



THE Mail Bag NEWS

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★ EDUCATION
★ ORGANIZATION



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

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VOLUME 67, NO. 2

CIRCULATION 2,500

MARCH - APRIL 2025

Membership Overwhelmingly Rejects Tentative Agreement

By James C. Perryman Jr., President

Hello, brothers and sisters of Branch 2902. The votes are in and the members of our great union have overwhelmingly rejected the Tentative Agreement (TA). The vote to ratify was as follows:

63,680 TO REJECT

26,304 TO ACCEPT

I want to personally thank all of the members of our branch for taking the time to cast their ballot in this extremely important vote. Moreover, our branch officers and shop stewards did an excellent job educating and encouraging active members to exercise their voice by utilizing their power to vote. The voices of the membership were loud and clear when expressing that the tentative agreement fell well short of the anticipated historic contract that was promised. President Renfroe spent many months building up expectations while providing vague information about the ongoing contract negotiations, which probably led to some carriers' anger and/or disappointment in this deal. Nevertheless, in my opinion, it's more likely that an arbitrator will decide our new contract. It may be better, worse, or the same; there are no guarantees.

So, I've been asked, what's next? Well, NALC President Brian L. Renfroe issued the following statement regarding the

vote over the 2023-2026 National Agreement with the United States Postal Service (USPS), via NALC.org:

"NALC has notified the Postal Service of the result of the ratification balloting and our intent to reopen negotiations within five (5) days in accordance with Article 16 of the NALC Constitution. Negotiations will not exceed a period of fifteen (15) calendar days from when they are

reopened. The NALC Executive Council will meet to discuss whether to send a second ballot to each member for ratification or rejection of a potential new tentative agreement or to proceed to binding interest arbitration. Under the law, decisions of that arbitration board would be final and binding upon the parties.

"In a democratic vote, the will of NALC's membership has been made clear - the tentative agreement that represented the best offer the Postal Service put on the table is not good enough for America's city letter carriers. We have earned more and we deserve more.

"We will negotiate in good faith with the Postal Service at the bargaining table during the limited timeframe set forth in the NALC Constitution. We call on the Postal Service to do the same. As I made clear since the very beginning of this process, NALC is well prepared to fight like hell for a better



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Membership Rejects Tentative Agreement

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contract in interest arbitration, and that is exactly what we will do if the Postal Service is unwilling to reach agreement on terms that fairly compensate and reward our members.”

Therefore, if the parties are able to reach another tentative agreement, active members will have the opportunity to vote on a second tentative agreement as prescribed in the NALC Constitution as follows:

When the majority of total votes cast is for rejection, the NALC negotiators shall inform the USPS and reopen negotiations within five (5) days after the vote is tallied. If negotiations are not reopened, the NALC negotiators shall determine if there will be binding arbitration, an immediate work stoppage, or a designated job action. If negotiations are reopened, they will not exceed a period of fifteen (15) calendar days, at which time a second ballot shall be mailed to each member for ratification or rejection. **If the membership rejects this second ballot, then the National President will determine if there will be binding arbitration, an immediate work stoppage, or a designated job action.** (Emphasis added)

Now that I have covered some of the basics about what happens next. Going forward, I have rhetorical questions:

- Will members continue to have the understanding that the greatest risk may be the allowing of a compromise to become a source of defeat?
- Will members accept the outcome of the union’s president and/or arbitration decision for the new Collective Bargaining Agreement (CBA).
- Are members prepared for a work stoppage? And if so, what will it look like; will there be any consequences?
- How will this affect me and my family?



Pictured above is Mail Bag News editor Paul Drapkin (retiree from the Woodland Hills office) and Branch 2902 President James Perryman (not retired!) as they both accept their 35-Year Union Membership Pins at the Union Hall in Chatsworth.

I’m not sure what my responses to these questions may be, but this is what I think about when making informative decisions, and so should you.

Please note: Per Article 18 of the 2019-2023 National Agreement reads as follows:

ARTICLE 18 NO STRIKE

Section 1. Statement of Principle

The Union in behalf of its members agrees that it will not call or sanction a strike or slowdown.

Therefore, the local branch (2902) and the NALC encourage all City Letter Carriers NOT TO STRIKE OR SLOWDOWN; IT’S ILLEGAL!!!

During my recent station visits, I’ve received questions about what happens next. And, despite my efforts to educate the members about the consequences: (*the Good, the bad, and the in-between*), during the ratification process, some members appeared to be confused and disappointed about the potential overall outcome when explained. Some members celebrated the rejection of the TA as a win, but were not aware that the ongoing dispute may take additional time to adjudicate. With enthusiasm, these members believed that a second and better TA would be presented to the membership for ratification within 15 days of the first tabulation count. While others have expressed disappointment in the **REJECT** vote; believed that money was left on the table, and expressed their frustrations while continuing to work without a new CBA.

