premiums or you can be billed monthly or yearly. The premiums are as low as \$1.95 bi-weekly. The MBA is non-profit, with no sales agents to pay commissions so they pass on the savings to the members. You can keep your policy as long as you like regardless of the benefits you received or future health conditions.

Dividends on the premiums are paid to you after your anniversary date each year. There is a 30-day, no-risk agreement, if you are not satisfied for any reason you can return your policy for a full refund.

In closing, I want to say Congratulations to all the Delegates that will be attending our 72nd National Convention in Chicago this August. I know all of you will learn a lot and bring back good information to our members.

In Solidarity Always. GOD BLESS YOU.

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.



No Longer a Dream, Postal Reform Act is a Reality

By David Hyman, Branch 2902 Trustee & Political Liaison

Greetings Sisters & Brothers! After 12 years of hard work, the Postal Reform Act of 2022, H.R. 3076 passed the House in February and then went to the Senate. There was a slight delay on the Senate vote due to an error in the bill that was delivered to the Senate for a vote. The correct Senate bill passed by a bi-partisan vote 79-19 in March and was sent to the President. President Biden signed the bill on April 6, 2022, despite his main focus then being the crimes against humanity occurring in Ukraine by Russia.

The key provision of the new law of course is the repeal of the mandate to pre-fund retiree health care benefits decades in advance.

Another one of the most major achievements of the new law is that it mandates that the Postal Service provide delivery of mail at least six days a week. The great part of this provision is that while the Postal Service has always delivered six days a week, each year that provision had to be renewed through the budget appropriations process. Often times Postal management was in opposition to this. Now six-day-a-week delivery of mail is a permanent mandate.

The new law also maximizes the integration of future postal annuitants into Medicare.

Postal Vehicles Going Green?

The House Committee on Oversight and Reform is examining the new vehicle contract for 50,000 new Postal vehicles. This bill presently seeks only 10% of these vehicles to be electric vehicles. This committee would like to see at least 75% of these as electric vehicles which would lessen our dependence on oil. They are better for the environment and save the Postal Service money in the long term with the high cost of gas being what it is.

Workers of the World Unite!

Bob Golden and I attended the 2022 Workers Congress at the end of March, which supported the L.A. labor movement. The L.A. Feds new officers were sworn in and there were numerous guest speakers and workshops. Some of the keynote speakers included Lorena Gonzales, incoming President, California Federation of Labor, AFL-CIO, Dr. Angela Davis, educator, activist and author, Ron Herrera, President of L.A. County Federation of Labor, AFL-CIO, and Liz Shuler, President, AFL-CIO.

Dr. Angela Davis mentioned her long support of labor.

During the Air Flight Controllers strike during the Reagan era, Davis told of what she did in support of the striking controllers. She refused to fly domestically with aviation using strike breaking replacements. For her international trips she would fly home by flying into Canada and then drive back to her US destination to avoid being airborne using scab replacements in the control tower. She told the crowd that Covid had one benefit, it

showed who essential workers were. She also said workers of the world unite, you have nothing to lose but chains. She also told the crowd this is the most exciting time in history. Hope is not a given, it's up to us to generate it.

The three workshops offered were: Power Starts with Organizing, Will Strike if Provoked, and From Protest to Vote. The other labor officials gave updates on our progress and future agenda. It was an inspiring program.

Beginning on July 10, 2022, Forever stamps will cost 60 cents and it will cost 44 cents to mail a domestic postcard.

Baseball is finally back, the boys in blue should again be contenders.



Pictured above is President Biden as he signs into law H.R. 3076, which provides the Postal Reform Act that the NALC has been working so hard to get passed over the past 12 years.

Treasurer's Report

3/16/2022 - 3/31/2022

General Account

Previous Balance	\$134,630.15
Receipts	<u>\$20,147.08</u>
Sub-Total	\$154,777.23
Disbursements	(\$7,611.42)
Total-on-Hand	<u>\$147,165.81</u>

Payroll Account

Previous Balance	\$133,460.91
Receipts	<u>\$0.00</u>
Sub-Total	\$133,460.19
Disbursements	(\$14,030.77)
Total-on-Hand	<u>\$119,430.14</u>

Convention Fund

Previous Balance	\$157,498.27
Checking Acct #7 .15% rate-USPS-C.U. (Active & Retirees 1675 x \$2 per By-Laws)	\$0.00
Total of Convention Fund	<u>\$157,498.27</u>

C.D. 6 mos .350% rate-Premier C.U.-#1	\$88,929.88
C.D. 6 mos .250% rate-Premier C.U.-#2	\$12,022.83
C.D. (1) year .598% rate Premier C.U.- #3	\$113,412.75
MM Cert #21 26 wks .200% rate-USPS-C.U.	\$25,657.04
MM Cert #18 26 wks .250% rate-USPS-C.U.	\$23,525.83
MM Cert #19 26 wks .250% rate-USPS-C.U.	\$69,201.85
MM Checking #8 26 wks .250% rate-USPS-C.U.	\$46,666.95
C.D. 6 mos .380% Priority One C.U.	\$33,928.23
Shares acct USPS-C.U.	<u>\$7.11</u>

Total of Contingency Fund **\$413,361.47**

Retiree Fund **\$12,611.03**

Mary Stanley
Financial Secretary-Treasurer

RETIREES LUNCH RAFFLE AT 12:30

MAY

Where: Golden Panda
1825 Madera Rd., Simi Valley
When: Tuesday, May 16, 2022
Time: 11:00 am to 1:00 pm

JUNE

Where: Golden Panda
1825 Madera Rd., Simi Valley
When: Tuesday, June 21, 2022
Time: 11:00 am to 1:00 pm

Brookfield® Uniforms
UNION MADE

Lori Stewart
Retired Letter Carrier & NALC Branch 2902 Shop Steward
- 35 years of service -

Moorpark, CA 93021
Email: Lschultzzy@aol.com

Office: 805.368.0444
Toll Free: 800.527.0606

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.



Hermance Law

ESTATE PLANNING & CRISIS PLANNING ATTORNEYS

THE TRUTH ABOUT ESTATE PLANNING, WILLS, TRUSTS & PROBATE



Daughter of a Letter Carrier

- A Will alone does **NOT** avoid probate court. A Trust **DOES** avoid probate court.
- Probate is **VERY** expensive and the fees are set by statute. Example, an estate of \$500,000 (FMV Home \$490,000 and \$10,000 in bank accounts) has **statutory fees of \$26,000**. This can be avoided with proper planning including a Trust.
- If you don't have a legal plan, everything **does not** automatically go to your spouse or kids. It passes via intestate law which may not be what you would want.
- If you don't have a legal plan and you can't make decisions for yourself, a judge will decide who gets to make decisions for you and it is expensive to go through.

WILLS | TRUSTS | PROBATE (SOMEONE PASSES AWAY) | TRUST ADMINISTRATION

DISCOUNTS FOR LETTER CARRIERS

Serving San Fernando Valley,
Santa Clarita and Ventura County

(805) 518-9633

www.HermanceLaw.com
4476 Market St. Suite 602, Ventura, 93003

*Legal Advisory

Hey,

Have We Met Yet?

We are U. S. Postal Service Federal Credit Union

Join U. S. Postal Service Federal Credit Union for:

- Cash Bonus for switching your checking account over
- Loans that will save you money
- VISA® Platinum & Platinum Rewards Credit Cards with 1.6% Cash Back
- Investments that will make you feel good about your future

- 24/7 Account Access through our Online and Mobile Banking Services
- Free Access To Cash to over 72,000 Surcharge-Free ATM's
- Access your account at over 5,000 Shared Branch locations nationwide

Join Today!

from: **USPS FCU**



117 N. Macneil St.
San Fernando, CA 91340-2993
Toll Free: 800 USPS-FCU (877-7328)
www.uspsfcu.org



We do business in accordance with the Federal Fair Housing Law and the Equal Opportunity Act. It is illegal to discriminate against any person because of race, color, religion, sex or national origin.



We deliver.



Serving Postal Workers Since 1933

- **Get paid two days early!** Your USPS paycheck delivered to you TWO DAYS EARLY with direct deposit*
- **PostCity Perks!** program with loan rate discounts and more
- Low auto loan rates with 100% financing
- FREE checking and Visa® debit card with mobile wallets
- Over 30,000 fee-FREE ATMs and 5,300+ shared branches
- FREE mobile and online banking with bill pay
- Platinum Visa® with rewards and NO annual fees
- Mortgage and home equity loans

If you work for, or are retired from the USPS call **(877) 337-2728**, visit any of our convenient branches or join online at www.postcitycu.org.

*Please visit www.postcitycu.org for complete rates and terms.



AMERICAN SHARE INSURANCE

Your savings insured to \$500,000 per account. By members' choice, this institution is not federally insured, and if the institution fails, the Federal Government does not guarantee that depositors will get back their money. The credit union is not insured by any state government.



BRANCH #2902 OFFICERS

PRESIDENT

- Ray Hill

EXECUTIVE VICE PRESIDENT

- James Perryman

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

SHOP STEWARD LIST

Agoura Hills Chief S.S.	Greg Gaddis
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
Oxnard Chief S.S.	Johnny Boyd
	Kathi Albritten
	Pablo Galvan
Alternate S.S.	Louie Tanglao
Pacoima Chief S.S.	Call Office
Reseda Chief S.S.	Oscar Cortez
San Fernando Chief S.S.	Albert Reyes
M.C.A.	Albert Reyes
North Hills	Albert Reyes
Sylmar / Main Office	Martin Diaz
	Robert Tracy
Santa Paula Chief S.S.	Marcos Aldrete
Simi Valley Chief S.S.	Sal Lopez
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
Alternate S.S.	Rochelle Harvey
Newbury Park S.S.	Alex Lopez
Ventura Chief S.S.	Laura Rowe
East Ventura S.S.	Anthony Casian
Woodland Hills Chief S.S.	Call Office

THE MAIL BAG NEWS

NALC BRANCH 2902

21540 PRAIRIE STREET, #C
CHATSWORTH, CA 91311
(818) 700-9615 FAX (818) 700-9755
union@nalcbr2902.com
www.nalcbranch2902.org

Address Service Requested

NON PROFIT ORG.
U.S. POSTAGE
PAID
PERMIT NO. 41
Canoga Park, CA

ATTENTION ALL DIRECT DUES PAYING RETIREES!

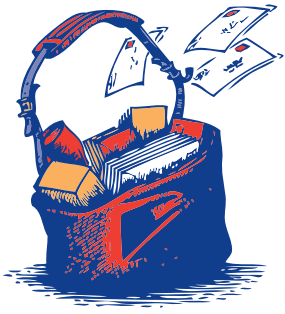
MEMBERSHIP DUES ARE DUE AND PAYABLE, JANUARY 1, 2022

Please remit your \$24
to the Branch Office:
21540 Prairie Street, #C
Chatsworth, CA 91311

Attn: Mary Stanley,
Financial Secretary-Treasurer

Calendar of Events

MAY 30	Memorial Day - Holiday
JUN 2	Executive Board Meeting 6:00 pm Executive Council Meeting 7:00 pm (Subject to COVID-19 restrictions)
JUN 16	Regular Branch Meeting 7:00 pm Union Hall - Chatsworth (Subject to COVID-19 restrictions)
JUN 19	Father's Day
JUN 21	Retiree Lunch 11:00 am - CANCELLED Golden Panda - Simi Valley
JUL 4	Independence Day - Holiday
JUL 7	Executive Board Meeting 6:00 pm Executive Council Meeting 7:00 pm (Subject to COVID-19 restrictions)
JUL 19	Retiree Lunch 11:00 am Golden Panda - Simi Valley
JUL 21	Regular Branch Meeting 7:00 pm Union Hall - Chatsworth (Subject to COVID-19 restrictions)



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

MEMBER: LOS ANGELES FEDERATION OF LABOR, AFL-CIO

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

VOLUME 64, NO. 4

CIRCULATION 2,500

JULY - AUGUST 2022

New Leadership at Branch 2902

By James Perryman, President

Hello everyone. This is my first article for the *Mail Bag News* since becoming the President of Tri-Valley Branch 2902. Before I begin, let me start by personally thanking our recently retired Branch President, Ray Hill, for his mentorship throughout my career as a union advocate and letter carrier. His leadership and guidance helped mold me into the professional representative that I am today.

Over the last three years, I have had the opportunity to work with Ray at the Union Hall and witnessed firsthand, his hard work, dedication, and excellent leadership. Although, Ray had a full plate of grievances, branch duties and responsibilities, he made the job look easy. He conducted union business in a profound manner that demonstrated tenacity that I admired and respect. Ray worked beyond the call of duty to advise, educate, and represent letter carriers on a daily basis; and, for those who may not know, he also had a hilarious sense of humor. Ray provided a smooth transition of power that helped acclimate me into my new position as branch leader. Additionally, after retiring, Ray volunteered to provide assistance to help out the branch, which is greatly appreciated. I'm eager to provide the same continuous representation and success that our branch members have grown accustomed to throughout my career and

beyond. I will always be grateful and thankful for Ray's leadership, and I wish him a happy and blessed retirement.

My Union Advocate Experience

On May 3, 1986, at the age of 18, I began my career as a letter carrier with the United States Postal Service, assigned to the San Fernando City Post Office. I chose the letter carrier craft because it was considered a position that had job security and no layoffs. I joined the National Association of Letter Carriers (NALC) during my three month work probation. Shortly after passing probation, I often had issues with local management that required me to request union representation to file grievances. I was not intimidated by management's threats and I learned from the union that all I had to do was show up for work on time, follow the rules, and file grievances when my rights were violated. I also realized, I belong to a union that is strong, respected, and supports its members. However, some managers continued violating the contract and my rights when the union was not physically present in my office to keep them in check. Besides joining the union, the most important thing that I realized when I began working as a let-



Pictured above is Branch 2902's new President, James Perryman. James is proudly holding a plaque that was presented to the branch at the California State Association of Letter Carriers State Convention in San Diego, honoring our branch for our outstanding achievement in organizing City Letter Carriers at 95.28% membership.

continued on page 2



New Leadership at Branch 2902

continued from page 1

ter carrier was the fact that I was making good money, received good benefits, and had a good future/career.

I'm not saying the work was easy. In fact, management made the job unnecessarily difficult. I experienced my fair share of bullshit (please excuse my language) from management during the performance of my duties. I had to deal with false accusation about my performance, attendance, and conduct. I learned early in my career not to accept management's accusatory nonsense and challenge their inappropriate actions and behavior. With the help of our local union (Branch 2902), we prevailed in stopping management's egregious, inappropriate behavior through the grievance procedure. You see, back in those days some managers were pure assholes. And, believe it or not, some supervisors wanted to physically fight me. Even though, I was young, I was also wise enough to know that I could lose my job for violence at the work place, especially after kicking some manager's ass. Besides, I'm a lover and not a fighter. I notified the union about these types of situations and it was addressed without any manager getting physically hurt.

Although, not all managers were that bad during this time period, there were enough bad apples in the barrel in my office that it had serious negative ramifications on the carriers. I would often complain to the local union President about the lack of representation in our office, and the daily violations similar to actions of some of our local branch members today. I would demand from our local union officers to assign a Shop Steward to our office immediately. Subsequently, I was asked by our late great branch President Beverly Mattes, to volunteer, and become a Shop Steward for my office. She basically told me to step up or shut up in a nice way.

President Mattes and Branch Executive Vice President Frank Salazar encouraged me step up to be proactive. So I did. I volunteered to be a union advocate, which over time, helped resolve most of the problems in our office. Even though it was a thankless job with no other volunteers I wanted to do more to help letter carriers and stop management's ongoing nonsense and misbehavior.

I became an alternate Shop Steward in or about the year 1999 and shortly after, promoted to chief Shop Steward of the San Fernando City Post Office. Yes, just like the words in the song performed by one of my favorite artists (Prince), "Two Thousand 0 0, party over, oops out of time." I began to party like it was 1999. Management was officially out of time harassing letter carriers without consequences. I filed grievances for management's violation of the contract and the violation of letter carrier's rights. With assistance from my local team of

Shop Steward's assigned to other delivery units, management was now being held accountable on a constant basis for inappropriate actions and violations of the national agreement at the San Fernando City Post Office.

I had many good and bad experiences with management before becoming a Shop Steward. I just wanted to provide a brief background history on how I arrived at this junction of my career.

My 36 years at the Postal Service have been a journey. The experience of representing letter carriers as a Chief Shop Steward paved the way to give me the opportunity to become a branch trustee, Vice President, Senior Vice President, Executive Vice President, and now President. I whole heartily thank the membership of Branch 2902 for the vote of confidence that led me to this point in my career.

Furthermore, I'm honored and proud to continue my career as an advocate and Branch President and I look forward to working alongside our new Branch Executive Vice President, Albert Reyes whom I recruited many years ago as a Shop Steward at the San Fernando City Post Office. I'm confident that he will have much success based on his great work ethics, reliability, and experience. He's a great teammate. Congratulations goes out to Albert and I wish him continued success.

Additionally, special thanks to Walter Williams who has accepted my appointment to the vacant Branch Vice President position and Ray Hill who has accepted my appointment to the vacant trustee position. Also, I'm happy to announce that Senior Vice President Alex Lopez, will be the new Letter Carrier Political Fund Coordinator for the branch, which is appreciated as well. I'm very pleased that these professional individuals stepped up to the plate to help ensure that the branch meets its goals and obligation to the membership.

CSALC 56TH CONVENTION 2022 SUMMARY REPORT

I recently attended the California State Association of Letter Carriers Convention hosted by San Diego Branch 70 and presided over by State President Harold Kelso with Executive Vice President Albert Reyes, Senior Vice President Alex Lopez, and Treasurer/Financial Secretary Mary Stanley. While there is so much to cover, I felt these topics and subjects were the most important to inform the branch members about.

Joint Training CSALC - NALC Region 1

OWCP Part 1 & 2, Beginner Steward Training, Retirement, Article 8, Food Drive/MDA, Grievance file Preparation, Clock Ring Fraud, Legislative Update, and OIG/PI/USPS Investigations were good. The instructors' presentation were constructive and informative.

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.

