

THE MAIL CALL



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Van Nuys, CA

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PRESIDENT'S REPORT

By Roger Askew

NATIONAL RAP SESSION.

On Sunday March 28th, over 500 letter carriers and union officers gathered in Manhattan Beach for the San Francisco Regions rap session on the status of our national agreement. In addition to myself; Calvin Brookins, Jeff Auslander, Bob Enz, Irwin Schnyder and Richard Reimer from our branch attended the session. During the session, President Sombrotto informed us that the mediation sessions had been unsuccessful in resolving the matter and the contract appears to be headed for arbitration (please note the next section). He also explained to us some of the issues that the National Association of Letter Carriers have placed on the table for negotiation. In addition to a substantial pay increase, letter carriers deserve to be elevated to a level 6 status. The NALC also wants a 4 year contract with management. Agreements have been reached with regard to Articles 8, 15, and 16 of the National Agreement. I guess when all is said and done the last sentence will read, " We really had no choice, we either agree to a contract similar to what the APWU and Rural Carriers agreed to, or we take our case in front of an arbitrator. The decision was a good one. As a union officer I say you have to fight for what you believe in and I believe that we deserve a contract that has this "substantial" increase in place. To the postal service, I would say, keep your donuts, SHOW ME THE MONEY! Let's put on the best case we can in front of an arbitrator and have the chips fall where they may. It would be my best guess that we should know the results of the arbitrator's decision sometime around the end of July or August. In an effort to make the public aware of the postal services desire not to settle on a national agreement, you can look forward to a national day of informational picketing. As soon as more information is know I'll be letting you know.

MEDIATION

The following paragraph appeared on the NALC web site and I thought you would like to see it, "Special Mediator Wayne Horvitz declared an end to mediation between the Postal Service and the NALC as a last ditch, face to face effort on March 29th failed to result in any movement by the Postal Service towards meeting the needs of letter carriers in a new national agreement. The negotiations process now heads to binding interest arbitration that probably will last throughout the summer. The first step in to select a neutral arbitrator,

either by agreement of the USPS and the NALC, or if that fails, appointed one by the Federal Mediation and Conciliation Service". President Sombrotto went on to praise the effort by Mediator Horvitz during the month long mediation process and emphasized that the failure was not his fault in any way.

(Continued on Page 2)

ELECTION

The election will be conducted by secret ballot at all Carrier stations on June 1, 2, 3, 4, 1999. the Election shall be conducted in accordance with the rules and regulations adopted and promulgated by the Executive Board of Branch 2462, NALC, which shall not be in violation of the rules and regulations adopted and promulgated by the Rules of the National Executive Council. Retiree's will receive their ballots by 1st class mail no later than May 14, 1999. Any member who, for any reason, will be unable to vote at the Stations, or has not received their ballot, may obtain an absentee ballot by writing to the Election Committee, Branch 2462, NALC, 6910 Hayvenhurst Ave., Suite #101, Van Nuys, California, 91406 or by calling (818) 786-8505. Requests for absentee ballots must be received by the Election Committee no later than May 14, 1999, Absentee ballots must be returned to the Election Committee no later than 5:00 PM on June 4, 1999. write-in votes are not permitted. The counting of the ballots will take place on Friday, June 4, 1999 beginning at 6:00 PM, at the Branch Meeting hall, 6910 Hayvenhurst Ave., #101 Van Nuys, CA. All candidates and members may observe the counting.