One of my many concerns throughout this important ordeal is the lack of participation from the estimated 205,000 active members of our union. It’s alarming that only 89,984 active City Letter Carriers participated in the ratification vote. This means that over half of the eligible members did not vote. I had a “WTF” moment when I read this. This sends the wrong message by giving the perception that half of the active members of the NALC didn’t give a shit about our wages, economic benefits, and working conditions. While this may not be indicative to the concerns of our local branch members, I still believe that most NALC members care and only want what letter carriers truly deserve in a TA, which is **Acceptable Fair Compensation for the Hard Work and Great Service That City Letter Carriers Provided to the American Public.**

By the time you receive this newsletter, we may be gearing up for a second vote to ratify or reject another tentative agreement; or we may be heading into interest arbitration that will be final and binding, if necessary. There’s still a chance that the parties could reach a tentative agreement even during the arbitration proceedings/hearing. If a second tentative agreement is reached, I urge you to vote, and I ask



Pictured above (l-r) are the Three Amigas: Carmen Lucio, Ernestine Hernandez, and Nusi Hulshoff, all from the Oxnard office as all three accept their 35-Year Union Membership Pins.

that you please encourage other letter carriers in your installation to vote as well. When it comes to our wages, benefits, and working conditions, we should all care, and realize that this is not a “You” or “Me” concern, rather, it’s a “**WE**” concern. And, every member should let their voices be heard by casting their ballot. If you voted to accept or reject the TA, I thank you for giving your opinion while letting your voice and power be heard. Some may see the glass as half full or half empty under our democracy. Either way, we should continue to stand in solidarity, stay vigilant, and stay tuned. Let’s wait to see what comes next.

Driving Observations

The NALC received notification that the Postal Service has established a Headquarters Safety Engagement Observation Team to assist district field offices in conducting safety observations. USPS states members of the safety team will be monitoring, observing, and conducting safety observations during the performance of carrier street delivery duties. The Safety Engagement Observation teams has begun conducting safety observations during December 2024 and will continue throughout the 2025 year. This initiative does not change any provisions of the National Agreement.

Just like the “WTF” moment that I had with the lack of participation in the ratification vote, I had the same moment with the recent notification that carriers were removed from their street duties and off the clock under our branch for reasons as follows:

- Driving postal vehicle without wearing the seatbelt.
- Being outside of the postal vehicle with the engine running.
- Driving postal vehicle through an intersection with the door open.

Again, I have rhetorical questions. Do carriers get paid to wear the seatbelt, operate postal vehicles safely, and follow all California State DMV rules when at work? The answers to these questions are a resounding, **Hell Yes, We Do!!!** So,

why are carriers failing to abide by these safety rules that we get paid to follow?

If you’re observed performing your street duties while violating the postal safety rules and state driving laws, your supervisor and/or team of safety managers may remove you from the street and off the clock by placing you on an Article 16.7 Emergency Suspension (Without Pay). This may include being placed off work and without pay for the violation(s) for weeks that can lead to months. If this happens to you, contact your shop steward or union hall immediately to file a grievance. The union will do its very best to get you back to work as soon as possible, which may include all, some, or no back pay. However, there are no guarantees; the outcome of grievance resolutions is usually decided on a case-by-case basis. Also, there are no guarantees that you’ll be brought back to work immediately; the disposition of the grievance will usually determine the outcome of your return to work and pay status as well.

A friendly reminder to Letter Carriers - perform your duties in accordance with the USPS Handbooks and Manuals to assure that you will not be placed on a 16.7 and lose pay for not following postal rules. Please take some time out of your busy lives to educate yourself about the postal rules by reading the *Letter Carrier Resource Guide*. Also, to learn more, visit the NALC website, read our branch newsletters, and/or come to a branch general meeting. These informative resources can help you stay out of trouble and serves as a guide to help you navigate through the challenging but rewarding career as a City Letter Carrier.

Remember, we get paid for performing our duties, which requires following all postal safety rules. If you don’t comply with these rules, you may not get paid. Also, carriers should expect to be supervised at all times. This means in the office and on the street by any member of postal management. And, as always, if you feel that your rights are being violated, please notify you shop steward immediately to file a grievance, if necessary. That’s all for now, I’ll be back with more. God bless you all.



Pictured above we have Ed Smith receiving his 65-Year Membership Retirement Pin at the February Retiree Luncheon presented by Director of Retirees, Bev Sucich.

MAY 10, 2025

THIS SPELLS
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FAMILIES THIS
YEAR!