OWCP Part 1: Tony Rios - Director of Federal Employees Compensation Act (FECA) and Kevin Card, NALC Assistant to the President for Worker's Compensation recommended that CA-1 and CA-2 should be filed through ECOMP for the reasons as follows:

- USPS paid over 1 billion dollars into FECA each year. In 2020 USPS paid 2.96 billion in benefits which includes: disability, medical treatment, and benefits to survivors of federal employees killed on the job.
- Postal management withheld claims, and challenged claims to reduce FECA operation cost to the service.
- USPS has more OIG agents assigned to the Postal Service than the Department of Labor (OWCP) has to investigate fraudulent claims. The Postal Service objective is to utilize the OIG investigations to reduce FECA cost to the service.
- ECOMP was created with intent to protect the employees' rights to securely file claims, and to process such claims in a timely fashion.
- Employees filing claims online should receive an ECOMP confirmation number after successfully completing the application. Employees can check the status of a claim by using their confirmation number.
- Employees should file a grievance and notify the Department of Labor (DOL)/OWCP if the claim status indicates (pending review by a supervisor) after 10 days from the filing date.
- 75% of letter carriers are still filing CA-1 and CA-2 claims through their Supervisor which may be delayed or never properly processed.
- The use of ECOMP for filing work related injuries and illnesses is about having the power of transparency to ensure that claims are being properly processed.
- The benefits of filing claims through ECOMP are as follows: Ability to track, update information, upload documentation, review status, and communicate with claims examiner, etc.

Convention Session Part 1

NALC President- FREDRIC V. ROLAND - Discussed:

- National Vice President Lew Drass is retiring this year and Region 1 Regional Administrative Assistant James Henry has been appointed to the vacant position.
- National Arbitration hearing was scheduled for improper payments to CCA (Step AA). However, a Prearbitration agreement was reached. USPS will make the proper adjustments and provide retroactive pay to affected CCA's.
- Two more COLA's are schedule for the year 2022 and the Step P increase will be implemented in about 2 months.
- Juneteenth holiday pay for 2021 is still being discussed at national. However, Juneteenth for 2022 will be observed as a paid holiday for full-time career employees.
- The NALC has recognized the increase in uniform prices and is currently working with the union uniform committee to prepare for contract negotiations with USPS to seek an increase allowance adjustment. A new uniform with lighter fabric designed for summer wear will be available soon. In addition, new pants will be released this summer that will have a pocket for the scanner.

- The new parcel sorting machine installed at some local offices has demonstrated success. The parcels are being distributed to carriers much faster in the morning, which should allow carriers to start work earlier. The NALC will continue to monitor.
- COVID-19 concerns for the National Convention look promising, the infection rates appear to remain stabled. Proof of vaccination will be required at the convention. Mask requirements are unknown at this time.
- The Chicago convention site has been upgraded with current technology to assist the union's agenda. Additionally, the next generation vehicle will be on display at the convention.
- USPS has notified the NALC that COVID-19 related MOU's have not been extended beyond May 6, 2022.
- Carriers that were infected with COVID-19 while at work should File a CA-1 (COVID-19 claim). The NALC strongly advises members that worked 21 days during January 1, 2020 through January 1, 2023 to file a claim if the infection occurred at work.
- **Route Inspections:** USPS headquarters realizes that they cannot successfully do route inspections by themselves. The NALC committee is close to a new join agreement process with the service to conduct route adjustments. If an agreement is reached, Supervisors will not be needed to conduct 3999 during the evaluation period. Current technology will be used as follows: MDD Scanner Reports, Employees Everything Reports, and Work Hour Workload Reports. The NALC Taskforce will continue its efforts to obtain a successful agreement to mutually adjust routes.
- **The NALC Taskforce:** Will seek the implementation of Postal Police to protect letter carriers, which includes conducting building inspections to ensure the safety of all Postal employees.
- The NALC Taskforce for CCA's objective is to limit the hours that they work to try to retain the new hires. The union's positions is that an increase in starting salary is needed to attract and retain the new hires.
- Staffing issues due to the COVID-19 pandemic continues to affect the job market and is not favorable to the Postal Service. No one wants to work for the USPS, at least not for the starting salary that it has to offer.
- The NALC will continue to observe the Postal Service's plan to recruit new hires. Drafts for hiring will be exchanged between the parties to address what needs to be done to properly staff and deliver mail six days a week in all areas.
- The Postal Service cannot unilaterally convert CCA's to PTF without the union's approval. There are MOU's in place to ensure that it is done the correct way. MOU's are being discussed to convert CCA's to career status in affected areas.
- **Amazon:** We don't want them to steal our market share, and we don't want them to drive our delivery wages down. NALC is working with the AFL-CIO to prevent the issue from becoming a problem. NALC will continue to work with Teamsters to help organize the Amazon union.
- **Legislation:** The NALC goal (in part) was to end the future retiree's health care mandate, secure six-day delivery, and grow the Postal business. The Postal Service was instructed

continued on page 4

by Congress to put a plan together years ago, but it didn't happen until DeJoy became the Postmaster General. Only 50 votes were needed to pass legislation in the Senate. However, conversation between NALC President Rolando and Postmaster General DeJoy indicated that the PMG didn't want to privatize the service. He also recognized letter carriers as the foundation of the Postal Service, wanted to keep six-day delivery, and wants to grow the business.

- PMG DeJoy had influence to keep the poison out from the far right to get support from the Republicans. He came up with the 10 plan which helped get the 79 Senate votes that help pass Postal reform. When the bill was ready to be sent to the President, the White House wanted a letter carrier to present the bill to President Biden to sign into law.
- The six-day delivery and repealed health care mandate was effective the day the bill was signed. What the service owed was completely forgiven.
- The integration of Medicare is effective January 1, 2025 and it does not take retirees out of the Federal Employee Health Benefits (FEHB) plans. Before the bill was passed, 80% of retired letter carriers were enrolled in Medicare option A & B, which eliminated any out-of-pocket medical cost. Having more health care expenses integrated into Medicare will reduce the cost to retirees and the service when the law goes into effect.
- The NALC is currently working on the Segal Term Initiative. The current law does not specify who is responsible to put 90 billion dollars into the retirement fund for Civil Service retired employees. The NALC is working on passing an initiative that will require the US Treasury to pay into the fund and not the Postal Service. The union is optimistic in getting the initiative passed under the current administration.
- **Vehicles:** The political left wants more green vehicles and the political right doesn't want to bankrupt the service in order to pay for the electric vehicles. The United Auto Workers (UAW) union disputes where the vehicles are being manufactured, NONE IN UNION STATES. The NALC has no dispute in any of the above-mentioned concerns. The union just wants the new vehicles delivered to the letter carriers nationwide ASAP.

NALC DIRECTOR OF SAFETY AND HEALTH - MANUEL L. PERALTA JR - Discussed:

- The APWU received an arbitration decision to eliminate the Safety Ambassador Program. Branch Presidents are advised to check the rosters to make sure safety captains are assigned by the local union in each office.
- Management continues to violate the contract when citing expunged, removed, and expired notices of discipline as a past element of record.
- Many years ago, Manny was assigned to advocate Case #23951 in San Fernando, CA, where Branch 2902 Shop Steward James Perryman discovered that management had kept its "secret" records in violation of the USPS requirement to adhere to its Privacy Act System of Records. Arbitrator Snow sustained the grievance and awarded the union the right to remove any and all documentation from the

Postmaster personal file cabinet relevant in the case.

- Manny commented and praised branch 2902 for the above-mentioned arbitration decision which is being used for grievances nationwide.
- The ASM-Appendix B (retention of records) should also be utilized to enforce compliance of the retention time frame for all file records.
- Over the last decade, we have experienced the heat-related deaths of three NALC members: John Watzlawick of Independence, MO, Peggy Frank of Woodland Hills, CA, and Dalvir Bassi of San Jose, CA. We have watched the Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) investigate these deaths and many heat-related injuries, watched USPS challenge those citations and then watched those challenges evaporate before the Occupational Safety and Health Review Commission (OSHRC).
- In this process, USPS has developed and improved its heat-safety training, but the key question is whether or not the training was given to each and every employee before each employee was put in harm's way. As safety activist, we should focus on whether or not the weather trend is alerting us to require the training. Management committed that it would require the training annually by April 1 of each year. If your office has not conducted the training, bring it to management's attention and, if necessary notify your local branch or your National Business Agent. We should address these concerns for letter carriers and in honor of the above-mentioned fallen members.

NALC DIRECTOR OF CITY DELIVERY - CHRISTOPHER JACKSON- Discussed:

- Management hired a contract engineer to create a loading standard. The NALC committee observed the practice and will monitor the progress. However, the NALC opposed the idea that every route and vehicle should be loaded the same way and within the same time standard.
- **Taskforce:** The NALC observed the retention rate of CCA's and management's practice of communications with CCA's daily, in the morning, and before the end of tour. Management is required to comply with this procedure to improve the retention rate.
- **Amazon:** USPS delivers approximately 31 million Amazon packages and 1 million UPS packages on Sundays. Additionally, Walmart, CVS, and Target also use the Postal Service to deliver parcels and packages nationwide. If we did not have Amazon delivery, the service would have not hired the 125,000 CCA's that are on the rolls today. The NALC supports the revenue the USPS receives from the above-mentioned companies.
- **The Next Generation Vehicle:** (5) companies competed for the contract that was awarded to Oshkosh. The vehicles will be built in South Carolina. The NALC Taskforce used letter carrier's input to make necessary changes to the vehicles. 50,000 will be rolled out, but only 20,000 will be electric due to a lack of infrastructure to support it. There will be no hybrid vehicles.

- The new Vehicles will have the following: Air conditioning, standing room, charging docks for the scanners, and cameras. It will take approximately 10 years to roll out the new vehicles across the country. Therefore, the old LLV's may still be in use after 2030, if they can last that long.
- **Route Adjustments:** A RAP process for 2022 and 2023. Office data will be used to evaluate and adjust office time and the DSR (Delivery Street Review) from the MDD scanner reports will be used to evaluate the carrier's street time adjustments. The Supervisor 3999 observation will not be used, except when the DSR is not available. Under this MOU routes will not be adjusted without the carrier's input.
- **The EBR (Electronic Badge Reader):** The company that provides service to the time clocks went out of business approximately 20 years ago. The Postal Service does not intend to replace the EBR's. Carriers will be required to use the MDD to scan their badges when clocking in to begin tour and throughout the work shift to record time. This will also limit local management's access to make changes to the carrier's clock rings.
- The MDD will also be programmed to translate languages during verbal communication with customers. The taskforce will focus on the MDD's ability to display special notices, dog warnings, and other hazardous condition alerts during work.
- The installment of the Connect Machines will roll out in July 2022 at delivery offices which processes 2,500 to 3,000 packages per hour. The taskforce will monitor the effectiveness of the machine which should allow for early start times for letter carriers.
- Webcams are being installed at offices and on LLV's, but cannot be used to observe carrier's casing mail. The NALC and USPS do not have an agreement on this issue.

Convention Session Part 2:

NATIONAL BUSINESS AGENT - REGION 1 - BRYANT ALMARIO - Discussed:

- Bryant Almario gave thanks to James Henry for his support, hard work, and dedication while serving as an RAA for region 1 and wished him well as he embarked on his new position as the national Vice President. Bryant also praised and thanked his staff after announcing his plans to retire next year.
- There are 15 NALC regions nationwide. Region 1 represents the most letter carriers in the nation and has a 79% sustained rate for grievances appealed to arbitration, which is very impressive when considering that Postal management forces the union in Region 1 to appeal more grievances to arbitration than any other region in the nation. Bryant thanked the local branches for the success of region 1.
- Branch 2902 **SARGENT AT ARMS BOB GOLDEN** was among the NALC political liaisons that were recognized for their work at the Nation's Capital, specifically for his persistence to meet with Congressman Kevin McCarthy, which contributed to getting him to sign on to (HR 3076). Bob received a very nice NALC jacket.
- **TRI-VALLEY BRANCH #2902** received an Organization Award for its Outstanding Achievement in Organizing City Letters at 95.28% Membership.

As you can see, there is a lot of activity going on with the NALC and the US Postal Service. We should all stay informed and active to help out any way we can. Please sign-up for the E-activist program on the NALC website and consider donating to the Letter Carrier Political Fund. Thanks to all who donate to the Letter Carrier Political Fund.

Return of The Food Drive

On Saturday, May 14, 2022 the Letter Carriers' Stamp Out Hunger Food Drive returned after two years off for safety reasons due to the COVID-19 pandemic. Patrons, letter carriers and especially food banks were all ready for the return.

Branch 2902 collected 170,284 pounds of food this year. Although this total is way down from the 2019 year's 332,774 pounds collected, this was due in part to the late announcement and limited time to coordinate, it is still an impressive amount of food that was picked up by our carriers and will definitely help to feed the needy in our local communities.

I cannot name everyone who went above and beyond the call of duty during the food drive in this article, but I must give a special thanks to our presiding Branch President Ray Hill, Branch Food Drive Coordinator Mary Stanley, Branch Food Drive Committee Alex Lopez, Matthew Hill (son of Ray Hill), Jeff Ross, Sue Degenhardt, Louis Rodriguez, and first-time Thousand Oaks Food Drive Office Coordinator, Shop Steward Rochelle Harvey. Good job, once again. A heartfelt thanks to each and every one of you that have participated in this yearly event at any time over the past 30 years; without all of your stellar efforts throughout the years the annual food drive could not succeed like it has for over the last quarter century. Listed below are the amounts of food collected this year from each office in Branch 2902.

Installation Pounds Collected

Agoura Hills	10,000
Chatsworth	10,000
Fillmore	500
Moorpark	1,200
LCCA/Valley Village	4,867
Chandler	1,295
Studio City	3,300
Northridge/Porter Ranch	11,600
Ojai	750
Oxnard/Port Hueneme	13,905
Pacoima	2,348
Reseda	7,000
San Fernando/MCA	5,000
North Hills/Sepulveda	3,786
Sylmar	9,888
Santa Paula	1,005
Simi Valley/ Main Office	10,500
Mt. McCoy	14,500
Thousand Oaks	19,420
Newbury Park	10,610
Ventura Main Office	3,265
East Ventura Station	7,545
Woodland Hills	18,000

continued on page 8



Extremely Grateful

By Albert Reyes, Executive Vice President

Hello fellow Branch 2902 members. With the retirement of Ray Hill as President I am now your new Executive Vice President. I am grateful for the opportunity and look forward to working as the new EVP for the branch. I will be very dedicated to this new position. I want to thank Ray Hill for his support and James Perryman for mentoring me throughout my career. I sincerely thank them for investing their time. I am also grateful for their help in transitioning into this new role. I look forward to being able to share my knowledge with the membership in an official capacity as a full-time officer.

I started my postal journey on May 9, 1998, at the San Fernando Mission City Annex Post Office. I was hired as a PTF and was constantly on management's radar. In late 2000, I was converted to Regular and was the successful bidder on Route 4407 in the Granada Hills zone. On November 5, 2003, I was issued a *Letter of Warning*. According to management, I was not casing up to standards at 18 and 8 and therefore failed to follow their instructions by correcting these deficiencies.

Not only did I make casing standards on the day in question and two Investigative Interviews later, management still issued the discipline. Management's charge for giving this discipline was inaccurate and subjective, and they had no evidence confirming their accusation. So, I filed a grievance with the Shop Steward at the time, James Perryman. Management chose not to resolve the issue at all levels. This issue went before an arbitrator. Management's sole argument in front of the arbitrator was that they could "hold the Grievant to a higher standard" of 18 and 8.

Management believed that I was scanning the case. My "inserting the mail into the case should have been more fluid or automatic." The arbitrator would not allow management to "hold me to a higher standard" of 18 and 8. According to the arbitrator's ruling, *"It is unreasonable to expect Mr. Reyes or any Letter Carrier would be able to glance at a letter and without delay or lapse of time have the letter go directly into the case."* James Perryman and the Union successfully had the *Letter of Warning* expunged from all Postal files and records.

To this day, we both chuckle and laugh at how far management took their unfounded charge of casing standards. When asked to become a Shop Steward, I was hesitant because of family obligations. Finally, in 2009, Frank Salazar, our Branch President at the time, certified me as an Alternate Steward in the Mission Hills zone. I was responsible for many old-timers who had bets on how long I would last. I had to prove myself. Whenever they filed a grievance, they trusted me to resolve their issues. I put in the hard work and had to prove that I could handle the day-to-day grind of representing them.

Several years later, I was certified as the North Hills Shop Steward. And about five years after that, I was appointed Chief Shop Steward of the San Fernando/Mission City Annex Offices. Shortly after that, then President Ray Hill appointed me as Vice President of the Branch. Fast forward twenty-four years and many grievances later, and here I am. This promotion is a group effort, and I am thankful for everyone who helped me get here—especially

Laura Rowe, who offered me some sound advice. I am excited and look forward to adding more value to the continued success of our branch.

Welcome Back with Open Arms

The 30th annual Letter Carriers' Stamp Out Hunger Food Drive was held on Saturday, May 14, 2022. Combined with all five zip codes, San Fernando, Sylmar, North Hills, Granada Hills, and Mission Hills, Carriers collected just about 15,000 pounds of food for their respected pantry and or shelters. It was great to see the volunteers work tirelessly unloading each LLV. It was great seeing everyone contributing! We had many new faces that had never participated in a food drive.

Thanking the Carriers for their hard work, OIC, DeAngelo Johnson, and his son, Isaiah, put on a feast. They barbecued some of the best tri-tip, ribs, hot links, burgers, hot dogs, chicken, and kabobs, with all the fixings and sides to go with it. Supervisor Sina Dehlavi and Steve Carranza helped fill the freezer with popsicles and ice cream bars. Custodian Cynthia Leyba and Jon Rymer helped clean and set up the dock. Clerk Sandra Acosta, Erin Macdonald, and Maria Pawa helped collect the food brought in through the lobby.

As for the San Fernando Mission City Annex installation, the food drive was a success. Letter Carrier Elsa Gutierrez provided homemade agua de piña (pineapple water) as the refreshment of choice. Mike Martinez helped bring food in from the offices and ice cream bars. Without everyone's help and support, we would not have had a good time. So, thank you to everyone who helped contribute to this great cause.

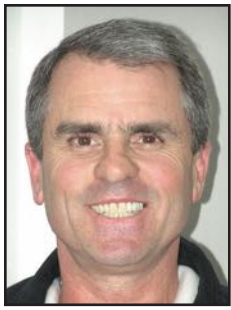
The Right to Representation During Any Investigatory Interview

Investigative Interviews, also known as Fact Findings, are an attempt by management to search for facts by asking a series of questions. Questions regarding attendance, reporting an injury, unauthorized overtime, accidents, scanning, street expansions, etc. The Weingarten rule gives each employee the right to representation during any Investigatory Interview that they reasonably believe may lead to discipline.

The Weingarten rule does not apply to other types of meetings, such as discussions. A Carrier does not have Weingarten representation rights during an official discussion. A discussion is not discipline and, therefore, cannot be grieved. These discussions should be held in private between the Carrier and Supervisor. Also, the Weingarten rule does not apply when management issues disciplinary action (e.g., signing for a Letter of Warning). Exercising your Weingarten rights applies when the meeting is an Investigatory Interview.