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PUT YOUR NON-PERISHABLE DONATION IN A BAG BY YOUR MAILBOX.
WE'LL DELIVER IT TO A LOCAL FOOD BANK.

National Partners



Return To Sender

By Albert Reyes, Executive Vice President



Over 63,000 active members voted against the Tentative Agreement, while just over 26,000 voted in favor. I spoke with the carriers who expressed their frustrations and concerns about the transparency and accuracy of the vote count. They worried the count would not accurately reflect the “Vote No” movement.

Many carriers did not receive their ballots, and by the time they finally arrived, some return envelopes were either missing or had incorrect addresses. The deadline for returning ballots in the contract ratification election had been extended to January 27, 2025, from the previous deadline of January 13.

I share the same concerns. Since President Renfroe has been neither honest nor transparent in past contract updates, it's difficult to trust the accuracy of his information. Additionally, it is confusing to feel assured that our interests as letter carriers are being considered, let alone defended. We shall see.

The icing on the cake is this new push to “fight like hell” for a better contract. Where was this fight in 2023? The membership has spoken, and he appears ready to “fight” for us. Key points that President Renfroe has shared in a post on NALC's website which would include the following:

- For a better contract with a higher general wage increase
- Defending the retirement and health care benefits letter carriers have earned
- Against any efforts to privatize the Postal Service



Pictured above is retired Ventura Carrier Leslie Sotelo as she proudly accepts her 35-Year Union Membership Pin from her granddaughters. Thanks Leslie for your years of membership and the very cute photo of you with your granddaughters.

- For safety and protection on the job, including an end to the violent assaults against our members on the job and protection from extreme weather
- For fair retirement for all letter carriers, including those who spent time in a non-career position, by passing the Federal Retirement Fairness Act

“Everyone who is against us doesn't know who they're dealing with, but they're about to find out. Because one thing is clear here today—we're fighting like hell!” Renfroe added.

Some individuals want President Renfroe to advocate for us like other Presidents advocate for their memberships with other delivery service companies. Most discussions revolve around the idea that “we need to be more like” fill in the blank. While comparing our union and contract negotiations with other delivery services is easy, I encourage everyone to review their agreements before sharing opinions on wages and working conditions. We, as letter carriers, are different.

This social media campaign advocating for our right to strike is ridiculous. However, while other delivery services can picket and strike, how many of your fellow carriers would actually stand with you? Let's put an end to this unreasonable argument. We are recognized as essential workers and should, therefore, fight for essential pay. We have collective bargaining rights and must recognize this power. In my last article, I urged us to unite rather than be divided; however, many struggle to find a cause they can truly believe in. Many individuals are allowing social media platforms to influence their agendas. We need to take a firm position on this right-to-strike issue. Why is this even a discussion? Can we enhance our working conditions? Absolutely, without a doubt. This is why over 63,000 voted against the agreement.

I want to understand what we will “fight like hell” for in our next tentative agreement. Based on feedback from most carriers who expressed their concerns, a maximum pay range of \$45.00 to \$47.00 per hour has been recommended. This would overhaul the pay scale, shortening the time to reach maximum pay from 13 years to eight years while maintaining the 46-week increases for up to eight years.

Secondly, eliminate mandatory overtime. If necessary, mandatory overtime should be compensated at the double-time rate, and this compensation should occur automatically without requiring a grievance. Currently, management cannot pay any Article 8 grievances; therefore, if they cannot pay through the grievance procedure, they must approve the double-time rate themselves. Currently, the carrier is responsible for filing the Article 8 grievance, which is then handled by the steward and ultimately by management. Many Article 8 issues are dealt with through the grievance process,

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Return to Sender

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resulting in a backlog of appeals. Months go by without a resolution. Remove the middleman and implement automatic payment, and two problems will be solved: eliminating mandatory overtime and addressing the appeal backlog.

Finally, arguments should be made for CCAs to receive credit for seniority toward retirement for the years worked before their conversion to career. This would be a significant victory for those who dedicated countless hours and years as CCAs. There are certainly more issues that need to be addressed. With these three starting points, we can build a unified platform that addresses carriers' concerns.

These are my starting points, not anyone else's. I'm not trying to persuade anyone to agree; however, based on my conversations with numerous carriers, this remains a significant issue. We need to come together on a common platform, especially with all the social media channels and podcasts available. Why can't we all reach an agreement? We are all carriers across the nation and must stand united. Conduct your research and ask questions. I will never pressure or influence anyone to vote in a specific way. As always, enjoy your time with friends and loved ones. Keep looking out for each other. If you still need to, download the NALC app. Stay safe out there!