A Steward cannot exercise Weingarten rights on behalf of the Carrier. Management can take you to the office anytime to review your attendance. However, if they start to ask you questions that you reasonably believe could lead to discipline, stop and invoke your Weingarten representation rights immediately. Whether or not a Carrier's belief is reasonable depends on the circumstances

continued on page 11



The Future Looks Bright

By Ray Hill, President Emeritus

As many of you know, I have retired from USPS after an almost 38-year letter carrier career that included 32-years as an NALC Representative. I have also stepped down as President of Branch 2902 and, in accordance with our Branch By-laws, have handed the reins over to James C. Perryman Jr., who has taken over as our new fearless leader. With James as Branch President, the future looks bright, as I will discuss further below.

Being President of our Branch presented many challenges and I enjoyed tackling *nearly* all of them, with a few annoying exceptions I won't bore you with.

I thoroughly enjoyed helping the membership deal with a variety of issues including personal and family problems, workers compensation issues, retirement questions and, of course, disciplinary and contractual grievances.

What finally drove me to retirement was my frustration with the *never-ending* tsunami of grievances that we process, over and over and over. Grievance handling was an important part of my presidential duties and I think I did an excellent job for the membership in the grievance procedure; apologies for bragging but I also think I was damned good at it. I always told myself that if I ever felt less than 100% enthusiasm towards all my duties as President, including grievance handling, that it would be time for me to go.

After 32 years of grievance handling, the fun and enthusiasm had vanished and I realized it was time for me to retire. My frustration with the grievance procedure is with both management and some of the membership. The ultimate goal of a grievance should be for management to admit the error of their violation(s) and to comply with the contract going forward. Yeah, right, good luck with that. During my 32 years of handling grievances, management has rarely shown any intention of being contractually compliant and, worst of all, management is never held accountable for the hundreds of thousands of dollars they waste on grievance payouts. Sorry to say, that will never change.

Management does a terrible job when issuing discipline and NALC is quite successful in overturning disciplinary actions not issued for just cause. That too will never change. My frustration with some of the membership stems from their love of the "free money" they receive through grievance payouts and the fact that a few members couldn't care less if management ever complies with the contract. Quite the opposite; some Overtime Desired List (ODL) carriers have grown accustomed to being paid up to 12 hours through the grievance payouts without ever having to work that many hours I continually badgered the Postmasters I dealt with to work their ODL carriers up to 12 hours because they would have to pay them anyway in the grievance procedure, even though they did not do the work. Some of the Postmasters got the message and started working their ODL's up to 12 hours and guess what that led to? More than a few phone calls to the Branch Office from a few ODL carriers complaining

that they are tired because management has them working 12 hours every day and stating that it was a lot easier when management only worked them 10 hours but they got paid for 12 hours anyway. Why would anyone want management to comply with the contract if they can get paid for not working? Don't get me wrong, I am speaking of a minuscule minority of carriers here but the "I couldn't care less about contractual compliance" attitude (as long as I get paid) annoys the hell out of me.

Grievance payouts are great but never serve to force management to comply with the contract. What about non-ODL carriers who don't give a rat's ass about grievance money but just want to work eight hours and go home?

My other gripe with a minuscule minority of our membership is their failure to follow the USPS Rules and Regulations, especially the Safety Rules. The USPS Rules are pretty damned simple to follow and the failure to follow them leads to disciplinary grievances that the union must process. This adds to our already heavy grievance workload and takes precious time that our Stewards and officers could be using for other issues to help the membership. Disciplinary grievances go to the forefront in arbitration scheduling and when we continue violating the rules the system gets clogged with discipline cases that would not exist if we simply followed the rules. Enough of my whining here; the bottom line is I had grown extremely weary of the grievance procedure and in fairness to the membership, and myself, it was time for me to step down as Branch President.

All Hail President Perryman

OK everyone, say it out loud, "President Perryman." That has a nice ring to it, don't you agree? I wrote above that the future looks bright with our new President in charge and I stand by those words.

I have worked with James at the Branch Office for over three years and have been extremely impressed with his work ethic during his time as a full-time officer. James is ready, willing and able to be our Branch President and I am convinced he will thrive in the role. I am very proud of James and feel extremely fortunate that the branch has him as our new leader.

Likewise, I am convinced that our newest full-time officer, Executive Vice President (EVP) Albert Reyes, will also thrive in his new position. I have been impressed with Albert's work ethic during the three weeks I have worked with him and I anticipate the Branch will be also be impressed with him as our new EVP. I hear Albert answering phone calls at the office and have been very pleased with how he conducts his business. The Branch office is in good hands. I have been a proud NALC Representative since 1990 and have made many friends and enjoyed serving the membership along the way. Now it is time for me to go as we pass the baton to James and Albert. Thanks to the many who have helped me along the way. There are too many of you to mention but know I have appreciated you all. It has been an awesome ride.



OWCP & COVID

By Alex Lopez, Senior Vice President

Hello Brothers and Sisters. I hope you're all staying safe and hydrated out there, as another summer arrives. I want to start by congratulating our new President of the Branch, James Perryman, and our new Executive Vice President, Albert Reyes. James as EVP has been a very valuable asset and credit to our branch, and I know he will continue to lead the Branch in a way that will continue to hold Postal management accountable to the contract. I look forward to continue serving the members of our branch under his leadership, and that of Albert's too, whom I have complete confidence in. I would also like to thank our outgoing President Ray Hill for his many years of service to our branch, and for all his help and guidance he gave me as a Steward. Thank you Ray. Enjoy your well-deserved retirement.

While attending the CA state convention in April, I went to a class for OWCP and COVID-19. Despite it being relatively easy to file a OWCP claim for a COVID-19 illness, many Letter Carriers are reluctant to do so and are therefore not doing it. The reasons for that may be from Carriers not knowing they have a right to do so, to Carriers being intimidated by Postal management into not filing a claim. Postal management often does not want Carriers to file a claim because it will count as an accident against their office. They care more about some office statistic than the well being of us Carriers. While the vast majority of people who come down with covid have a full recovery, I read there is about 20% of the population that experience long covid in varying degrees. They never fully

recover. The truth is we don't know yet whether having contracted covid will have any health implications years from now. It's still too soon to know since it's a new virus. And that's why it's important for Carriers that have had Covid to file a claim so they are already protected from health implications in case you are unable to work because of later complications. You will save yourself so much time and trouble if you already have an approved OWCP claim and like I said before, its not very difficult to file it, or get approved.

First you will need to go to ecomp.dol.gov, and you will need register with them. It's just basic information about yourself, and a password of your choosing. Easy. Everyone should register now even if you aren't seeking to file a claim of any kind. You will be ready for any injury if and when it happens. Next, to be able to successfully get approved for your COVID-19 claim, you only need two things. One, a positive PCR or Antigen test (the home tests will not be enough), and two you must have worked within 21 days prior of when you took your positive test. That's it. As long as you meet both those criteria, you are likely to get approved. Now you want to look for the link that says CA-1 COVID-19, and start your claim. You will need to be able to upload and image of your positive covid test. Contact your Shop Steward or the Branch, or me if you are unsure how to answer any of the questions on the claim form. Also like any OWCP claim, if you want to get paid Continuation Of Pay (COP), you need to file your claim within 30 days of your date of injury, which for covid claims, it would be the last day you were at work prior to your positive test. When local Postal management learns of your claim, they may try to persuade or intimidate you from filing. They'll often say they are going to fight it or try to controvert it because they know you didn't get it at work because they already know you got it at home from your family. Who cares. Let them. You are not required to prove you got covid at work. OWCP is very clear. All you need is an acceptable positive test, and have been at work at some point 21 days prior to your positive test. Until next time, stay safe out there, and stay strong.

New Leadership at Branch 2902

continued from page 5

The Carl J. Saxsenmeier Scholarship Fund

In 2022, the California State Association of Letter Carriers will award ten Saxsenmeier Scholarships of \$2,000 each. Children and grandchildren of both active and retired California Letter Carriers are eligible. The winners are selected by a panel of professors from the California State University system.

The State Association is made up of 70 branches. Branch and individual donations are the source of funds to this scholarship. Without these generous contributions this valuable resource would not be available to our students.

Congratulations go out to Jude Lopez, a selected winner of the 2022 Saxsenmeier Scholarship, son of Branch 2902 member Glen Lopez from the Simi Valley Post Office. This exceptional student will receive a one time scholarship of \$2,000. Congratulations and best wishes to the Lopez family.

Again, thanks to the all members of this branch for your support, assistance, and confidence in me to lead our branch to continued success.

That's all for now, I'll be back with more. In the meantime, God bless and stay well.

KNOW YOUR RIGHTS

When overtime is needed and a PS Form 3996 is requested M39-122.33

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



A Return to Serving Those in Need NALC Stamp Out Hunger Food Drive is Back

By Mary Stanley, Branch 2902 Treasurer/Financial Secretary, NALC Food Drive Coordinator

I want to take this opportunity to say “Thank You” to all Letter Carriers, Shop Stewards, Clerks, Management, and Postmasters/Officer-in-Charge who participated in our annual Stamp Out Hunger Food Drive. I know how challenging it was this year for all of us. The last time we had drive was in 2019. This year’s drive was filled with obstacles (e.g., short notice, no district management meeting, shortage of, or no bags, bags that fell apart,

no T-shirts, closed food pantries – the list goes on and on). This is why I am going to ask for ALL of YOU to HELP!! Regardless of your employment status (carriers, management, retirees) and seniority (newbies or old-timers). I need information. I need for you to help me to improve those obstacles for next year’s Food Drive. Please email me any suggestions, advice, problems, etc. My email address is as follows: br2902mjstanley@gmail.com

In order for this to be as successful as we can make it – we need team work.

I would like to mention some offices that deserve recognition. This first number is what was collected for this year. The second number was from 2019:

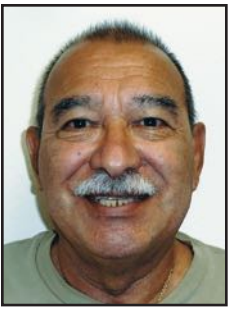
- Newbury Park**
10,610 pounds (2,000)
- Agoura**
10,000 pounds (7,000)
- Sylmar**
9,888 pounds (8,646)
- Reseda**
7,000 pounds (6,000).

Despite all the obstacles, your teams did outstanding jobs!! Congratulations!! (At the time of writing this article, a couple of pantries have yet to turn in their numbers).

Wishing you a Happy and Safe 4th of July. God Bless you all and God Bless America.

Pictured at left are just a few of the hard working Carriers who helped to make this years Stamp Out Hunger Food Drive such a success. Thanks to all who participated in such a worthy event.





Compare & Save

By Joe Gutierrez, Branch 2902 Health Benefits Representative

Hello everyone, it has been a while since I last wrote an article, so please bear with me. As always I like to call attention to the NALC Health Plan being the best plan for members of our union and all federal workers. Every year I ask our members to compare premiums and benefits of our plan with the other FEHB plans available. The premiums for the NALC plan are usually lower and the benefits are almost equal. In most cases the NALC plan comes out on top.

When comparing plans make sure you look at equivalent plans. In other words, compare high-option plans against high-option plans and low-option plans with low-option plans (apples with apples...).

There are many low-option plans that are very good including ours, but these plans are mainly for people who are fairly healthy and really very seldom seek medical care. In my case, I thought I was a healthy adult when I retired. Little did I know that years down the line I would need great medical care. I am fortunate that I had a great medical plan to help me when I needed it, saving me many thousands of dollars. Once I reached 65, I joined Medicare and have not had a medical bill since. I'm not saying you should join Medicare, but to really check it out to see if you could benefit from that option.

The Plan's mission is to provide the members accessibility to quality medical care while maintaining a comprehensive benefit package. The NALC HBP prides itself on offering excellent benefits with affordable premiums. The plan is union owned, union operated and a not-for-profit plan.

In 2019, the NALC HBP achieved re-accreditation from the Accreditation Association for Ambulatory Health Care, Inc. (AAAHC). The three-year re-accreditation term was effective from June 23, 2019 to June 22, 2022. The Plan is fully compliant with all of AAAHC's standards. This achievement speaks to the Plan's continued dedication to fulfill our missions, goals and objectives to ensure the provision of high quality of health care services and benefits.

I compare plans every year and am surprised at how our plan is usually less costly and the benefits are equal to or better than plans in the same category. You take the time to compare phone plans, cable TV plans and others and switch to save a few dollars, but if you are not doing the same with health plans, you are most likely missing out on some considerable savings. Thank you for allowing me to be your Health Representative.



One Premium, Only with Independence

By Chris Alessi, MBA/NSBA Representative

Hello Brothers and Sisters. It's amazing how fast this year is going. I hope you are all having a great summer and that you take some time out to look into having **Good Family Protection** in case of any unforeseen circumstances

The MBA offers a whole life insurance policy called "Independence" that is a very unique plan where you will have a life time of benefits without a lifetime of premiums. This policy is designed for all NALC members and their families. It is a very convenient way to help your loved ones get closer to financial independence. All you need to do is make **one premium payment** at the time of purchase and that's it!! You do not have to make any more payments, and this will insure you or your loved ones with protection for the rest of their lifetime.

The plan offers immediate cash value and starts on your very first and only payment which is tax deferred until you decide to cash it out. This cash value increases every year with a good interest rate that is better than any bank or financial institution, our current rate is 3.25%. This plan is available to you and your spouse and is really

ideal for your children, grandchildren, great-grandchildren and also step children, step grandchildren, and step great-grandchildren, parents and legal guardians.

The premium is based on the age of the insured at the time of purchase and there are no more payments for the rest of your life. You can have a death benefit from as little as \$5,000 to as much as \$100,000.

This plan has instant availability of low interest loans based on your cash value while keeping your policy in force with full death benefits. Independence also has generous dividends that are paid on the anniversary date each year when the policy has been in force for three years and more. The National Trustees calculate a divisible surplus of all the premiums paid and pass it on to the owners of the policies.

The MBA was created in 1891 as a service to Letter Carriers and their families, with low overhead and no salespeople on commission (the savings are passed on to the members).

To purchase the independence policy or any other plans that

continued on page 13



The Fight Goes On, Both in Congress and at the Ballot Box

By David Hyman, Branch 2902 Trustee & Political Liaison

Greetings Sisters & Brothers! Despite the Postal Service Reform Act of 2022 passing and being signed by President Biden on April 6th, there are still many NALC priority bills and resolutions to support and pass. We still have the usual resolutions of Door Delivery with 155 co-sponsors, Anti Privatization with 192 co-sponsors and service standards with 139 co-sponsors.

Congress is still trying to pass the Fairness Act that would repeal the provision that reduces Social Security benefits for individuals who receive a pension from a state or local government. The bill is HR 82 in the House with 279 co-sponsors and it is known as S 1302 and in the Senate with 40 co-sponsors. All four of our local members of Congress are on this bill, as are both Senators.

There is also another bill dealing with federal retirement, HR 4268. This bill will help the federal employees who start out as casuals or transitional employees. Currently, the time served in these non-career positions do not get added to the time served during their careers towards their FERS retirement. This bill would allow these employees to get credit for working as casuals or transitional employees, plus they could make catch up retirement contributions should they choose to. The bill has 60 co-sponsors including our own Julia Brownley.

The Senate approved both Dan Tangherlini and Derek Kan to the Postal Board of Governors, filling the final vacancies on the board. No updates on Postmaster De Joy's remaining or

removal. Postage went up to 60 cents for first class mail July 10th under his leadership. The new postal fleet will include at least 10,000 electric vehicles, a very small percent of the new fleet. The Postal Service is in the process of using electric mail bicycles. The bikes will have a Bosch cargo line e-bike drive system with a 500 WH battery. The three-wheeled electric bikes will have a 73-square-foot storage box.

The June primary is over and the local candidates the Federation of Labor endorsed going to the November election are Julia Brownley in the 26th, Christy Smith in the 27th, Tony Cardenas in the 29th and Brad Sherman in the 32nd, all running for Congress. The local candidates endorsed by the Federation in the Assembly are Pilar Schiavo in the 40th, Jacqui Irwin in the 42nd, Luz Rivas in the 43rd, Laura Friedman in the 44th, and Jesse Gabriel in the 46th. Daniel Hertzberg has been endorsed in the 20th State Senate district. Several other endorsed candidates are in a runoff. Jeffrey Prang for L.A. County Assessor, Paul Koretz for L.A. City Controller, Maria Brenes for L.A. School District 2 and in 6, Kelly Gonez, There are three judicial candidates in the November runoff. For seat 60, Abby Baron, seat 67, Fernanda Maria Barreto and in seat 90 Melissa Lyons. There will be additional endorsement in the near future.

It's time for Dodger baseball with the L.A. Federation having secured Union Night at Dodgers Stadium on Friday August 5th with ticket prices starting at \$41. Please don't hesitate to contact me for more information.

Extremely Grateful

continued from page 6

of each case. If so, keep calm and recite this statement to your supervisor.

"If this discussion could in any way lead to my being disciplined or terminated or affect my personal working conditions, I respectfully request that my Union representative, officer, or Steward be present at this meeting. Without my Union representation present, I respectfully choose not to answer any questions or participate in this discussion."

This statement applies to the Office of Inspector General (OIG) agents and the U.S. Postal Inspectors. I have heard agents questioning Carriers while delivering mail. They were attempting to catch them off guard, calling their cell phones and even going as far as meeting with Carriers at their home to interview them in front of their family. Again, if this happens to you, do not answer any questions; read the above statement, and contact your Steward immediately.

Unlike Miranda rights, which apply only in criminal matters,

the Supervisor or OIG agent is not required to inform you of your Weingarten right to representation. They are attempting to gain your trust. Often these individuals will come off friendly and claim they are on your side. Making statements such as "you do not need union representation" or, my favorite, "they can't help you anyway." Regardless, do not waive your right to representation.

Carriers also have the right to a pre-interview consultation with a Steward. Section 665.3 of the Employee Labor Manual (ELM) requires all Postal employees to cooperate with Postal investigations. However, Management would violate the Carriers Weingarten's rights if they refused to allow representation during the pre-interview and Investigative Interviews. The Carrier should clarify that they will participate in any investigation and answer questions once a Steward is present. Again, a Steward cannot exercise Weingarten rights on behalf of the Carrier.

I want to thank everyone for their support. Continue to watch out for one another. If you have not already done so, download the NALC app, and finally, be safe out there!

Labor 411 &
FOUNDATION



Present:

Union Night at Dodger Stadium



Join us as the World Champion Dodgers
face the San Diego Padres



SAVE THE DATE

When: Friday, August 5 at 7:10 pm

Enjoy Post-Game Friday Night Fireworks!