Pictured above is Brenda Stevens from the North Hollywood office as she accepts her 35-year membership pin and her retirement watch.

30-Year Membership Pins

The following members are invited to the next General Meeting or the next Retiree's Luncheon (if you are a retiree) to be presented with their membership pins. Please call the Union Hall at (818) 700-9615 and let us know if you will be present to accept yours.



Albert Andernians
Valentina Aparicio
Francisco Arias
Donold Arnold Jr
Ruben Asahan
Chriscil Baldado
Robert Beattie
Troy Beaty
Richard Bell
Lajuana Blackburn-Pears
Richard Blanks
Jaime Boutin
Deborah Brazier
Scott Buchwitz
John Burgess
Daniel Cabrera
Juan Cano
Solomon Capina
Joseph Castanon
Celestino Cease
Manuel Centeno
Peter Chang
Liem Chau
David Chavez
James Coleman
Samuel Corralejo
Mizuyo Crane
Christine Cruz
Rizaldy De Luna
Ricardo Deltoro
Andrew Denes
Gurdev Dhindsa

Elizabeth Diaz-Ramirez
Brian Dickson
James Doll
Diane Dozal
Ronald Erb
Wilfredo Escobar
James Espinosa
Richard Estrada
Clifford Fahl
Frances Federico
Cecilio Flatts
Maureen Foster
Enrique Garcia
Eduardo Gimenez
Marco Giraldo
Gonzalo Gonzalez
Lloyd Gray
Michael Guidicessi
Alex Gutierrez
James Hamilton
Eric Hart Sr
Glen Hattori
John Herr
Joseph Herrera
Lisa Hilton
Michael Hutton
Paul Iwasaki
Victor Jimenez
Mehrzaad Khademi
Stephen Kim
Tanai Kingi
Kevin Kriss

Jose Lara
Elliott Lazarus
Tien Le
Paul Lechman
Barbara Lehneis
Felissa Libecap
Boui Lim
Bienvenido Lobo Jr
Fermin Lopez
John Lopez
Manuel J. Lopez
David Lory
Le Lu
Augusto Luna
Teela Ma
William Magtaos
Javier Mandujano
Michael Martinez
Sanjive Massey
Marie McTavish
Beatrice Mendez
Michael Miller
Pelham Mills
Setu Molia
Danny Montoya
Miguel Munoz
Richard Mortimer
John Murguia
Chana Nalamliang
Philip Navarro
Thuan Nguyen
Christoher Nunez

Cesar Nuno
Timothy O'Connor
Eduardo Ornelas
John Otte
Mark Paar
Mark Perkins
Loc Phan
William Postl
Michael Potter
David Ramirez
Leon Ramirez
Leonel Ramirez
Rose Rangel
Richard Ribota
Christopher Rigali
Jesus Rodriguez
Louie Rodriguez
Michael Rodriguez
Leopoldo Rojas
Jesus Rosas
Phillip Rosenkranz
Leah Saint John
Albert Sanchez
James Sanchez
Rebecca Seeley
Ronald Sindelar
Nares Singhasri
Bennie Smith
Yvette Solache
Sean Sotelo
Mary Stanley
Lauri Steed

Mike Stelly
Scott Stuler
Thomas Tang
David Thai
Son Thai
Mark Thielen
Antonio Tolentino Jr
Vien Tran
Kevin Trono
Po Uy
Nancy Valadez
John Valdez
Jose Vallin
Victoria Vargas
Fabian Vasquez
Carlos Verdejo
Douglas Vey
Rolando Vivar
Gloria Vizcardo
Maximo Vizcardo
Edwin Vizcarra
James Webb
Walter Williams III
Anthony Wu
George Wu
Chun Young
Davina Zamora
Laura Zenon
Xiao Zhu



CSUN Scholarship Opportunity

Do you have a student planning to attend CSUN in the Fall of 2025?

The **Guravitz-Shaw Scholarship** is available for kids of NALC members. Fred Shaw, a CSUN graduate, retired from the Woodland Hills Post Office after 36 years on the job. Fred and his wife, Lisa Guravitz, then moved to Carpinteria where Fred served on the City Council and Lisa serves on the Fire Board. They feel very fortunate to be able to offer this Annual \$1,000 scholarship.

Requirements for Applicants are as follows:

Applicants:

- Must be a child of members of the National Association of Letter Carriers (NALC), whether active, retired, or deceased.
- Priority will be given to applicants whose parent is or was (if deceased) an NALC member from the Tri-Valley Branch 2902.
- Must submit verification of union membership (parent, whether parent is active, retired, or deceased).
- Must have a GPA greater than or equal to a 2.50.
- Award is intended for the 2025-2026 academic year.
- Students may apply and be awarded more than once.
- All CSUN students (Frosh-Seniors) who meet criteria regardless of financial need or citizenship status are encouraged to apply.