Groups that buy 50 or more tickets will be honored on the field.

To buy tickets:

Group Sales (15+): Email grouptix@ladodgers.com or call 866/DODGERS

Individual Tickets: Online portal *coming soon*

Tickets start at \$51
and include a special
limited edition Union
Night T-Shirt.



**For more information,
contact Dave Hyman at (818) 893-8613**



Hermance Law

ESTATE PLANNING & CRISIS PLANNING ATTORNEYS



*Daughter of a
Letter Carrier*

THE TRUTH ABOUT ESTATE PLANNING, WILLS, TRUSTS & PROBATE

- A Will alone does **NOT** avoid probate court. A Trust **DOES** avoid probate court.
- Probate is **VERY** expensive and the fees are set by statute. Example, an estate of \$500,000 (FMV Home \$490,000 and \$10,000 in bank accounts) has **statutory fees of \$26,000**. This can be avoided with proper planning including a Trust.
- If you don't have a legal plan, everything **does not** automatically go to your spouse or kids. It passes via intestate law which may not be what you would want.
- If you don't have a legal plan and you can't make decisions for yourself, a judge will decide who gets to make decisions for you and it is expensive to go through.

WILLS | TRUSTS | PROBATE (SOMEONE PASSES AWAY) | TRUST ADMINISTRATION

DISCOUNTS FOR LETTER CARRIERS

**Serving San Fernando Valley,
Santa Clarita and Ventura County**

(805) 518-9633

www.HermanceLaw.com

4476 Market St. Suite 602, Ventura, 93003

*Legal Advisory

One Premium

continued from page 10

the MBA has to offer, just fill out a simple one-page application and when you receive your policy, you can examine it for 30 days. If for any reason you are not satisfied, you can return it for a full refund of your premium paid. To make it easy for our members, you can go on line at NALC.org and click on member services. Then click the **MBA** and you can download all the applications and brochures. If you need any other help or information, please feel free to call me any time. My number is in the *Mailbag News*, or you can call the MBA toll free at 800-424-5184 Tuesdays and Thursdays from 8:30 am to 3:30 s eastern time.

In closing, I want to thank Ray Hill for all his years of very dedicated leadership to our great branch. I wish you all the best for a great new chapter in your life. It's a great life, enjoy!! I also want

to wish a hearty congratulations to James Perryman as our new President and Albert Reyes as our new Executive Vice President. I know you both are great leaders and I have full confidence that you both will keep our branch Strong just like: Jon, Bev, Frank, and Ray have done.

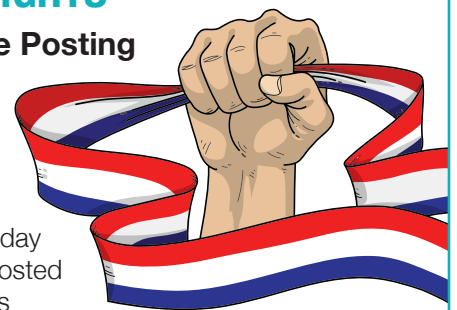
I wish all our Members and your Family a Great Summer and be safe. GOD BLESS YOU. In Solidarity.

KNOW YOUR RIGHTS

Holiday Schedule Posting

The provisions of Article 11.4.A concerning straight-time pay for holiday work apply to all full-time employees whose holiday schedule is properly posted in accordance with this section. If the holiday schedule

is not posted as of Tuesday preceding the service week in which the holiday falls, a full-time employee required to work on his or her holiday or designated holiday, or who volunteers to work on such day, will receive holiday scheduling premium for each hour of work, up to eight hours.



Brookfield® Uniforms
UNION MADE

Lori Stewart

Retired Letter Carrier & NALC Branch 2902 Shop Steward
– 35 years of service –

Moorpark, CA 93021
Email: Lschultz@aol.com

Office: 805.368.0444
Toll Free: 800.527.0606



We deliver.



Serving Postal Workers Since 1933

- **Get paid two days early!** Your USPS paycheck delivered to you TWO DAYS EARLY with direct deposit*
- **PostCity Perks!** program with loan rate discounts and more
- Low auto loan rates with 100% financing
- FREE checking and Visa® debit card with mobile wallets
- Over 30,000 fee-FREE ATMs and 5,300+ shared branches
- FREE mobile and online banking with bill pay
- Platinum Visa® with rewards and NO annual fees
- Mortgage and home equity loans

If you work for, or are retired from the USPS call **(877) 337-2728**, visit any of our convenient branches or join online at www.postcitycu.org.

*Please visit www.postcitycu.org for complete rates and terms.



AMERICAN SHARE INSURANCE

Your savings insured to \$500,000 per account. By members' choice, this institution is not federally insured, and if the institution fails, the Federal Government does not guarantee that depositors will get back their money. The credit union is not insured by any state government.



BRANCH #2902 OFFICERS

PRESIDENT

- James Perryman

EXECUTIVE VICE PRESIDENT

- Albert Reyes

SENIOR VICE PRESIDENT

- Alex Lopez

VICE President

- Walter Williams

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
- Ray Hill

WEBMASTER

- Larry Orcutt

Shop Steward LIST

Agoura Hills Chief S.S.	Greg Gaddis
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
Oxnard Chief S.S.	Johnny Boyd
	Kathi Albritten
	Pablo Galvan
Alternate S.S.	Louie Tanglao
Pacoima Chief S.S.	Call Office
Reseda Chief S.S.	Oscar Cortez
San Fernando Chief S.S.	Albert Reyes
M.C.A.	Albert Reyes
North Hills	Albert Reyes
Sylmar / Main Office	Martin Diaz
	Robert Tracy
Santa Paula Chief S.S.	Marcos Aldrete
Simi Valley Chief S.S.	Sal Lopez
Simi Valley S.S.	Durim Kamberi
Mt. McCoy Station S.S.	Sal Lopez
Thousand Oaks Chief S.S.	Alex Lopez
	Walter Williams
	Mary Stanley
Alternate S.S.	Rochelle Harvey
Newbury Park S.S.	Alex Lopez
Ventura Chief S.S.	Laura Rowe
East Ventura S.S.	Anthony Casian
Woodland Hills Chief S.S.	Call Office

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.

THE MAIL BAG NEWS

NALC BRANCH 2902

21540 PRAIRIE STREET, #C
CHATSWORTH, CA 91311
(818) 700-9615 FAX (818) 700-9755
union@nalcbr2902.com
www.nalcbranch2902.org

Address Service Requested

NON PROFIT ORG.

U.S. POSTAGE

PAID

PERMIT NO. 41

Canoga Park, CA

RETIREEES LUNCH

RAFFLE AT 12:30

AUGUST

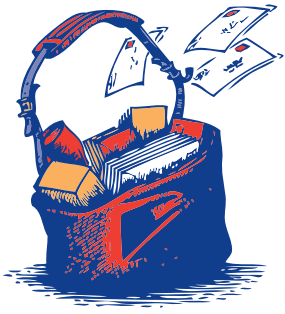
Where: Golden Panda
1825 Madera Rd., Simi Valley
When: Tuesday, August 16, 2022
Time: 11:00 am to 1:00 pm

SEPTEMBER

Where: Golden Panda
1825 Madera Rd., Simi Valley
When: Tuesday, September 20, 2022
Time: 11:00 am to 1:00 pm

Calendar of Events

JUL 21	Regular Branch Meeting 7:00 pm Union Hall - Chatsworth (Subject to COVID-19 restrictions)
AUG 4	Executive Board Meeting 6:00 pm Executive Council Meeting 7:00 pm (Subject to COVID-19 restrictions)
AUG 8	NALC National Convention Begins (Chicago, August 8-12)
AUG 16	Retiree Lunch 11:00 am Golden Panda - Simi Valley
AUG 18	Regular Branch Meeting 7:00 pm Union Hall - Chatsworth (Subject to COVID-19 restrictions)
SEP 1	Executive Board Meeting 6:00 pm Executive Council Meeting 7:00 pm (Subject to COVID-19 restrictions)
SEP 5	Labor Day - Holiday
SEP 15	Regular Branch Meeting 7:00 pm Union Hall - Chatsworth (Subject to COVID-19 restrictions)
SEP 20	Retiree Lunch 11:00 am Golden Panda - Simi Valley



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

MEMBER: LOS ANGELES FEDERATION OF LABOR, AFL-CIO

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

VOLUME 64, NO. 5

CIRCULATION 2,500

SEPTEMBER - OCTOBER 2022



Chicago Welcomes Delegates from NALC

By James Perryman, President

Although there were some major delays leaving Harry Reid International Airport in Las Vegas and LAX due to the bad storms in Chicago and Las Vegas, the delegates of the Branch made it to Chicago and returned home safely. Many of the delegates may have flight anxieties now when scheduling for trips from this experience, but we all returned with a little more knowledge and experience from our recent National Convention. A total of 4,273 delegates from 554 branches were registered at NALC convention. The attending delegates were from all 50 states including the District of Columbia, Guam, Puerto Rico, and the Virgin Islands.

and dealing with legislative gridlock in Congress. "Despite the dire challenges facing the country, we racked up several major victories," Rolando said. In the last four years, the NALC has:

- Negotiated and ratified a 44-month contract with the Postal Service that included better pay and benefits for CCA's and the automatic conversion to career status after no more than 24 months; three general wage increases; seven cost-of-living adjustments; a new top Step P for the career pay scale; protections against contracting out and layoffs; and a series of MOU's to address route adjustments, workplace culture and more.

Challenges and Victories

President Rolando began by thanking the delegates for abiding by the protocols to protect them from COVID-19, recognizing Honolulu Branch 860 for the work it did to prepare for the ultimately cancelation of the 2020 national convention, and reflecting on NALC and the labor movement's history in and around Chicago. He then reminded delegates about the challenges that the 2018 convention in Detroit had confronted, including collective bargaining for a new contract



Pictured above are the Tri-Valley Branch 2902 delegates as they take a moment from convention duties to pose as a group for this photo. Thanks delegates for representing so honorably!

- Resisted efforts by the Trump administration to privatize the Postal Service and repeal collective-bargaining rights.
- Worked to elect pro-letter carrier majorities in both houses of Congress and a friend in the White House.
- Helped calm public fear about vote by-mail as letter carriers delivered nearly all of the 2020 ballots on time, even as the percentage of ballots cast rose by 25 percentage points from 2016.

continued on page 2

Chicago Welcomes Delegates from NALC

continued from page 1



- Fought to secure supplies of personal protective equipment, develop new safe work protocols, restructure workplaces and work schedules to accommodate social distancing, and negotiate a variety of COVID-19 leave policies.
- Convinced the Postal Regulatory Commission to adopt a more favorable price cap to improve the USPS's financial condition.
- Pushed for the passage and enactment of Postal reform legislation that included repeal of the pre-funding of the retiree health benefits mandate and made the requirement of six-day mail delivery permanent.

"All these victories were made possible by the incredible solidarity, unity and strength of the NALC membership, and by the work of thousands of activists at all levels of our union. We should all take pride in this progress."

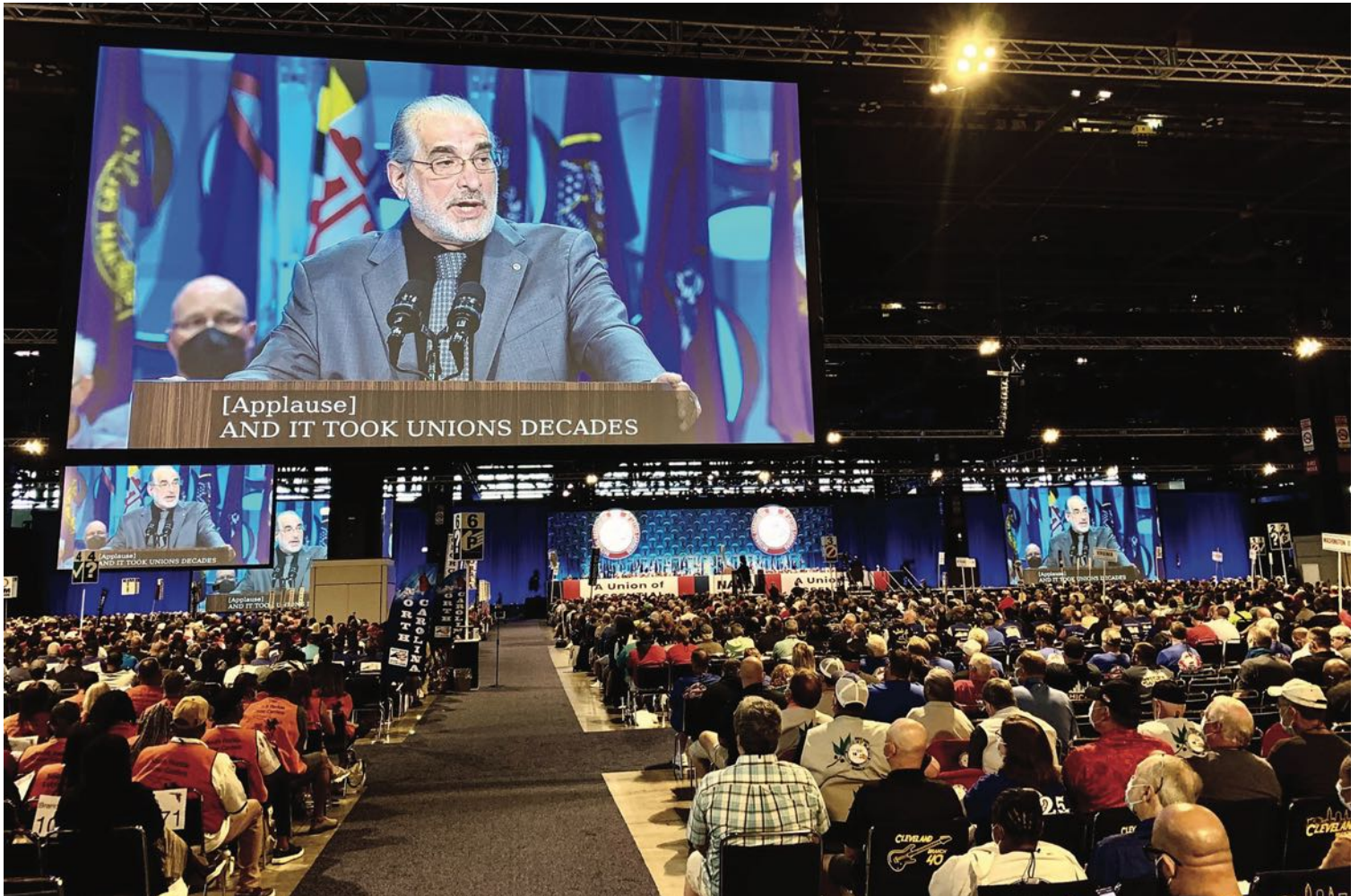
Looking Ahead

Letter carriers cannot rest on their laurels, Rolando said, because they face ongoing challenges, including the 2022 mid-term elections and the 2023 round of collective bargaining.

NALC's president encouraged delegates to attend the many workshops being held before and after the general sessions on Monday through Thursday, to be informed about those and other subjects and to get involved. "We're also going to begin to address some longer-term challenges, those that the NALC's present and future leaders are sure to face far beyond the next two years," he said.

President Rolando discussed Postmaster General Louis DeJoy's 10-year strategic Delivering for America (DFA) plan. "[The DFA plan] combines a massive reorganization of the managerial structure of the Postal Service with proposed legislative and administrative actions, and a strategy to fundamentally restructure the operations of the Postal Service," He went on to state; "It features ambitious goals to both invest in the Postal Service's networks and dramatically increase the agency's revenues by growing its competitive product streams."

While commending DeJoy for embracing six-day delivery and adding capacity rather than downsizing, President Rolando criticized the service standard changes, and called upon DeJoy to embrace letter carriers as partners. "Our union must be involved up front as partners in this transformation, not just be informed and tolerated. Not consulted after key decisions are made," Rolando said. He added that if letter carriers are not at the table, "It will not work."



Pictured above is NALC President Rolando as he addresses the delegates to the 72nd Biennial Convention in Chicago.

He also said that any transformation of the Postal Service won't succeed unless it solves its chronic staffing problems. And, he added, this will continue to guide NALC in its approach to collective bargaining.

"Even as we're filing grievances to compensate letter carriers for work-hour limits and other Article 8 violations of the National Agreement, we also are engaging management to address staffing issues with additional career conversions and the direct hiring of career employees rather than non-career employees," he said.

While the City Delivery and Workplace Improvement Task Force's pilot programs to improve the new employee experience are showing promise, Rolando vowed that the union would continue to push for an all-career workforce with competitive starting wages.

Taming Amazon

The rise of Amazon was the second long-term challenge Rolando broached. Because the Postal Service's finances now are closely tied to package delivery, it's much more driven by market forces and the competition: UPS, FedEx and Amazon, with the latter expected to become the nation's largest package delivery company this year.

For letter carriers, the focus is on Amazon's workforce. "We support the unionization of Amazon workers, both to help these suffering workers and of course to curb Amazon's market power," Rolando said.

While much attention has been paid to the organizing efforts for Amazon's warehouse employees, organizing Amazon's delivery drivers will be much more difficult, he said.

"Rather than employing delivery drivers directly, Amazon contracts with a handful of delivery companies at each of their Amazon facilities," Rolando said. "These small companies, known as delivery service providers (or DSPs), then hire drivers themselves. So, this means a union would need to organize anywhere between five to 15 DSPs at each facility while also hiding these efforts from Amazon, which can and will just cancel contracts with DSPs with little warning."

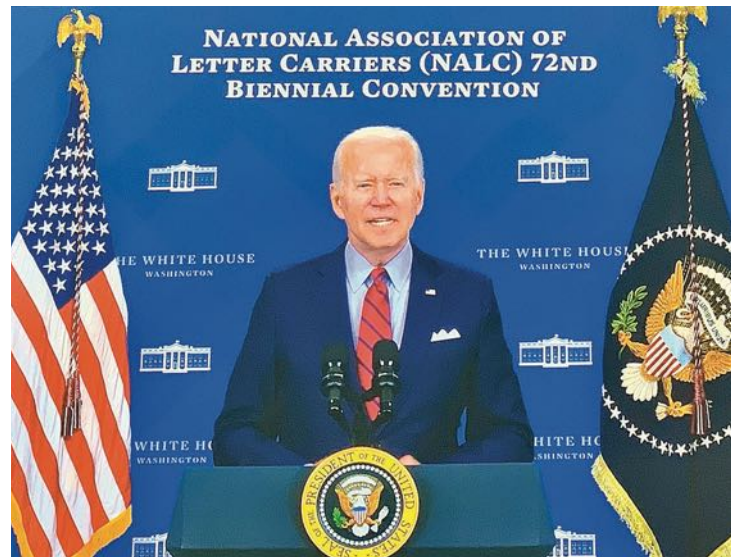
Rolando told delegates that NALC is working with more than a dozen other U.S. unions to organize these workers and with the AFL-CIO and international labor partners to come up with successful strategies to engage the company going forward.