Apply through the CSUN Financial Aid Office:

Login to the Matador Scholarships portal to begin the general scholarship application and once completed, search for the scholarship with either “Guravitz” or “Shaw” or <https://csun.academicworks.com/opportunities/6033>.

Application period is February 14, 2025 through May 8, 2025.

One recipient will be randomly drawn from the eligible applicants.



Ten-Year Renewable and Convertible

By Chris Alessi, MBA/NSBA Representative

The MBA offers a ten-year Term Life Insurance policy that is **Renewable** after ten years. This means that you buy ten years of life insurance at a time. After each ten-year term, you are **Guaranteed** the right to renew your policy for another ten years, without a medical exam. Your premiums will increase according to your age.

Convertible means that you may choose to convert your policy to an MBA Whole Life policy before your 65th birthday. It can be converted any time before that date (without taking a medical exam). The only requirement is that the face value cannot be greater than the face amount of your existing policy.

You can select any amount of your policy from \$10,000 to \$150,000. You can also choose to purchase a policy for your spouse, children, grandchildren, great grandchildren, step-children, step-grandchildren and step-great grandchildren between the ages of 17 and 70. You may also now purchase insurance for your parents or legal guardians up to the age of 80.

DIVIDENDS - Each year the NALC Board of Trustees determines if the MBA Ten-year Renewable and Convertible Term Life Insurance plan has a divisible surplus for distribution as a dividend. If so, the dividend amount is credited to each policy on the policy anniversary date. The policy owner has the following options:

- (1) Leave the dividend on deposit at an interest rate set by the MBA (never less than 2%)
- (2) Receive the dividend in cash.
- (3) Use the dividend to pay premiums on the policy.

You decide how often you want to pay your premiums—monthly, annually, or bi-weekly under MBA's automatic payroll deduction plan. It's very easy to get started, just fill out the application and mail it to the MBA, postage free. The MBA will send your policy to your home. You may return it in 30 days for a full refund of your premium if you decide not to keep the policy. The ten-year Renewable and Convertible Term Insurance Plan is designed exclusively for Letter Carriers from your MBA, backed by the NALC

In closing I wish our entire union members, officers, and their families to have safe and fun spring ahead. God Bless You, in solidarity.



Pictured above accepting their 35-Year Union Membership Pins from the Director of Retirees, Bev Sucich (top far right) at the January Retiree Luncheon are (top row, l-r) Jim Pompe (East Ventura Station), Carlos Angulo (Sylmar), John Dominguez (Sylmar), and Rob Tracy (Sylmar). Bottom row (l-r) Mike Charles (Thousand Oaks), Linda Watters (Thousand Oaks), Debbie Riggs (Thousand Oaks), and Harry Wilson (Simi Valley) Congratulations to all and thanks for your continued union membership.



Pictured above is Maria Lopez from the Thousand Oaks office as she accepts her 35-Year Union Membership Pin.



On the Road to DC and Furthering Our Agenda

By David Hyman, Branch 2902 Trustee & Political Liaison

Greetings brothers and sisters. Every two years the NALC has its DC Lobby trip. I represented our branch to help jump start our agenda. I had to work twice as hard on this late-February trip because Bob Golden was unable to join me. I flew to the DC swampland the Sunday of that week. The Monday morning of my visit we had an orientation at the NALC headquarters, followed by a Pro Postal Service rally nearby at a park adjacent to the Capital. Some of the featured union allies who spoke were from the Communication Workers of America (CWA), American Federation of Government Employees (AFGE), Flight Attendants, Postal clerks and the Postal supervisors' representatives. There were three loyal members of Congress who spoke, Gerald Connolly (D-VA), Eric Sorensen (D-IL), and Jill Tokuda (D-HI). On Tuesday and Wednesday we were visiting numerous Congressional offices, distributing our Delivering for America packets containing information on the two bills, plus a cover letter telling the members of Congress about the NALC and its members. I visited the offices of all four of our local officials plus a couple other offices. We mostly had a visit with Representative staffers. but Julia Brownley and Luz Rivas did actually meet with us.

Progress has been slow with some of our agenda but we've also had some big victories in the last few years as a result of our efforts. Last year we finally passed the Social Security Fairness Act which will benefit our CSRS employees and in 2022 Congress repealed the USPS Pre-Funding bill. The attack on Social Security benefits for CSRS employees passed in 1983. The pre-funding retirement benefit legislation was in effect over 15 years causing the biggest deficit portion of the USPS budget. Our lobby trips are what help get the word out to our Representatives on what legislation is important to the NALC membership.