Crisis of Democracy

Turning to his third long-term challenge, Rolando explained how the will of the powerful few is diminishing the power of the many, connecting the dots between the filibuster's effect in the Senate with the Supreme Court's decisions removing limits on political spending and gutting the Voting Rights Act of 1965.

"Very powerful economic interests are both making it harder for working-class people to vote and drowning out their voices in the media," he said.

The assault on the Capitol on Jan. 6, 2021, and the continued belief by 40 percent of Americans that the 2020 presidential election was stolen, despite all evidence to the contrary, is now fueling a wave of voter suppression efforts in many states, Rolando said. This comes despite the 2020 election's successes with voter turnout soaring to the highest level in more than 100 years, thanks largely to vote-by-mail.



Pictured above is President Joe Biden as he addresses the delegates to the NALC Convention in Chicago.

"The legacy of the 2020 elections should be the remarkable everyday heroism of Postal workers who made this surge in mail-in voting possible, not the attack on the Capitol," Rolando said. He then called on delegates to return home at the end of the week and ask their friends and family to vote for democracy in the upcoming midterm elections.

"By voting, we can begin the arduous work of restoring confidence in our public institutions, and send a message that we won't let democracy fail on our watch," he said.

Essential

Rolando finished his speech by recognizing how letter carriers have delivered for the American public during the pandemic, helping people to work from home and stay safe; distributing relief checks, health bulletins, and COVID-19 tests; and delivering and collecting vote-by-mail ballots.

"Letter carriers have always known how essential we are to the political, social and economic well-being of our country, long before COVID-19 struck. But now the rest of the country has taken notice, too."

He recognized the delegates for all the well-recognized and lesser-noticed tasks they do for the success of their branches and NALC as a whole, from the shop stewards to the food drive coordinators, and the active carriers to the retirees. "Today we are together a union of essential workers," he said.

Elections

There will be a National Election this year. Some were elected by acclamation. However, President Rolando will not be seeking another term because he's retiring. I'm sure that the NALC will continue the fight to protect the rights of letter carriers and have success in collective bargaining. And, even though I have confidence in the direction of the NALC's new leadership, I, like many others, will miss President Rolando's passion, tenacity, dedication, and great sense of humor while serving as an excellent leader for our union.

Best wishes to our president and have a blessed and happy retirement.

continued on page 4

NOMINATIONS

President Rolando turned to the next order of business, as required by the NALC Constitution: calling for nominations for national and regional offices, which were offered from the floor as follows (uncontested nominees were elected by consent; contested nominees are listed in nominating order):

President (contested)

- Brian L. Renfroe, Hattiesburg, MS Br. 938
- David Noble, Washington, DC Br. 142

Executive Vice President (contested)

- Paul Barner, Roswell, GA Br. 4862
- Kenneth R. Gibbs Jr., South Florida Br. 1071
- Maureen Valadie, Central Florida Br. 1091

Vice President

- James Henry, Garden Grove, CA Br. 1100

Secretary-Treasurer (contested)

- Nicole Rhine, Lincoln, NE Br. 8
- Cie Sharp, Long Island Mgd., NY Br. 6000

Assistant Secretary-Treasurer

- Mack I. Julion, Chicago, IL Br. 11

Director of City Delivery

- Christopher Jackson, Garden Grove, CA Br. 1100

Director of Safety and Health

- Manuel L. Peralta Jr., Garden Grove, CA Br. 1100

Director of Retired Members (contested)

- Linda Kellam Mann, Minneapolis, MN Br. 9
- Daniel Toth, Lorain, OH Br. 583

Director of Life Insurance (contested)

- James W. Yates, Long Island Mgd., NY Br. 6000
- William E. Boone, Greater East Bay, CA Br. 1111

Director, Health Benefit Plan (contested)

- Matthew Webster, Cleveland, OH Br. 40
- Stephanie Stewart, Central Iowa Mgd. Br. 352

National Trustees (three positions; contested)

- Lawrence D. Brown Jr., Los Angeles, CA Br. 24
- Francisco Jose Cabrera, Greater East Bay, CA Br. 1111
- Sandra D. Laemmel, Detroit, MI Br. 1
- Charles P. Heege, New York, NY Br. 36
- Dorothy Kay Hall, Wenatchee, WA Br. 1350
- Rolando Rodriguez, Indianapolis, IN Br. 39

Region 1 NBA (contested)

- Markeisha Lewis, Garden Grove, CA Br. 1100
- Calvin Brookins, Van Nuys, CA Br. 2462

Region 2 NBA

- Nick Vafiades, Longview, WA Br. 2214

Region 3 NBA

- Michael Caref, Chicago, IL Br. 11

Region 4 NBA

- Dan Versluis, Tucson, AZ Br. 704

Region 5 NBA

- David A. Teegarden, Kansas City, MO Br. 30

Region 6 NBA

- David L. Mudd, Louisville, KY Br. 14

Region 7 NBA

- Patrick Johnson, Milwaukee, WI Br. 2

Region 8 NBA

- Steve M. Lassan, Nashville, TN Br. 4

Region 9 NBA (contested)

- Cliff Edwin Davidson Jr., Durham, NC Br. 382
- Don Lyerly, West Coast Florida Br. 1477

Region 10 NBA

- Shawn Boyd, Dallas, TX Br. 132

Region 11 NBA

- Mark S. Camilli, Northeastern NY Br. 358

Region 12 NBA

- Brian Thompson, New Castle, PA Br. 22

Region 13 NBA

- Vada E. Preston, Tidewater, VA Br. 247

Region 14 NBA

- Richard J. DiCecca, Massachusetts Northeast Merged Br. 25

Region 15 NBA

- Bruce Didriksen, New Jersey Mgd. Br. 38

Of local note are the election of James Henry, Christopher Jackson, and Manuel (Manny) Peralta to National Officers positions, who are from our very own Region 1, and, the nomination of Markeisha Lewis of Branch 1100 and Calvin Brookins of Branch 2462 for Region 1 National Business Agent. Good luck to both candidates.

Also best wishes to our current Reign 1 NBA- Bryant Almario, who announced his plan to retire in the near future. Thanks for all your work, support, and enjoy your retirement.

National Negotiations

National Negotiations begin in the near future. It is expected that management will come after our Health Benefits and COLA. Updates will be posted as they happen on the NALC website (NALC.org).

- The NALC will seek pay increases that reward Letter Carriers for their contributions to the success of the USPS (i.e. e-commerce, customer connect).
- The NALC will seek a better and fairer way to inspect and adjust routes.
- If National negotiations fail, the NALC will be prepared to go to arbitration and go hard.
- The NALC will protect the rights and interests of all Letter Carriers.
- The NALC will negotiate for an all-career work force.

President Rolando stressed that he wanted a stronger employer and long-term job security which can be achieved through the current Postal Reform law. A better job through collective bargaining. A strong Union through training and political mobilization. And, a stronger country through union mobilization.

Rolando also stated that the NALC sought to expand vote by mail, so that everyone's vote could count. And, that we would oppose do not mail laws, which were modeled after the do no call law.

Note: As a Union, on the national level, we are 93.0% organized. The NALC is the best organized open Union Shop in the country. Locally, here at branch 2902 we are 95.28% organized. That is a fabulous achievement and we were recognized for that at the State convention in San Diego.

Convention Classes

The classes put on during the convention were well attended by our delegation. The following were some interesting facts I learned in some of the classes:

The Next Generation Vehicle (NGDV): (5) companies competed for the contract that was awarded to Oshkosh. The vehicles will be built in South Carolina. The NALC Taskforce used letter carriers' input to make necessary changes to the vehicles. 165,000 new vehicles will be ordered as FWD or AWD. The first 50,000 will be rolled out in the near future, but only 20,000 will be electric due to lack in infrastructure to support it. There will be no hybrid vehicles.

The NALC had a voice in the design of the vehicle and selected letter carriers across the country participated in a full 8-hour training course. And, employees will be required to be certified in order to operate the NGDV.

The new Vehicles will have the following: Air conditioning, standing room, charging docks for the scanners, and cameras. It will take approximately 10 years to roll out the new vehicles across the country. Therefore, the old LLV's may still be in use after 2030, if they can last that long.

Route Adjustments: The TIAREAP process for 2022 and 2023 will be used to evaluate and adjust office time and the DSR (Delivery Street Review) from the MDD scanner reports will be used to evaluate the carriers' street time adjustments. The supervisor 3999 observation will not be used, except when the DSR is not available. Under this MOU routes will not be adjusted without the carrier's input.

The EBR (Electronic Badge Reader): The company that provides service to the time clocks went out of business approximately 20 years ago. The Postal Service does not intend to replace the EBRs. Carriers will be required to use the MDD to scan their badges when clocking in to begin tour and throughout the work shift to record time. This will also limit local management's access to make changes to the carriers' clock rings.

OWCP: Letter carriers should register for e-comp, even if you're not filing a claim. It will make the process easier if and when you're ready to file a claim.

Health And Safety: Currently the union has more carrier-on-carrier article 14 issues. It appears letter carriers are more willing to write statements on each other regarding conduct issues, rather than providing statements when a supervisor(s) is demonstrating a conduct issues. The root cause for such behavior is managements failure to properly correct the situation. Management chooses to ignore and/or contribute to the inappropriate behavior rather than implementing corrective measure to resolve the issue at the lowest possible level.

Also, the new supervisors have less than three years' experience, and it appears they're being trained to manage by intimidation and force. In fact, most new supervisors do not know that the M-39 Section 115.4 of Supervisor Handbook even exist.

Awards

The *Mailbag News*, the newsletter you are now reading, is once again an award-winning newsletter. Branch 2902 received a third place award for General Excellence for the 2020-2022 period; Best Cartoon or photo by artist: Mike Charles, retiree from the Thousand Oaks P.O. won honorable mention at the National Convention as well. Thanks to Mike for his outstanding artistic work and to Paul Drapkin for his tireless efforts and dedication in putting out a quality newsletter.

Additionally, our branch won second place for Best Website for the 2020-2022 period of time. Thanks to our Webmaster Larry Orcutt for his excellent work in placing our branch on a positive and informative media platform.

Resolutions of Interest:

Carrier Staffing	Passed
Carrier Technician Work Assign OT List	Passed
Hybrid Locality Pay	Defeated
Bereavement Leave for Grandchildren	Passed
Juneteenth National Independence Day	Passed
Standard Issue Uniform Program	Defeated
Include CCA in Article 13	Passed
Emergency Placement	Passed
CCA Administrative Leave National	
Day of Observance	Passed
Donated Leave for any FMLA	Passed
USPS Phone and Bluetooth Policy	Defeated
MBA Partial Withdrawal Options	Defeated

Let's Play Ball

Although they were not the Dodgers, I had a good time watching the Cubs vs. the Nationals at Wrigley Field during convention week. By the way, the Cubs lost (6-5).

continued on page 8

On The Positive Side

By Albert Reyes, Executive Vice President



In the few short months of having the honor of representing multiple offices, carriers have been expressing their concerns about unwanted overtime.

Daily, carriers are mandated to work off their assignments/tours and or required to work their non-scheduled day. Many have expressed the direction the Postal Service is heading. Questions and uncertainty such as when will management hire more employees? Other questions deal with specific individual concerns such as, why am I mandated on my day off, should I cancel my doctor's appointment? Do I refuse the unwanted overtime? Do I get off the overtime list during the middle of the quarter? What about the sudden surge of attendance reviews? Do I call out? These well-thought out questions can leave a carrier disengaged and frustrated.

Many carriers who work for the Postal Service believe that work and having a personal life cannot co-exist. Walking through the Post Office doors in the morning with the uncertainty of being mandated can be stressful. The unwanted overtime can become a burden to friends and family. Some carriers will have fun with the daily mandates in their offices by commenting that their families haven't seen them in over two years. Understanding that mandating is not a popular topic and even may not be the popular way of thinking, but on the positive side, it's comforting to know that there is work within the Letter Carrier craft. Can anyone imagine the day when mail volume drops below an eight-hour day? Looking at issues differently can change how we address a situation.

Since COVID-19 spread throughout our neighborhoods and the Postal Service, carriers have had to put their offices on their backs, casing and carrying downed routes resulting in working unwanted overtime, picking up auxiliary from assignments they do not know and working late hours. On the positive side, carriers have made more income in the past two years than ever. Some carriers do not care about being placed in a new tax bracket; instead, they want to be home with loved ones. Daily phone calls of frustrations on mandates in offices are front and center during these uncertain times.

What are some positives while we ride these uncertain times out? For starters, every carrier has access to the grievance procedure, so if you are mandated in your office and believe your rights are violated, sign up to see your Shop Steward. Invest into your TSP. I currently know many carriers who keep me informed of how much they have increased their TSP contributions due to the increased income from working more hours. It's great to hear a newly converted CCA contributing to their TSP. OTDL Carriers are known to make over six-figure salaries. They will contribute the maximum amount allowable in a calendar year.

Open a high-yield saving account. Set aside extra cash for the kids' education. Save for that summer vacation. Take the entire month of August off to attend every practice from your favorite sports team. However, try to make it to an in-season game! Pay off debt. Invest in yourself and your family. Again, mandating is not a popular topic, and at some point, it will decrease, but in the meantime, why not invest in yourself? I appreciate every carrier's response to the long work hours and unwanted overtime. Your customers appreciate your constant positive attitude while on the

front lines. You are the bridge to delivering their packages, checks, medicines, educational acceptance letters, and most importantly, their ADVO's! How many miss the Penny Saver on Wednesdays?

Also, on the positive side, since the peak of the pandemic in 2020, career letter carriers have had two general wage increases of 2.1%, 2.3%, and the final general wage increase of 2.3% this November. That's along with five COLA's resulting in a 6.2% increase under the 2019-2023 National Agreement. The sixth COLA is at least 3.8%, effective at the end of August. An increase of 10% from COLA increases alone. A total general wage increase of 8.8%. Do the math. At some point, every career letter carrier could quickly increase their contribution to their Thrift Saving Plan.

Also, on the positive side, a huge step was made to repeal the pre-funding mandate. It was passed with massive bipartisan majorities in the House back in February. The Postal Service Reform Act of 2022 (H.R. 3076) was signed into law by President Joe Biden in April. This bill also addresses the finances and operations of the U.S. Postal Service (USPS). This now guarantees the mail will continue to be delivered six days a week. The bill also requires the Office of Personnel Management (OPM) to establish the Postal Service Health Benefits Program within the Federal Employees Health Benefits Program for current employees and retirees (for more information, see H.R. 3076 in its entirety).

Again, sign up to see your Shop Steward if you believe an improper mandate has violated your rights. Why not look at this as an opportunity to invest in your future? Who wouldn't want to retire with an excellent healthy, comfortable TSP or savings account? I am sincerely proud of the letter carrier craft and how everyone has dealt with and managed during these uncertain times. Mandates are not popular. Take some time to focus on the positives and know that we are more vital now for going through this pandemic. Again, thank you to every carrier for your dedication and patience.

Chicago

It was a privilege to have been in the Windy City for the 72nd Biennial Convention! This was my fourth National Convention and first holding the responsibilities of Executive Vice President. It was great to see everyone engaged and interacting with each other. Branch 2902 was representing proudly, with their vests and all! Within the branch, we had a handful of new delegates attending the convention. It was a great time coming together. A special thanks to Trustee Rochelle Harvey for stepping up and taking on the responsibilities of the recording secretary during the week.

While each day of the convention began with instructional classes prior to the work of the convention beginning, there was time after the close of the convention each day for a bit of fun. Some activities occurring throughout the convention week brought solidarity front and center. On Monday, we engaged in a friendly card game downstairs in the hotel lobby. Branch President James Perryman had his cheering section while teaching us card tricks. We were mesmerized! We did not play for money; however, it was an opportunity to build a stronger relationship with delegates we do not get during regular meetings.

Tuesday, we saddled up to Wrigley Field to watch a close game



Pictured above are Tri-Valley President James Perryman (right) and EVP Albert Reyes (left), along with NALC President Fred Rolando (center) as they attend the National Officers Retiree dinner at the Chicago Convention.

between the Cubs and the Nationals. On top of a good game, hot dogs with relish were the buzz around the stadium! It was great sitting with each other, trying to catch a home run ball. Everyone was up on their feet, swaying back and forth. Even the individuals sitting way in the back participated! Singing the iconic “Take Me Out to the Ballgame” during the seventh-inning stretch was an experience I will never forget!

Thursday, Branch President James Perryman and I attended the National Officer Retiree Dinner. Looking sharp and dressed for the formal occasion had us ready for the night ahead. I want to thank Mail Bag News editor Paul Drapkin for capturing our excitement before heading into the dinner. Our table of seven was in the front and center of the event. National President Fredric Rolando was the Master of Ceremonies. He kept the event flowing with charisma and shared funny stories about each retiree. There was great food, music, dancing, and many great laughs. A night to remember! Congrats to all the National Officers who have retired.

We gathered as a branch to enjoy a convention tradition of eating together on Wednesday. The branch dinner, called by many, was a success! There were well over 20 delegates in attendance at the dinner. Thanks to Joe Gutierrez and the other delegates on the committee who helped set up the reservation. It is always fun hearing stories from retirees about past conventions and dinners. I look forward to many more stories and traditions in the future.

Friday, we walk downtown after the convention’s conclusion. Chicago is a beautiful city, rich in labor history. So many buildings, museums, statues, murals, and parks connect our generation to those who fought the same fight a hundred years ago. It was significant to experience and cherish these memories with my fellow delegates. Let’s not forget all the fun sitting in the classrooms! I hope we can share many more positive moments in the upcoming conventions.

If you haven’t done so, please download the NALC app, and always be safe out there! See everyone at the general membership meeting every third Thursday of the month.



Pictured above is retired Tri-Valley Secretary-Treasurer Dan Gorman as he poses with a pristine Postal Service three-wheeled Mailster on display at the convention. It is like the one that he used to deliver mail in many moons ago.



Pictured above is Paulette Dyer (right) as she is presented her 35-year Union Membership pin by Director of Retirees Beverly Sucich.

The Mail Bag News has once again won our share of National Awards at the NALC National Convention held in Chicago, Illinois in August 2022

3rd Place for General Excellence 2020-2022

Mail Bag News

Honorable Mention

Original Cartoon by Mike Charies

Second Place

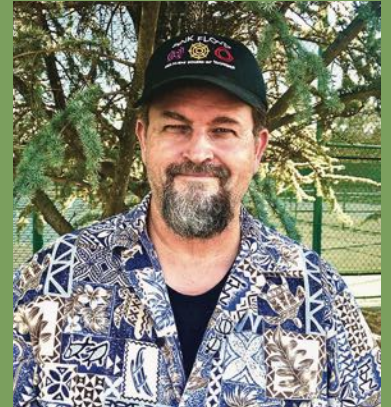
Website, Larry Orcutt, Webmaster



Pictured above is Mail Bag News Editor Paul Drapkin as he poses with one of two awards that the Mail Bag News was honored with at the National Convention.

Pictured at right is Mike Charies, who received an honorable mention for his original cartoon.

Pictured below is Tri-Valley Webmaster Larry Orcutt as he is presented with a second place award for the branch's website. Quite an honor Larry, keep up the good work



Chicago Welcomes Delegates from NALC

continued from page 5

AFL-CIO Delegate Election Results

The results of the AFL-CIO delegate election (the top seven are listed below and will serve as AFL-CIO delegates):

- Michael O'Neill, New Jersey Mgd. Br. 38 10,447 votes
- Anita Guzik, Los Angeles, CA Br. 24 10,140 votes
- Elise Foster, Chicago, IL Br. 11 10,071 votes
- Lloyd Doucet, New Orleans Br. 124 9,822 votes
- Michael Willadsen, Hartford, CT Br. 86 9,485 votes
- Julie Quillam, Great Falls, MT Br. 650 9,369 votes
- Paul Rozzi, Pittsburgh, PA Br. 84 9,353 votes

Salute to Retiring Officers

Attending the reception was a fun experience. The drinks and dinner were pretty good as well as the music and dancing. Most of the honored retirees were in attendance and President Rolando was an excellent MC as usual.

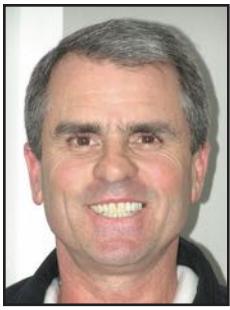
Branch Delegates Dinner

We continued our traditional branch delegates dinner during the convention week, which was a good experience. In my opinion, having at least one dinner together as a branch provides an opportunity to build a camaraderie amongst our fellow delegates. It provides a moment to share union activist work ideas and experiences. And, it also allows the delegates to have a break from convention work, to hang loose, and to have a good time.

Letter Carrier Political Fund

On Thursday during convention session most delegates participated in wearing the LCPF T-shirt for members that made campaign contributions or signed up to join our PAC.

continued on page 9



National Elections Upcoming

...Elections Have Consequences!

By Ray Hill, President Emeritus

Congratulations to NALC President Fred Rolando on his upcoming retirement. Fred Rolando held several positions in NALC during his career, including President for the past 13 1/2 years. Fred took over as President during trying economic times for both NALC and USPS and he did an outstanding job keeping the ship afloat until the economy recovered. Enjoy your retirement, Fred; it is well-earned. Likewise, congratulations to our outgoing NALC Region 1 National Business Agent (NBA), Bryant Almario, on his upcoming retirement. Although Bryant is retiring as our NBA, he will continue to assist NALC as an arbitration advocate. Good luck and best wishes to you, Bryant.

Elections for NALC National Officers are conducted every four years after nominations are submitted on Wednesday during our National Conventions. For the first time since 1994 there will be an election for NBA in our region for the term commencing in 2023. The two candidates for NBA are Region 1 Regional Administrative Assistant (RAA), Calvin Brookins, and Branch 1100 President, Markeisha Lewis.

Local NALC officers and stewards are well-aware of the functions of our respective NBAs but some of the membership is unaware of exactly what an NBA is or does. The duties and functions of our NBA(s) are defined in the NALC Constitution, which you can view and download at NALC.org. Article 9, Section 8 of the NALC Constitution outlines the duties of NALC's 15 NBAs and reads as follows:

"...There shall be fifteen (15) National Business Agents, who shall devote full time to their duties. Subject to the ultimate direction of the President, and the immediate direction of the Executive Vice President and the Vice President in their respective spheres of authority, they shall perform duties relating to organizing, contract administration and interpretation, and the processing of grievances and unfair labor practices. Their functions shall include, but not be limited to, assisting in organization campaigns, gathering evidence for

legal proceedings, assisting in the preparation of grievances and arbitration hearings, assisting in the mediation and conciliation of labor disputes, advising members and local officers upon practice and procedure, assisting in all activities relating to legislation; conducting training and educational seminars; and all other functions relevant to their duties. In the performance of their duties they may be assigned by the President in such numbers and to such functions and localities as he/she deems fit and necessary. They shall have such control and authority over other representatives as the President shall determine. They shall be members of the Executive Council. For their services, they shall receive \$122,306.22 per annum, payable weekly, effective July 20, 2018, provided, that future salary adjustments will be made with the same percentage given top grade letter carriers in their salary increases. They shall be entitled to the same sick and annual leave provisions of the letter carriers, and they shall be scheduled for three weeks of annual leave each year..."

The Region 1 NBA represents an enormous geographical area that consists of California, Nevada, Hawaii and Guam. The local NALC branches rely often on the advice and guidance of our NBAs and their staffs. I can't stress the importance of the position of NBA enough to the membership and how important it is for us to cast our ballots in NALC national elections. I bring this up because of the apathy of the much of the NALC membership, Branch 2902 included, when it comes to voting for National Officers. The percentage of our membership that votes for NALC elections is always very, very low. I really don't understand why that is. Take the time to educate yourselves on the candidates for our upcoming National Elections. Taking an interest in your union includes exercising your voting rights in elections for NALC officers. NALC members will soon be receiving ballots in the mail, and I urge you all to make your voices heard and cast your ballots for all of the national positions that are contested, **especially for our Region 1 NBA.**

continued from page 8

Last Hurrah

The final day of the 72nd Biennial Convention was a time for delegates to look back at what they and their union had accomplished in the past week and in the past decades, and to look forward to a new generation of union activists and leaders. As they prepared to head back to their branches and their routes, the delegates recommitted themselves to stand up for letter carriers on the workroom floor, to deliver for democracy, and to defend the rights of all workers.

The delegates looked back at a convention that highlighted the special role of letter carriers in their communities and their long history of binding the nation together. After a week of educational workshops, the convention ended with a wealth of information to share with their branch members and to use to better the lives of their fellow carriers.

They closed the convention with a renewed energy and confidence that, by sticking together, letter carriers and other

workers can win ongoing organizing and union rights struggles across the country as part of the emerging renaissance of labor.

With many delegates wearing "I'm Voting for Democracy" wristbands, they headed home to do their part in ensuring that elections remain free and fair, and to work to elect candidates who stand up for working people and for a strong democracy. As President Emeritus William H. Young reminded delegates in his greeting, unity and activism are "the secret of our success."

Thanks to all the branch delegates for your contributions and patience during the National Convention. And, a special thanks goes out to Walter Williams and Greg Gaddis for working at union hall during convention week to address the memberships concerns in our absence.

Moreover, thanks to the members of Tri-Valley Branch 2902 in their confidence in electing our branch delegates to represent our local union for the 72nd Biennial National Convention 2022.

That's all for now, I'll be back with more. God Bless you all.



TERM TO AGE 65

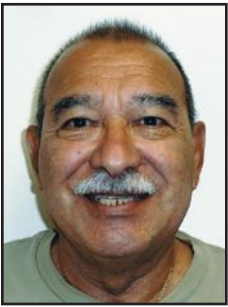
By Chris Alessi, MBA/NSBA Representative

This Term Insurance Plan offers the protection and convenience of having a life insurance policy until you reach the plan's anniversary date after your 65th birthday, as long as the premiums are paid on the policy, you are guaranteed the insurance coverage. The premiums will not go up and will remain the same during the entire life of the policy. You can select your policy worth from; \$10,000 to \$100,000.

You may also choose to purchase a policy for your spouse, children, grandchildren, great-grandchildren, step-children, step-grandchildren, step-great-grandchildren and even your parents or legal guardians. The proposed insured must be 17-years old and you decide how often you want to pay your premiums: monthly, annually, or biweekly. The nice thing about this policy is that it is

convertible. As your insurance needs change, you may choose to convert your policy to an *MBA Whole Life Policy* before you turn 65-years old without taking a medical exam. With a Whole Life policy, your premiums earn interest providing you with a nice "nest egg." The only requirement is that the face amount of the new policy can not be greater than the face amount of your existing policy. It's easy to sign up. Just fill out the application and mail it in the postage-paid envelope to the MBA. They will send your policy to your home. You can return your policy within 30 days of receipt for a full refund of your premium should if you decide not to keep your policy.

In closing, I want to thank all the delegates who attended our 72nd National Convention in Chicago. I appreciate all that you do in keeping our branch educated and strong. I hope you all had a great Labor Day and fun this summer. Take care, In Solidarity, God Bless You.



Innovative Benefits

NALC Health Benefits Plan Leads the Way

By Joe Gutierrez, Branch 2902 Health Benefits Representative

Hello everyone. Just a few thoughts on my trip to Chicago to attend the 72nd Bi-Annual NALC National Convention. I want to start by thanking the membership for having sent me as a delegate to the National Convention. It was five days of listening to speakers and attending seminars and informative classes. You can be proud of all the delegates who attended the convention. From the veterans to the first timers, everyone did a great job of representing Branch 2902. No slackers here, everyone was present and paying attention.

I attended the NALC Health Benefits class which was hosted by the Director of the Health Benefits Plan, Stephanie Stewart and I came away impressed. They spoke about how the plan is evolving, from just paying benefits which it does quite well. The plan is far better than other plans in the Federal Employees Health Benefits system. All you have to do is go on the website and compare. The union has an App called NALC Member App that you can install for free and has a lot of features you can access.

The health plan has a few options available to us that are really cool. One is Telehealth, where you can speak to a medical provider in your area and chart a health plan that fits your ailment. Hinge health is another option available to our members. This is a brand new program that gets you access to Hinge Health's digital exercise therapy programs for back, knee, hip, shoulder and neck pain at no cost to you. It can be done anywhere and at anytime, and participants reduce pain by nearly 70%. When you sign up for Hinge Health you may receive wearable sensors to guide stretches, Personal exercise therapy and Unlimited one-on-one health coaching. I will go into more details in future articles as this program is still fairly new to me. One of the benefits of these new options is those of us with problems related to aging, and even you younger ones with very few ailments is that you can call the plan and speak to a doctor who is certified in your condition and prescribe a program to help you work through whatever ails you. It's like going to physical therapy but in the comfort of your home. I will explain in greater detail some these options in as they are revealed.



Pictured above is Dan Perego as he is presented with his 40-year Union Membership Pin at the August Retiree Luncheon.



The Fight Goes On, Politics on a National and a Local Level

By David Hyman, Branch 2902 Trustee & Political Liaison

Greetings Sisters & Brothers! The three main bills we are most recently following have gained co-sponsorship, but not from our local representatives. H.R. 82 to remove the windfall elimination penalty for CSRS employees on social security now has 294 co-sponsors, including our four Congress members and both Senators on the companion Senate Bill S. 1302. The USPS Shipping Equity Act now has 44 co-sponsors. This bill would remove the prohibition-era restriction on the Postal Service from shipping alcohol products. The Federal Fairness Act, H.R. 4268 now has 76 co-sponsors including Julia Brownley. This bill will allow CCA's to get credit for time served as a CCA towards their Postal retirement should they become regulars.

The Inflation Reduction Act passed in early August. This legislation was supported by President Biden. This bill will cap senior out-of-pocket expenses for prescription drugs at \$2,000 per year and 13 million people covered by the Affordable Care Act will see their premiums reduced by \$800. Medicare will be able to negotiate with big Pharma on 10 drugs starting in 2026. This legislation will also fight climate change by creating more jobs in America manufacturing solar panels, wind turbines, and electric vehicles. These programs will be funded by establishing a minimum corporate tax on the richest corporations and does not increase taxes on those making under \$400,000.

The late Richard Trumka, former head of the AFL-CIO was issued the Presidential Medal of Freedom on July 7th. This is the highest honor that can be given to a civilian. It has been a little over a year since his untimely passing in August of 2021 at age 72.

The November 8th general election is rapidly approaching. The LA Federation of Labor has endorsed Karen Bass for Mayor of Los Angeles, as well as Paul Koretz for City Controller and Jeffrey Prang for L.A. County Assessor. They also endorsed three of our local members of Congress, Julia Brownley, Anthony Cardenas and Brad Sherman. Christy Smith again has their endorsement over Mike Garcia in that race. Check out <https://thelafed.org/resource/2022-endorsements> for other endorsements.

Time for Dodgers baseball! Branch 2902 participated in the annual Los Angeles Federation of Labor Union night at Dodger Stadium on August 5th. We knew we would see fireworks after the game but got the added bonus of the Blue Crew scoring four runs in both the first and third innings as they held on to an 8-1 victory over the San Diego Padres. It was the first home game for the Dodgers after the passing of legendary broadcaster Vin Scully and we were there for the tribute ceremony paid to him at the stadium.

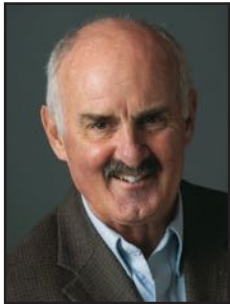
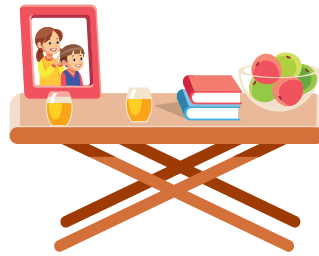


Pictured above is retiree Stephen Peltz as he is presented with his 25-year Union Membership Pin.



Pictured above is James Yamamoto as Director of Retirees Bev Sucich presents him with his 55-year Union Membership Pin at the Retirees Luncheon.

Retirees Corner



Unionization Coming to Amazon? Bezos' Company on a Mission to Control Package Delivery

By Fred Shaw, Woodland Hills Retiree

First off I'd like to commend all the delegates for representing Branch 2902 well, not only on the convention floor, but also by attending many of the classes. It probably seemed just like a typical work day as classes began at 7:30 and in the afternoon went to nearly 5 pm. Our new branch President James did an excellent job breaking down the convention highlights at our August meeting and briefly touched on the subject of my report. Amazon—the elephant in the room.

Just an aside before I begin. Of all of the guest speakers the one that held my interest was Representative Hakeem Jeffries out of New York. Keep an eye on him as a potential presidential nominee in 2032/36. Possible Obama redux.

On to Amazon: Jim Sauber (NALC Chief of Staff for President Rolando) chaired a very diverse panel. Nicolas Rudikoff from UNI Global Union, Kevin Matthews from Canada Postal Union, and Carolyn Wyatt, an organizer in the Bethlehem strike in Alabama.

We all know Jeff Bezos as the multi-billionaire behind Amazon and he's a believer in taking advantage of the margins in business. If he can control the small profits in delivery and marketing on a massive scale then those few individual pennies can become a fortune. He has created warehouses offering McJobs at \$15 to 16 an hour and delivery positions for not much more. It is assumed that by 2024 Amazon will control at least 22% of the entire global delivery market. For now Amazon couldn't exist without the current USPS last mile network, but as Bezos adds drivers and delves into robotic delivery this can't be good for the Postal Service or our main competitors, UPS and Fed-Ex.

Just in 2020 as the pandemic loomed large Amazon added 299 new warehouses worldwide. They are currently in a battle with WalMart for primacy in India and have expanded globally. All of this puts added pressure on the USPS to keep our growing parcel business. Italy has probably fought Amazon the hardest with nearly constant strikes against Amazon workplace and wage practices.

In Canada gig workers are being exploited and are working to organize Amazon warehouses. While Amazon has seen success in building non-union delivery, the Canadian Postal Workers have been trying to organize other large employees, like WalMart. The answer to the Amazon threat is simple but not easy. Postal carriers here in the US and throughout the world need to grow the union movement to a point of critical mass where union jobs make up almost half of all jobs offered (kind of like post WWII).

As a union we need to work with our brothers and sisters in the AFL-CIO and the Teamsters to make delivery jobs union jobs. We need to hold our elected representatives' feet to the fire to make sure Bezos isn't flouting anti-trust regulations.

And equally important - when you see an Amazon delivery person on your route or at your home get to know them. Let them know that they should apply to the USPS. Better pay, better benefits, and a union to keep management off their backs.

Organized and involved we can fight back against the Amazons that threaten our jobs. Together we are Union Strong!



Hermance Law

ESTATE PLANNING & CRISIS PLANNING ATTORNEYS



Daughter of a Letter Carrier

THE TRUTH ABOUT ESTATE PLANNING, WILLS, TRUSTS & PROBATE

- A Will alone does **NOT** avoid probate court. A Trust **DOES** avoid probate court.
- Probate is **VERY** expensive and the fees are set by statute. Example, an estate of \$500,000 (FMV Home \$490,000 and \$10,000 in bank accounts) has **statutory fees of \$26,000**. This can be avoided with proper planning including a Trust.
- If you don't have a legal plan, everything **does not** automatically go to your spouse or kids. It passes via intestate law which may not be what you would want.
- If you don't have a legal plan and you can't make decisions for yourself, a judge will decide who gets to make decisions for you and it is expensive to go through.

WILLS | TRUSTS | PROBATE (SOMEONE PASSES AWAY) | TRUST ADMINISTRATION

DISCOUNTS FOR LETTER CARRIERS

Serving San Fernando Valley,
Santa Clarita and Ventura County

(805) 518-9633

www.HermanceLaw.com

4476 Market St. Suite 602, Ventura, 93003

*Legal Advisory



Pictured above is Rolando Vivar, the latest retiree from the Woodland Hills installation as he accepts his Union Retirement Watch. Congratulations Rolando and enjoy the retirement life.

Brookfield® Uniforms

UNION MADE

Lori Stewart

Retired Letter Carrier & NALC Branch 2902 Shop Steward
– 35 years of service –

Moorpark, CA 93021
Email: Lschultz@aol.com

Office: 805.368.0444
Toll Free: 800.527.0606

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.



We deliver.