The 119th Congress are busy re-introducing bills that we previously supported as well as new legislation. The "Protect Our Letter Carriers

Act" will be one of the NALC's top priorities. Both the House and Senate introduced similar bills supporting this goal on February 6th, 2025. The House bill, HR 1065, was introduced by Brian Fitzpatrick (R-PA) and Greg Landsman (D-OH). The Senate version, S.463, was introduced by Kirsten Gillibrand (D-NY) and Josh Hawley (R-MO). Both bills will increase penalties and assign more prosecutors to protect our letter carriers.

On January 28th, 2025, the House had an anti-privatization resolution introduced by Stephen Lynch (D-MA) and Nick Lalota (R-NY). There are 147 co-sponsors on H-Res 70, three of them from our service area (Brownley, Whitesides, Sherman). Our visit to DC not only educated our new members about NALC issues, but also lead to three of our four members co-sponsoring our bill.

You are encouraged to contact our U.S. Senators Alex Padilla and Adam Schiff at <http://www.senate.gov> for S.463 to protect our letter carriers and contact your member of Congress at <http://www.house.gov> to support HR 1065 for letter carrier protection and H.RES 70 to prevent the Postal Service from being privatized. The four members representing areas serviced by Branch 2902 are Julia Brownley (26th District) representing Ventura County and for L.A. County,

Brad Sherman in the 32nd District, George Whitesides in the 27th District and Luz Rivas in the 29th District. Whitesides defeated Mike Garcia and Luz Rivas replaced the retiring Tony Cardenas. You can also contact the Capitol switchboard at (202) 224-3121.

In the near future, we will probably see the following legislation re-introduced; "The Paid Leave for Federal Employees Bill," "The Federal Retirement Fairness Act," "The USPS Shipping Equity Act," and "The Door-to-Door Service Resolution."

In other Postal related news, Louis DeJoy, the Postmaster General of the U.S. Postal Service, intends to step down, the federal agency said announced



Pictured above is David Hyman with Canoga Park Branch 4006's Political Liaison, Jill Lemons as they attended the "Fight Like Hell" rally in DC in February.

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To Be or Not to Be

By Sam Sabedra, Sylmar Shop Steward

“That is the question: Whether 'tis nobler in the mind to suffer the slings and arrows of outrageous fortune, or to take arms against a sea of troubles, and by opposing end them?”

—William Shakespeare

That is the question that Stewards asks themselves each and every day. Who knew that the opening soliloquy of a Shakespeare play would offer some contemplation on whether or not to become a Shop Steward? A Steward is one of the last roles I saw myself becoming when I started working at USPS. Being a City Carrier Assistant in my office was a blessing in many ways, I already knew most of the city, but just as anyone knows the best way to learn this job is by working it, I was placed on every route and learned all of them little by little until I thought I became “invaluable.” I later started training to be a supervisor, but luckily I was deemed “too valuable/fast” to lose as a carrier and so I remained one, except on Sundays when I helped run the Amazon hubs.

I worked hard and thought by being fast I would always be appreciated. It wasn't until I finally became a regular carrier in 2020 that no matter how many routes I cased and split I would find myself in several fact-finding interviews regarding “unauthorized overtime” for anywhere between three to 10 minutes even though I cased multiple routes and did an extra two hours from another route everyday. I was charged with several disciplines, and had at least two seven-day and a 14-day suspension all within the span of a few weeks. It is then that I became aware and familiar that without my union steward and representative, Martin Diaz, I would not still be employed if left up to management's discretion. After that I started to learn more about the rules and rights of being a city carrier and over the next several months multiple grievances were filed on my behalf because management was violating my rights by making me work different routes I had either not opted on or a part of my schedule as a T-6 Carrier. I was awarded several thousand dollars over the course of my grievances until it eventually stopped.

Our office was hit just like any other during Covid. People quit. Others took time off to be with their kids who were out of school. Many unfortunately caught Covid, one after another. Our office became severely understaffed and overworked. Regardless of what overtime list anyone signed up for everyone was mandated to work their non-scheduled days off, week after week. As I kept hearing many of my coworkers complaints and eventual disciplines from management for calling out on their own non-scheduled days off and just blatantly violating the contract I decided to help the only way I knew how. I began my training as a shop steward. I attended monthly video meetings by phone for Stewards and for our regular branch meetings. A few months later, I was certified as an alternate shop steward and was eager to throw

myself into enforcing the contract and our rights as NALC union members. I filed several grievances on behalf of my office to end the blanket mandatory overtime violations and while investigating found several other grievances as well such as carriers being worked past the 12/60 hours mark. Although I stumbled and made mistakes in my grievances, finally in early 2023 management stopped mandating non-overtime carriers to work their days off for the first time in three years.