Serving Postal Workers Since 1933

- **Get paid two days early!** Your USPS paycheck delivered to you TWO DAYS EARLY with direct deposit*
- **PostCity Perks!** program with loan rate discounts and more
- Low auto loan rates with 100% financing
- FREE checking and Visa® debit card with mobile wallets
- Over 30,000 fee-FREE ATMs and 5,300+ shared branches
- FREE mobile and online banking with bill pay
- Platinum Visa® with rewards and NO annual fees
- Mortgage and home equity loans

If you work for, or are retired from the USPS call **(877) 337-2728**, visit any of our convenient branches or join online at www.postcitycu.org.

*Please visit www.postcitycu.org for complete rates and terms.



AMERICAN SHARE INSURANCE

Your savings insured to \$500,000 per account. By members' choice, this institution is not federally insured, and if the institution fails, the Federal Government does not guarantee that depositors will get back their money. The credit union is not insured by any state government.



BRANCH #2902 OFFICERS

PRESIDENT

- James Perryman

EXECUTIVE VICE PRESIDENT

- Albert Reyes

SENIOR VICE PRESIDENT

- Alex Lopez

VICE President

- Walter Williams

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
- Ray Hill

WEBMASTER

- Larry Orcutt

Shop Steward LIST

Agoura Hills Chief S.S.	Greg Gaddis
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
Oxnard Chief S.S.	Johnny Boyd
	Kathi Albritten
	Pablo Galvan
Alternate S.S.	Louie Tanglao
Pacoima Chief S.S.	Call Office
Reseda Chief S.S.	Oscar Cortez
San Fernando Chief S.S.	Albert Reyes
M.C.A.	Albert Reyes
North Hills	Albert Reyes
Sylmar / Main Office	Martin Diaz
	Robert Tracy
Santa Paula Chief S.S.	Marcos Aldrete
Simi Valley Chief S.S.	Sal Lopez
Simi Valley S.S.	Durim Kamberi
Mt. McCoy Station S.S.	Sal Lopez
Thousand Oaks Chief S.S.	Alex Lopez
	Walter Williams
	Mary Stanley
Alternate S.S.	Rochelle Harvey
Newbury Park S.S.	Alex Lopez
Ventura Chief S.S.	Laura Rowe
East Ventura S.S.	Anthony Casian
Woodland Hills Chief S.S.	Call Office

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.

THE MAIL BAG NEWS

NALC BRANCH 2902

21540 PRAIRIE STREET, #C
CHATSWORTH, CA 91311
(818) 700-9615 FAX (818) 700-9755
union@nalcbr2902.com
www.nalcbranch2902.org

Address Service Requested

NON PROFIT ORG.

U.S. POSTAGE

PAID

PERMIT NO. 41

Canoga Park, CA

RETIREEES LUNCH

RAFFLE AT 12:30

OCTOBER

Where: Golden Panda
1825 Madera Rd., Simi Valley

When: Tuesday, October 18, 2022

Time: 11:00 am to 1:00 pm

NOVEMBER

Where: Golden Panda
1825 Madera Rd., Simi Valley

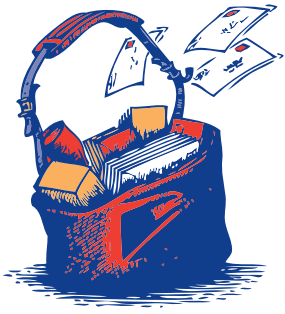
When: Tuesday, November 15, 2022

Time: 11:00 am to 1:00 pm



Calendar of Events

- | | |
|--------|---|
| SEP 15 | Regular Branch Meeting 7:00 pm
Union Hall - Chatsworth
(Subject to COVID-19 restrictions) |
| SEP 20 | Retiree Lunch 11:00 am
Golden Panda - Simi Valley |
| OCT 6 | Executive Board Meeting 6:00 pm
Executive Council Meeting 7:00 pm
(Subject to COVID-19 restrictions) |
| OCT 10 | Columbus Day - Holiday |
| OCT 18 | Retiree Lunch 11:00 am
Golden Panda - Simi Valley |
| OCT 20 | Regular Branch Meeting 7:00 pm
Union Hall - Chatsworth
(Subject to COVID-19 restrictions) |
| OCT 31 | Halloween |
| NOV 3 | Executive Board Meeting 6:00 pm
Executive Council Meeting 7:00 pm
(Subject to COVID-19 restrictions) |
| NOV 6 | Daylight Savings Time ends |
| NOV 11 | Veterans Day-Holiday |
| NOV 15 | Retiree Lunch 11:00 am
Golden Panda - Simi Valley |
| NOV 17 | Regular Branch Meeting 7:00 pm
Union Hall - Chatsworth
(Subject to COVID-19 restrictions) |
| NOV 24 | Thanksgiving Day - Holiday |



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

MEMBER: LOS ANGELES FEDERATION OF LABOR, AFL-CIO

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

VOLUME 65, NO. 6

CIRCULATION 2,500

NOVEMBER - DECEMBER 2022

Zooming Back to Union Hall

By James Perryman, President

Well folks, it was fun while it last, but all good things sometimes have to come to an end. At the general meeting in September, I was happy to announce the return of conducting all branch meetings at John Gaunce Union Hall. I considered the concerns about in person meetings during the pandemic, the continuation of Zoom meetings, and the possibility of simultaneously conducting both methods at union hall. However, after further review, I decided to end Zoom meetings and return to branch meetings at the hall for the reasons as follows:

- In CA, the hospital infection rates for COVID-19 were low and improved.
- LA City/ LA County, which is where the branch is located, have lifted the mask mandate and social distancing requirement for businesses.
- Preparation and conducting Zooming meetings required a lot of time and work.
- Members were losing interest in attending the branch Zoom meetings.
- Cooperation and compliance during the branch Zoom meetings were

not always observed.

- The branch does not have the necessary equipment to conduct hybrid Zoom and in person hall meetings simultaneously.

While many members may have enjoyed the convenience of attending branch meetings at home, our meetings were never intended to be remotely held via Zoom permanently nor indefinitely. The Zoom meeting served as an alternative which allowed our branch to conduct meetings over the last two and a half years of the pandemic while protecting the safety of the membership.

There were challenges and many things we could not achieve

on Zoom as a group. However, things are getting back to some since of normalcy; and unfortunately, I can't sacrifice all to please only the few. Furthermore, it was not an easy decision to open up the branch for meetings, but I'm excited about the return of face-to-face meetings with our branch members and I'm happy to welcome you all back. Therefore, please continue to be respectful



Pictured above is Branch 2902 President James Perryman as he presides over his first union meeting at the Jon Gaunce Union Hall since he was installed as President after the retirement of President Emeritus Ray Hill. Until now, the Covid pandemic has not allowed for live, in-person union meetings and the branch wants to welcome everyone back to in-person meetings.

continued on page 2



Zooming Back to the Union Hall

continued from page 1

of the safety concerns for others. Although being vaccinated for COVID-19 and wearing a face mask at the branch meetings will not be required, it will be highly recommended and accepted for those who choose to.

Things That Make Me Wonder

Who is responsible for the miss-handling of leave requests? Carriers and managers have opinions on who to blame. The carriers blame management when improper instructions are given to complete and/or submit the leave request form. Conversely, management faults carriers when the form is incomplete or improperly submitted. One would think that the task of requesting and recording leave wouldn't be so difficult, and, the task should be completed without unnecessary conflict. However, success is predicted by one's action, so I will attempt to provide information in this article to try to eliminate some of these unnecessary issues.

Time after time, the union addresses the concerns of carriers that submit requests for leave that were disapproved without reason, unanswered, and/or miss-handled by management. Regardless of whom to blame, management is obligated to correct problems before they become grievances whenever possible. Moreover, the carriers are responsible for the proper completion and submission of the leave request form as well.

When requesting leave, carriers should not place the PS Form 3971 at the supervisor's desk without having the Supervisor Signature and Date Notified section of the form completed. After this section is completed by management, a copy of the PS Form 3971 should be provided to the carrier immediately. If this is not done, ask for it. Note: This copy will not serve as proof that the leave was approved; rather, as proof that the request for leave was received by management. Most (LMOUs) provide a timeframe for management to answer a letter carrier's request for leave. Management should also provide a disposition on the PS Form 3971 and provide a copy to the carrier(s) as prescribed under Article 19, via National Agreement. If this is not happening in your office, request to see your Shop Steward immediately.

How Could This Happen

One may have heard the saying "The person who robs a bank, or embezzles money, probably stole from a parent of a shoplifter first." People who are dishonest start out early, a few lies, a piece of candy stolen from a store, something minor, then they progress. Once in a while I come across a discipline grievance and wonder, how could this happen? In a recent case, a Letter Carrier was issued a Notice of Suspension for being AWOL (Absence Without Leave). I have knowledge that the grievant was self-serving, didn't follow all the Postal rules, and made inappropriate deals with management. However, they did not have a history of being irregular in attendance or AWOL.

While investigating the grievance I learned that the grievant was allowed to use annual leave of their choice, whether the

leave was available on the Annual Leave board or not, and when staffing was inadequate to cover down routes. Both the grievant and the supervisor had a total disregard for the work rules or fair treatment of others. As long as the grievant ran the scheduled assignments and made the supervisor's numbers look good, it was a "win, win" for the dynamic duo.

The Grievant completely ignored advice from the union concerning consequences when: (working unsafely, skipping breaks and/or lunch, and delivered mail in an unorthodox fashion); and how their actions may jeopardize the time value of the route(s). Needless to say, it didn't matter. The grievant didn't care enough, until the sweet deal agreement was broken.

One day the grievant decided to cash in on the team's arrangement and informed the partner in crime (supervisor) that they will not be in to work the next day. The grievant verbally



Pictured above is retiree Paul Decareau as he is presented with his 50-year Union Gold Card and Pin at the September Retiree Luncheon by Director of Retirees Bev Sucich.

requested annual leave from the dishonest supervisor and assumed the deal was approved. However, the next day, that same supervisor denied that the conversation ever happened and subsequently charged the grievant AWOL for failure to report to work. Moreover, the loyal grievant even complied to their favorite supervisor's instruction to sign a completed PS Form 3971 requesting AWOL. Note: The grievant did not complete his/her own 3971.

Wow, talk about giving someone your needle to stick you with. Think about this, would you jump off a cliff, drive a Postal vehicle through a tree, or deliver mail at the door step where a vicious dog is roaming the front yard? The answer is NO! So, why would you trust anyone that requires you to falsify a Postal document by requesting **AWOL** on a **REQUEST FOR OR NOTIFICATION OF ABSENCE** form? Again, please note: **The PS Form 3971 is used to request leave or provide notification of absence.** Therefore, requesting AWOL on a 3971 does not make any sense, reasons: because it's **false**, AWOL is a charge, and not a request!!!

Now, it was the beginning of the end for these two cheating individuals, the relationship was broken, which made the situation worse for the grievant. The supervisor claimed the grievant retaliated by slowing down his/her work performance because the request for annual leave was never granted. The supervisor's performance numbers allegedly suffered on routes assigned to the grievant, and now finds himself/herself in jeopardy of being issued discipline as well. This is probably where the cover-up began for having down routes, (due in-part to their ill-advised arrangement), and it's more than likely what led to the supervisor's next course of action placing blame on the grievant.

Management conducted an investigative interview (Fact Finding) with the grievant for the alleged above-mentioned absence. The grievant was required to explain the alleged failure to report to work as schedule/AWOL-**CHARGE**, which was followed by the issuance of discipline. Management at the Fact Finding even presented the grievant's signed copy of the PS Form 3971 requesting AWOL in an attempt to establish that they acknowledged the request for annual leave was not approved.

Conversely, a grievance was filed to challenge the discipline (7 Day No Time Off Suspension) charges: Failure to Follow Instructions/Irregular Attendance/AWOL. During the union's investigation, I discovered a past practice of verbal agreements made between the grievant and their supervisor's actions of granting annual leave on preceding work days frequently, which were consistent with their inappropriate arrangements. Furthermore, in the instant case, the grievant stated upon the return to work that they were instructed to sign the PS Form 3971 (**Request for or Notification of Absence**), completed by management requesting AWOL. And, the grievant's reason for signing a 3971 requesting AWOL, was because he/she didn't realize it was for AWOL instead of Annual Leave. Therefore, what is done in the dark will eventually come to light. Be aware and stop making **Sweet Deals** because they are not worth the potential consequences.

Hopefully, after shedding some light on this grievance case, which is common in some Post offices, you may avoid these types of pitfalls that lead to frivolous disciplinary action from conniving supervisors. That way you will avoid the need to ask yourself: "How could this Happen?"

Request for Scheduled and Unscheduled Leave

The **PS Form 3971** is a USPS official document used for the request or notification of absences. USPS employees are required to complete this form when requesting or using any type of leave. Both the requesting employee and the supervisor have responsibilities when using this form. Appendix B of the National Agreement talks about PS Form 3971 in Section 3. OTHER PROVISIONS- Article 10 in part as follows:

Appendix B Section 3. OTHER PROVISIONS - Article 10:

Form 3971, Request for, or Notification of Absence

- 1. Purpose, Application for annual leave is made in writing, in duplicate, on Form 3971, Request for, or Notification of, Absence.**
- 2. Approval/ Disapproval. The supervisor is responsible for approving or disapproving application for annual leave by signing Form 3971, a copy of which is given to the CCA employee. If a supervisor does not approve an application for leave, the disapproved block on Form 3971 is checked and the reasons given in writing in the space provided. When a request is disapproved, the reasons for disapproval must be noted. AWOL determinations must be similarly noted.**

Employee and Labor Relations Manual (ELM) Section 511.23 stats in part:

Postal Employees:

- a. Request leave by completing PS Form 3971, Request for or Notification of Absence.**
- b. Obtain approval of PS Form 3971 before taking leave- except in cases of emergencies.**

The NALC encourages letter carriers to fill out their own PS Form 3971 to ensure that the type of leave you are requesting is accurate. The type of leave requested and the reasons indicated on Form 3971 determines whether paid leave or leave without pay (LWOP) is entered into the leave system. Improperly requested of input leave entries may significantly impact your payroll or attendance history.

Sometimes management will print a computer-generated PS Form 3971 for you in which the leave type, hours, and comments sections are already completed for you. Be cautious when signing the management-generated version and verify that the entries are exactly what you requested. Likewise, if management disapproves your request for leave be sure the reasons are noted in the appropriate section as well. Always retain a copy of your PS Form 3971 for your records. Copies are often useful in the grievance process if you have a dispute regarding your leave request or if management attempts to discipline you for attendance-related issues. If you have a dispute regarding your leave request, provide a copy of the PS Form 3971 to your Shop Steward so they can investigate and correct the problem.

Until next time, happy holidays to all, that's it for now, and I'll be back with more.



1892

By Albert Reyes, Executive Vice President

Some may ask themselves, what in the world is 1892 about? Is it a year in history that reflects progress within the Postal Service? Is it an address? CCAs should know what 1892 is. \$18.92 is their hourly rate. I am asked every day what I am doing about getting CCAs more pay. Unfortunately, I am not responsible for hiring and promoting in each office. The Postal Service is the employer. Many of the newly hired CCAs in the offices that I represent are hard-working and working in understaffed offices. Many leave within weeks because the pay is just not worth it. The work is there; just not worth the income.

Although CCAs can work 11 and 1/2 hours on any given day and are available seven days a week, management is doing what it can by giving them a day off during the week. I have heard that District has come out with an internal memo that each office should give their CCAs two days off in a service week. This would conflict with the provisions of Article 8 of the National Agreement and JCAM. CCAs are considered auxiliary assistance. Accordingly, management must seek to use CCAs at either the straight-time or regular overtime rate before requiring letter carriers not on the overtime desired list or work assignment list to work overtime on their own route on a regularly scheduled day.



Pictured above are Thousand Oaks Carriers Chris and Florence Brewster as they are presented with their 25-year Union Membership Pins by the Director of Retirees Bev Suchich.

Regarding retention, NALC and the Postal Service have developed language in selected testing sites (M-01949 and M-01961). Recognizing positive pilot results, District may have its own way of trying to retain CCAs. I like what I hear, and it is encouraging that District is trying to address retention. However, ask the 20-30 year seniority veterans that are constantly mandated if they agree to give the 4-5 week CCAs a day off. If an office is fully staffed and Article 8 is not being violated, then, by all means, get these CCAs two days off. But offices are not fully staffed. Some offices convert CCAs to PTF and Regular before the mandatory 24-month Memorandum of Understanding.

For those unaware of this Memorandum, M-01946 Re: City Carrier Assistants - Conversion to Career Status, CCAs who have not been converted to career status by the time they reach 24 months of relative standing in their installation will now be converted to PTF career status in their installation rather than continuing as non-career employees. After reaching 24 months of relative standing, this automatic conversion will take place in every size office throughout the Postal Service. This is the bridge that will bring peace of mind to non-career carriers.

When possible, NALC has provided union membership benefits to fit the needs of CCAs. See the Letter Carrier Resource Guide by logging on to the Members Only section of the NALC website. Not many CCAs take advantage of these benefits. Many do not even know the many benefits that they do have. The standard answers are that I do not have time because I work late. There has become a division between Regular Carriers and CCAs in some offices. Some veteran carriers are not reaching out and educating CCAs with sound advice. I constantly get questions from CCAs that get their information from online chat groups...not realizing that some offices have different local agreements.

Supervisors often conduct Investigative Interviews with CCAs because they call out due to exhaustion. These Supervisors, including Postmasters, will issue discipline to CCAs before they reach their 90/120 review periods. They will say with 100% confidence that they do this because CCAs do not have access to the grievance procedure while in this review period. Then after a few months, they will issue escalating discipline, citing the discipline that was never grieved. In my opinion, that is shady. I am not calling these offices out, but they know who they are. These same offices will do their best to wiggle out of Article 8 payouts using the excuse that they do not have CCAs because of retention.

Management claims they want to fill empty CCA spots in their offices, but when they get them, they issue discipline for calling out three times. \$18.92 plus overworked, plus multiple disciplines equals low retention. To retain CCAs, the Postal Service needs to do more than offer competitive salaries and benefits; they also have to keep employees happy and engaged. NALC has advocated in offices where retention is low. In a recent News and Information

continued on page 7



Do You Have Enough Life Insurance?

By Chris Alessi, MBA/NSBA Representative

It's always a good time to evaluate your life insurance needs for the family's future protection. With MBA insurance products, you are offered policies that can suit your individual needs based on your family's particular life style.

According to the Life Insurance Marketing Research Association, 45% of widows and 37% of widowers say their spouse was **inadequately insured**. In 2021 about 54% of people in America had Life insurance. Unfortunately, about **60 million** households are currently **underinsured**. One or two years after a spouse's death, half of the widows and one-third of the widowers are just getting by financially. 12% of U.S. households would have immediate trouble meeting everyday living expenses if a primary wage earner died, and another 15% would have difficulty keeping up with expenses after several months. And lastly, 25% of household heads don't feel they have a plan in place to provide decent standard of living for their families if they died tomorrow.