I can't remember if anyone thanked me or that a celebration was had but I was content with the knowledge that my coworkers rights were not being violated each day. I will write about other grievances later, but I know that with each one I file I become more educated, strengthening my resolve that one day our office will be so formidable that the thought of violating our rights will not be an afterthought or such an easy decision to make and the consequences not just a mere pittance.



Pictured above is Dennis Piscuskas, newly retired from the Woodland Hills office as he accepts his Retirement Watch and 35-Year Union Membership Pin at the January Union Meeting. Congratulations Dennis and enjoy your retirement.

I aim to educate and have all members of our branch confident in knowing your union, and your stewards have your backs and your best interest. The stewards of your union hold many roles and receive little thanks but that's not why we do it. We do it with the resolve that we are willing to stand up to the tyrannical manner in which management attempts to violate our nationally agreed contract.

I leave you with this the Union Stewards prayer which I first heard at the national convention in Boston in 2024. I hope to see you all soon at our next branch meeting which is the third Thursday of every month.

“Grant me, Oh Lord, the genius to explain to my Brothers and Sisters the policies and plans of our great Union even though no one explains them to me.

Give to me the understanding that I may forgive the apathetic member, curb the overly ambitious member and accept the views of the member who does nothing until I have done something, and then tells me what I should have done and how I should have done it.

Oh Lord, make me formidable in debate, logical in argument and fearless in confrontation. Let me be a lawyer, actor, mathematician, sage, philosopher, sociologist, and economist: pleasing, cajoling, threatening and belaboring so that I may make the best of a good case and a good case from no case at all.

Teach me, Oh Lord, to stand at all times with both feet firmly on the ground...even when I haven't a leg to stand on.”

On the Road to DC

continued from page 9

after a nearly five-year tenure marked by the coronavirus pandemic, surges in mail-in election ballots and efforts to stem losses through cost and service cuts. In a letter, Postmaster General DeJoy asked the Postal Service Board of Governors to begin looking for his successor.

President Donald Trump is preparing to overhaul the U.S. Postal Service (USPS) by dismissing its governing board and integrating the agency into his administration, according to a report from *The Washington Post*, citing six sources familiar with the matter.

The anticipated executive order, which as of the writing of this article, could be issued as soon, would dissolve the USPS Board of Governors and transfer control of the mail agency to the Commerce Department. The move would mark a significant shift in the agency's long-standing status as an independent entity and place its operations directly under executive oversight.

The USPS has operated as a self-funded, quasi-independent government agency since 1971, with its board

responsible for selecting leadership and overseeing its financial and operational decisions. Under Trump's reported plan, that structure would be dismantled, allowing for direct federal control over postal operations, policy, and leadership.

Critics of the plan argue that this shift could politicize the Postal Service, while supporters say it would streamline inefficiencies and address ongoing financial struggles that have plagued the agency for years. Trump has previously expressed frustration with the Postal Service, particularly regarding its financial losses and handling of mail-in ballots during elections. The potential reorganization could have far-reaching implications for mail delivery, our union, and logistics contracts with major private sector partners. If enacted, it would represent one of the most significant federal restructuring efforts of Trump's presidency. Further details on the executive order and the timeline for its implementation remain unclear. The White House has yet to comment on the report.

Be safe! Spring training is here again for our World Champion Dodgers.



Pictured at left is Branch 2902 Political Liaison David Hyman along with several other NALC representatives with Congresswoman Julia Brownley (center with tan colored sweater) as they make the rounds to lobby for NALC's legislative agenda.

Treasurer's Report

1/1/2025 - 1/31/2025

General Account

Previous Balance	\$322,785.76
Receipts	\$44,470.34
Sub-Total	<u>\$367,256.10</u>
Disbursements	\$58,420.92
Total-on-Hand	<u>\$308,835.18</u>

Payroll Account

Previous Balance	\$22,920.29
Receipts	\$25,000.00
Sub-Total	<u>\$47,920.29</u>
Disbursements	\$24,094.77
Total-on-Hand	<u>\$23,825.52</u>

General Account (New)

Previous Balance	\$725.94
Receipts	\$0.00
Sub-Total	<u>\$725.94</u>
Disbursements	\$0.00
Total-on-Hand	<u>\$725.94</u>

Payroll Account (New)

Previous Balance	\$4,455.63
Receipts	\$15,000.00
Sub-Total	<u>\$19,455.63</u>
Disbursements	\$3,338.79
Total-on-Hand	<u>\$16,116.84</u>