This is why you should review your income and debt ratio based on life's changes at least once a year to see if you would have enough income to live a good quality of life for your family if your loved one passed away and there was loss of their income.

Some Important expenses to consider are:

- (1) **Final Expenses** - onetime expenses incurred by your death, including funeral costs, legal fees, and estate taxes.
- (2) **Outstanding Debt** - to be paid off at your death.
- (3) **Readjustment Expense** - to cover a transition period, including child care, additional homemaking help, and training for a surviving spouse.
- (4) **Dependency Expense** - until all children are self-supporting
- (5) **Educational Expense** - Annual college cost in current dollars multiplied by the number of years and children to attend.
- (6) **Life Income for the Surviving Spouse** - After all the children are self-supporting, estimated annual amount desired minus annual income from employment.
- (7) **Retirement Income for the surviving spouse** - Annual Income desired in current dollars minus Social Security and any Pension Income.

Now is the time to plan your purchase of life insurance coverage and to do research on insurance carriers. The financial soundness of the insurer is a very critical concern, you have to have assurance that the company will be around in case you aren't. **We do not endorse** any other insurance companies but our own Union's **Mutual Benefit Association** products.

The **MBA** was established in 1891 and is a non-profit fraternal benefit arm of the NALC to provide low-cost life insurance to

members of the NALC. The MBA is financially sound with \$264 million in assets and \$34 million in reserves. You can always contact the insurance companies and ask about its ratings. In general it's best to go with an insurer rated "A" or better. The most financially sound insurers are rated "AAA." Make sure any reports you get are current, specifically within the last six months. Always review your coverage every few years or when changes occur, such as buying a home or having children. Currently, our MBA has four different types of **Whole Life Plans** and four different types of **Term Life Plans**, ranging from as little as \$15,000 to \$100,000 worth of coverage. All of our policy premiums are based on the insured age at time of purchase.

You can call me any time to make sure your coverage is always aligned with your needs, or you can call the MBA at: 1 (800) 424-5184 Tuesdays and Thursdays from 8:30-3:30 PM EST, and: (202) 638-4318 Monday and Fridays from 8:30-3:30 EST.

In closing, I wish all our Brothers and Sisters, and the families of Branch 2902 a **Very Happy Thanksgiving and a Very Merry Christmas. GOD BLESS YOU.**



Pictured above is Art Covarubias as he is presented with his 55-year Union Membership Pin by Director of Retirees, Bev Suchich.



Urging National Representatives to Get On Board Local Politics Get Ugly

By David Hyman, Branch 2902 Trustee & Political Liaison

Greetings Sisters & Brothers! Additional co-sponsors have signed on to our main bills. The Windfall elimination legislation, HR 82, now has 303 co-sponsors — 211 Democrats and 92 Republicans. The Senate version, S 1302 has 42 co-sponsors, still below the number 60 needed to prevent a filibuster against it. The Shipping Equity Act, HR 3287 moved up to 47 co-sponsors and the Senate version S 1663 just has four co-sponsors. The Federal Retirement Fairness Act, HR 4268 which will benefit our CCAs has 89 co-sponsors including, our own Julia Brownley. We will have to get our other local congressional members to sign on to this bill and the alcohol shipping bill.

The Inflation Reduction Act, signed in August, included \$1.29 billion for purchasing zero-emission delivery vehicles and \$1.71 billion for infrastructure support at USPS facilities.

Local politics got ugly with the release of an illegal recording of a discussion between three labor-friendly Los Angeles City Council Members at the L.A. Fed building with the Federation of Labor President in attendance. The discussion

took place in October of 2021, while those in attendance were discussing a redistricting plan for the City of Los Angeles. A lot of inappropriate language was used there discussing other elected officials. The three elected officials there were City Council President Nury Martinez, Gilbert Cedillo and Kevin DeLeon. L.A. Federation of Labor President Ron Herrera hosted the meeting. Gilbert Cedillo was voted out in the primary and will be leaving office the end of the year. Nury Martinez has just resigned as City Council President. L.A. Federation of Labor President Ron Herrera has announced his resignation. There are numerous calls for the others to resign their positions which I would not be surprised if it happens by the time you receive this issue of the *MBN*.

On a bitter note, the Dodgers set a team record with their 111 wins this season, however the San Diego Padres managed to win three out of five games in the NLDS and sent the mighty Dodgers headed home up the 405!

Hope you all have a safe healthy holiday season!

For the Good Life

By Bev Sucich, Director of Retirees

Hi everyone, to all the new and current retirees. I have not submitted an article for the *Mail Bag News* since the March/April 2022 issue — I apologize for that.

We had a few new retirees at our September 2022 and October 2022 Retiree Luncheons for the first time. We had 49 retirees and guests in September and had 40 members and guests in October. No one received pins or watches at the October 2022 Luncheon.

As soon as I receive the retirees' union pins, I present them to the retirees who are due to get them. Also, I present watches to them at the luncheon unless they want to receive those at the union hall during our regular branch meetings. James, our President, has re-opened the branch to have our monthly meetings back at the union hall from now on. There will be no more zoom meetings unless announced.

This is now open season for making any changes you may want to your health plan. If you have the NALC health plan, we suggest you stay with that plan.

I would like to thank Larry Orcutt (our webmaster) for always taking pictures of the retirees as they receive pins or watches.

I would also like to thank Joe Gutierrez for all the gifts he has donated to our retiree luncheons. We have retirees donating calendars, candles and gift items to raffle or give away.

This is a little late, but I would like to send condolences to Dave Nicholson and James Yamamoto, whose wives passed away this year. Also to the family of Lois Perkins, who was a member.

We now have a new representative for the Letter Carrier Political Fund (LCPF). Senior Vice President Alex Lopez is the guy to see when you are ready to sign up to donate to the political fund. James Perryman stepped down from that position now that he is President. We need to support our political leaders who support legislation that protects Letter Carriers and retirees alike.

We will still be attending the Golden Panda in Simi Valley in November. December will be dark, but starting on January 17, 2023 we will be attending the Golden Panda again.

Until my next article, I hope you all have great holidays and a very Happy New Year. Yay, 2023!! Be safe and stay healthy.

section on NALC's website, dated 10/6/2022, NALC and USPS have agreed on two additional Memorandums of Agreement, M-01986 and M-01988.

The Memorandum of Understanding Re: City Delivery Staffing Adjustment addresses the hiring of Part-Time Flexible City Letter Carriers. The Postal Service will convert all city carrier assistants (CCAs) to part-time flexible (PTF) career status and hire new PTF city letter carriers in these installations to reach and maintain an identified number of PTF city letter carriers on the rolls for each installation. The Postal Service is required to convert all city carrier assistants (CCAs) in the identified installations to part-time flexible career status as soon as practicable but no later than the first day of the second full pay period following the date of the respective agreement.

As a PTF in the late 90s, I made just over \$16.00 an hour. Per the current Letter Carrier Pay Schedule, Part-Time Flexible

Employees' hourly rates (Grade 2) are \$21.92. For PTFs who hold Carrier Technician assignments, it is \$22.38 an hour. The PTF Step AA pay dispute was settled on April 20, 2022 (M-01980). The correct rates and retroactive pay adjustments will be implemented as soon as administratively practicable. So those offices that are mentioned in M-01986 and M-01988 will not be hiring at the \$18.92 rate. Will the Postal Service adopt these Memorandums in all their installations? Time will tell.

In the meantime, CCAs, please read and educate yourselves with the City Carrier Assistants Joint Questions and Answers M-01870. All CCAs, hang in there and know that NALC is actively fighting for your progress and success. For the mandated veteran carriers, see your Shop Steward, and hold management accountable. If you haven't done so already, please download the NALC App, and as always, be safe out there!



Pictured above is Joseph Valdez (L) along with Lisa Guravitz and Fred Shaw. Joseph is the latest recipient of the Guravitz-Shaw CSUN Scholarship that is awarded each year to students with a Mail Carrier parent. Joseph is transferring as a Junior to CSUN and said the scholarship will help him to minimize loans needed for school expenses. Joseph's mother has been a Letter Carrier for over 20 years. Congratulations Joseph and the best of luck to you as you continue your education at CSUN.



Hermance Law

ESTATE PLANNING & CRISIS PLANNING ATTORNEYS



Daughter of a Letter Carrier

THE TRUTH ABOUT ESTATE PLANNING, WILLS, TRUSTS & PROBATE

- A Will alone does **NOT** avoid probate court. A Trust **DOES** avoid probate court.
- Probate is **VERY** expensive and the fees are set by statute. Example, an estate of \$500,000 (FMV Home \$490,000 and \$10,000 in bank accounts) has **statutory fees of \$26,000**. This can be avoided with proper planning including a Trust.
- If you don't have a legal plan, everything **does not** automatically go to your spouse or kids. It passes via intestate law which may not be what you would want.
- If you don't have a legal plan and you can't make decisions for yourself, a judge will decide who gets to make decisions for you and it is expensive to go through.

WILLS | TRUSTS | PROBATE (SOMEONE PASSES AWAY) | TRUST ADMINISTRATION

DISCOUNTS FOR LETTER CARRIERS

Serving San Fernando Valley,
Santa Clarita and Ventura County

(805) 518-9633

www.HermanceLaw.com

4476 Market St. Suite 602, Ventura, 93003

*Legal Advisory



Pictured above is Ventura Retiree Becky Seeley (L) as she is presented with her 25-year Union Membership Pin by Bev Sucich.

Brookfield® Uniforms

UNION MADE

Lori Stewart

Retired Letter Carrier & NALC Branch 2902 Shop Steward
– 35 years of service –

Moorpark, CA 93021
Email: Lschultz@aol.com

Office: 805.368.0444
Toll Free: 800.527.0606

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.

DOHERTY & DONELON SCHOLARSHIPS

Deadline: This form must be returned to NALC Headquarters no later than December 31, 2022.

Eligibility

- Applicant must be the son, daughter or legally adopted child of a letter carrier NALC member in good standing—active, retired or deceased. Stepchildren and grandchildren are eligible if they live with the letter carrier in a regular parent-child relationship.
- Applicant's parent must be a member in good standing of NALC for at least one year prior to making application.
- Applicant must be a high school senior when-making application and must submit the form provided at right, signed by the NALC member and an officer of the member's NALC branch. This form must be returned to NALC Headquarters by December 31, 2022.

Requirements

- All applicants must take the Scholastic Assessment Test (SAT) or the American College Test (ACT) in either their junior or senior year. A copy of the official scores from the administering organization must be received at NALC Headquarters by midnight, March 31, 2023. (Computer-generated print-outs of test scores will not be accepted.)
- All biographical questionnaires and secondary school reports must be received at NALC Headquarters by midnight, March 31, 2023.

Regulations

- Scholarship is to be used toward pursuing undergradu-

ate degree at an accredited college of recipient's choice.

- Winners may accept other college scholarship assistance in addition to the NALC award.
- Any change of schools or course of study must be done only with the permission of the NALC Scholarship Committee.
- A transcript of grades must be forwarded to the committee at the end of each school year.
- If winner suffers certified serious illness, scholarship will be held in abeyance for not more than one year.
- If unusual conditions are going to require an interruption in schooling, recipient must state reason(s) in writing to the Scholarship Committee and request that the scholarship be held in abeyance. Request(s) will be reviewed by the Committee and a decision rendered.
- If the NALC member is suspended by his/her local NALC branch or enters supervision, scholarship will be canceled.

Terms of Awards

- The official scholarship judges will award one William C. Doherty Scholarship in each of the five USPS Regions and one John T. Donelon Scholarship. Winners are judged on the basis of secondary school records, personal qualifications and test scores. As in the past, the scholarship judges will consist of experienced persons in the educational field. Decisions of the judges will be final.

- Doherty Scholarship awards will be \$4,000 per year and the Donelon Scholarship award will be \$1,000 per year. Each scholarship is renewable for three consecutive years thereafter providing the winner maintains satisfactory grades. Award money will be deposited annually with the college. It will be credited to the winner's account to be drawn upon under the rules and regulations which the college has established for handling scholarship funds. Award money is to be used for required college fees, including room and board and transportation fees.
- Children of NALC national officers are not eligible.

In honor of NALC's president from 1941 to 1962, the William C. Doherty Scholarship Fund will again award five \$4,000 scholarships to children of members in good standing. The John T. Donelon Scholarship Fund will award one scholarship in honor of Donelon, longtime NALC assistant to the president. Applicants must be high school seniors and must meet all of the following eligibility criteria to be considered.

SCHOLARSHIP APPLICATION

Date _____ (PLEASE PRINT CLEARLY)

Please send instructions as to how I can compete for a scholarship award. I am a senior in the 2022-23 school year.

I am the daughter son active
 *stepdaughter *stepson of retired
 *granddaughter *grandson deceased

letter carrier _____

of Branch No. _____ City _____ State _____

My name is _____

My address is _____

City _____ State _____ ZIP _____

Phone No. _____

Signature of branch officer

Signature of NALC parent member
(or spouse if deceased)

Printed name of branch officer

Last 4 digits of Social Security No. _____

Title _____ Date _____

This form must be returned no later than December 31, 2022, to the NALC Scholarship Committee, in care of the National Association of Letter Carriers, 100 Indiana Ave. NW, Washington, DC 20001-2144.

* Stepchildren and grandchildren are eligible if they live with the letter carrier in a regular parent-child relationship.



We deliver.



Serving Postal Workers Since 1933

- **Get paid two days early!** Your USPS paycheck delivered to you TWO DAYS EARLY with direct deposit*
- **PostCity Perks!** program with loan rate discounts and more
- Low auto loan rates with 100% financing
- FREE checking and Visa® debit card with mobile wallets
- Over 30,000 fee-FREE ATMs and 5,300+ shared branches
- FREE mobile and online banking with bill pay
- Platinum Visa® with rewards and NO annual fees
- Mortgage and home equity loans

If you work for, or are retired from the USPS call **(877) 337-2728**, visit any of our convenient branches or join online at www.postcitycu.org.

*Please visit www.postcitycu.org for complete rates and terms.



AMERICAN SHARE INSURANCE

Your savings insured to \$500,000 per account. By members' choice, this institution is not federally insured, and if the institution fails, the Federal Government does not guarantee that depositors will get back their money. The credit union is not insured by any state government.



BRANCH #2902 OFFICERS

PRESIDENT

- James Perryman

EXECUTIVE VICE PRESIDENT

- Albert Reyes

SENIOR VICE PRESIDENT

- Alex Lopez

VICE PRESIDENT

- Walter Williams

FINANCIAL SECRETARY/TREASURER

- Mary Stanley

RECORDING SECRETARY

- Laura Rowe

DIRECTOR OF RETIREES

- Bev Sucich

MBA/NSBA REPRESENTATIVE

- Chris Alessi

HEALTH BENEFIT OFFICER

- Joe Gutierrez

SGT.-AT-ARMS

- Bob Golden

TRUSTEES:

- Greg Gaddis
- David Hyman
- Louie Rodriguez
- Rochelle Harvey
- Ray Hill

WEBMASTER

- Larry Orcutt

Shop Steward LIST

Agoura Hills Chief S.S.	Greg Gaddis
Chatsworth Chief S.S.	Angel Hale
Fillmore Chief S.S.	Connie Ramirez
Moorpark Chief S.S.	Call Office
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.	Onefree Varela
Porter Ranch	Onefree Varela
Ojai Chief S.S.	Call Office
Oxnard Chief S.S.	Johnny Boyd
	Kathi Albritten
Alternate S.S.	Louie Tanglao
Pacoima Chief S.S.	Call Office
Reseda Chief S.S.	Oscar Cortez
San Fernando Chief S.S.	Martin Diaz
M.C.A. Alternate S.S.	Javier Torres
North Hills Alternate S.S.	Javier Torres
Sylmar / Main Office	Martin Diaz
Alternate S.S.	Samuel Sabedra
Santa Paula Chief S.S.	Marcos Aldrete
Simi Valley Chief S.S.	Sal Lopez
Simi Valley S.S.	Durim Kamberi
Alternate S.S.	Glen Lopez
Mt. McCoy Station S.S.	Sal Lopez
Thousand Oaks Chief S.S.	Alex Lopez
	Walter Williams
Alternate S.S.	Mary Stanley
Alternate S.S.	Rochelle Harvey
Newbury Park S.S.	Alex Lopez
Ventura Chief S.S.	Laura Rowe
East Ventura S.S.	Anthony Casian
Woodland Hills Chief S.S.	Angel Hale

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.

THE MAIL BAG NEWS

NALC BRANCH 2902

21540 PRAIRIE STREET, #C
CHATSWORTH, CA 91311
(818) 700-9615 FAX (818) 700-9755
union@nalcbr2902.com
www.nalcbranch2902.org

Address Service Requested

NON PROFIT ORG.

U.S. POSTAGE

PAID

PERMIT NO. 41

Canoga Park, CA

RETIREEES LUNCH

RAFFLE AT 12:30

NOVEMBER

Where: Golden Panda
1825 Madera Rd.,
Simi Valley

When: Tuesday, November 15, 2022

Time: 11:00 am to 1:00 pm

DECEMBER

Where: Golden Panda
1825 Madera Rd.,
Simi Valley

When: Tuesday, December 20, 2022

Time: 11:00 am to 1:00 pm

Calendar of Events

- | | |
|--------|--|
| NOV 6 | Daylight Savings Time ends |
| NOV 11 | Veterans Day - Holiday |
| NOV 15 | Retiree Lunch 11:00 am, Golden Panda - Simi Valley |
| NOV 17 | Regular Branch Meeting* 7:00 pm
Union Hall - Chatsworth |
| NOV 24 | Thanksgiving Day - Holiday |
| DEC 1 | Executive Board Meeting* 6:00 pm
Executive Council Meeting* 7:00 pm |
| DEC 15 | Regular Branch Meeting* 7:00 pm
Union Hall - Chatsworth |
| DEC 20 | Retiree Lunch 11:00 am, Golden Panda - Simi Valley
Dark for the holidays |
| DEC 25 | Christmas Day |
| DEC 26 | Christmas Day - Holiday |
| JAN 1 | New Years Day (Happy 2023) |
| JAN 2 | New Years Day Holiday |
| JAN 5 | Executive Board Meeting* 6:00 pm
Executive Council Meeting* 7:00 pm |
| JAN 16 | Martin Luther King JR. day - Holiday |
| JAN 17 | Retiree Lunch 11:00 am, Golden Panda - Simi Valley |
| JAN 19 | Regular Branch* Meeting 7pm
Union Hall - Chatsworth |

* Meetings subject to COVID-19 restrictions