Convention Fund

Previous Balance	\$18,432.91
Checking Acct #7 .15% rate-USPS CU Dividend/Int.	\$2.12
(Active & Retirees 1650 x \$2 per By-Laws)	\$3,270.00
Total of Convention Fund	<u>\$21,705.03</u>

Contingency Fund

C.D. (6 mos) .350% rate Premier CU #1	\$95,473.07
C.D. (6 mos) .250% rate Premier CU #2	\$12,980.83
C.D. (1 yr) .598% rate Premier CU #3	\$122,558.61
MM Cert #21 (26 wks) .200% rate USPS CU	\$27,723.28
MM Cert #18 (26 wks) .250% rate USPS CU	\$25,919.64
MM Cert #19 (26 wks) .250% rate USPS CU	\$76,503.20
MM Ckg #8 (26 wks) .250% rate USPS CU	\$47,897.07
C.D. (6 mos) .380% Priority One CU	\$34,285.39
Shares acct USPS CU	<u>\$7.11</u>
Total of Contingency Fund	<u>\$443,348.20</u>

Retiree Fund

Retiree Luncheon	<u>\$3,101.28</u>
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Mary Stanley
Financial Secretary-Treasurer



Pictured above is Vince Scudieri being presented with his 35-Year Union Membership Pin by Branch 2902 Director of Retirees Bev Sucich at the February Retiree Luncheon.



Pictured above is Jeff Hastert from the Reseda office as he accepts his Retirement Watch and 35-Year Union Membership Pin at the Union Hall in Chatsworth

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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.

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- James Perryman

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- Albert Reyes

SENIOR VICE PRESIDENT

- Alex Lopez

VICE PRESIDENT

- Walter Williams

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- Mary Stanley

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- Diane Dozal

DIRECTOR OF RETIREES

- Bev Sucich

MBA/NSBA REPRESENTATIVE

- Chris Alessi

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- Joe Gutierrez

SGT.-AT-ARMS

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- David Hyman
- Louie Rodriguez

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- Larry Orcutt

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Agoura Hills Chief S.S.	Louie Rodriguez
Chatsworth Chief S.S.	Alejandro Medina
Fillmore Chief S.S.	Kathi Albritten
Moorpark Chief S.S.	Kathi Albritten
No. Hollywood Chief S.S.	Louie Rodriguez
Chandler	Louie Rodriguez
Laurel Canyon	Louie Rodriguez
Studio City	Louie Rodriguez
Valley Village	Louie Rodriguez
Northridge Chief S.S.	Robert Tracey
Porter Ranch	Robert Tracey
Ojai Chief S.S.	Call Union Hall
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Reseda Chief S.S.	Robert Tracey
San Fernando Chief S.S.	Martin Diaz
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M.C.A. Alternate S.S.	Diane Dozal
North Hills S.S.	Fernando Aguilar
North Hills Alternate S.S.	Diane Dozal
Sylmar / Main Office	Martin Diaz
Sylmar S.S.	Samuel Sabedra
Sylmar Alternate S.S.	Abel Vazquez
Santa Paula Chief S.S.	Marcos Aldrete
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Thousand Oaks Chief S.S.	Alex Lopez
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	Rochelle Harvey
Alternate S.S.	Mary Stanley
Newbury Park S.S.	Alex Lopez
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East Ventura S.S.	Kathi Albritten
Woodland Hills Chief S.S.	Call Union Hall

THE MAIL BAG NEWS

NALC BRANCH 2902

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MARCH

Where: Golden Panda
1825 Madera Rd.
Simi Valley

When: Tuesday, March 18, 2025

Time: 11:00 am to 1:00 pm

APRIL

Where: Golden Panda
1825 Madera Rd.
Simi Valley

When: Tuesday, April 15, 2025

Time: 11:00 am to 1:00 pm

Calendar of Events

- | | | |
|------------|-----------|--|
| MAR | 20 | Regular Branch Meeting 7:00pm
Union Hall-Chatsworth |
| APR | 3 | Executive Board Meeting 6:00 pm
Executive Council Meeting 7:00 pm |
| APR | 15 | Retiree Luncheon 11:00 am
Golden Panda-Simi Valley |
| APR | 17 | Regular Branch Meeting 7:00 pm
Union Hall-Chatsworth |
| MAY | 1 | Executive Board Meeting 6:00 pm
Executive Council Meeting 7:00 pm |
| MAY | 10 | NALC Food Drive |
| MAY | 11 | Mothers Day |
| MAY | 20 | Retiree Luncheon 11:00 am
Golden Panda-Simi Valley |
| MAY | 26 | Memorial Day - Holiday |



***Subject to Covid-19 restrictions**