IN MEMORY OF
ROBERT VILBRANDT
RETIRED--BRANCH 2462

CHUN CHUANG
LETTER CARRIER--VAN NUYS MAIN

"The MailCall" is published monthly by "Heart of the Valley Branch 2462, NALC, 6910 Hayvenhurst Ave., Suite 101, Van Nuys, CA 91406 in the interest of and for the Letter Carriers of the Van Nuys Post Office and its Stations. ARTICLES FOR PUBLICATION MUST BE IN THE HANDS OF THE EDITOR ON THE 21ST DAY BEFORE THE REGULAR BRANCH MEETING. ALL ARTICLES MUST BE TYPED OR ON COMPUTER DISK WITH SINGLE LINE SPACING. The Editor reserves the right to delete any article he deems necessary, improper, or unfit. All opinions expressed are those of the writer and are not necessarily those of the Editor or Branch 2462, NALC. The views expressed in this document are those of the author and do not necessarily represent the official views of the U.S. Postal Service. In the hopes that any material contained herein may be of benefit to your Branch and the goals of the NALC, permission is granted to copy and/or use any material in this publication with our best wishes.

ATTENDANCE CHART BRANCH MEETINGS

MONTH	J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	D
MAIN OFFICE	11	0	7	12								
ENCINO	8	6	6	8								
CIVIC CENTER	2	1	2	1								
PANORAMA CITY	1	1	2	2								
SHERMAN OAKS	6	7	5	5								
SUN VALLEY	1	1	1	2								
TARZANA	1	1	1	1								
RETIREE'S	7	5	5	8								
TOTAL	37	22	29	40								

MEETING PLACE OF BRANCH 2462, NALC
6910 HAYVENHURST AVE., SUITE 101
VAN NUYS, CALIFORNIA

NEXT MEETING
6:00 PM

May
4th
1999

DEADLINE DATE FOR THE NEXT
ISSUE OF "THE MAIL CALL" IS

May 11th

BRANCH OFFICE.....818-786-8505
SICK CALL
FRANK RIMKUS..... 818-892-7118

"RETIREE CORNER"

Our Monthly (fourth saturday) breakfast 9AM meeting will be held at Cocos Restaurant(15701 Roscoe Blvd. just west of the 405 Freeway across from Anheuser-Busch) The date for the next breakfast is May 22nd. Be sure to mark your calendar and we hope to see you there.

Thank You
 Frank Rimkus

President's Report

(Continued from Page 1)

FOOD DRIVE

The nationwide Food Drive is close at hand. Saturday, May 8th has been set aside for this effort. By the time you read this article the actual day for the food drive will be two weeks away. Please help with what ever you can do. Each station has been assigned a Food Drive coordinator and they will be having stand-ups to keep you informed. Hopefully we will be able to surpass last years total.

BRANCH NOMINATIONS

At last months meeting nominations were held for branch officers. The election will be held on June 1st, 2nd, 3rd and 4th. I have appointed Steve Seyfried from the Sherman Oaks station as Election Chairperson who will appoint the Election Committee at each station. Research who the candidates are and vote for the one who best represents your views. Cast your ballot from the individuals who you feel can perform the duties of the office they are seeking. But most of all please vote. If you would like an absentee ballot please let Steve know by contacting him at the union office (818) 786-8505. Elsewhere in this issue of the Mail-Call, candidates have submitted articles about themselves. Read each one carefully and select the candidate of your choice.

INSTALLATION DINNER

The installation of officers is scheduled to take place on Friday July 23rd, 1999. It will be held at the Encino Glen Restaurant located on Burbank Blvd. Over the last two years we have held a number of events at this location and each time we have been given a great reception. We will be extending invitations to our national officers and hopefully some addition information will be available about our arbitration case. Mark your calendar for this special evening.

EEO/OWCP Report

by Art Bocek

Redress Program

The "Redress" program through a mediation process is designed to expedite EEO complaints. The redress program is not supposed to go around the union on matters that are covered in the National Agreement under "exclusive bargaining rights" of the union. Problems regarding terms or conditions of employment should not be placed in the "Redress" process unless there is a basis of discrimination. An EEO settlement should not violate any of our collective bargaining agreements. I don't understand the necessity for such a program when all management has to do is to not violate rules and regulations and just treat employees with dignity. Well, you know the old saying. " If it looks like a fish and smells like a fish, it must be fishy."

VICE PRESIDENT REPORT

by
CALVIN BROOKINS

On March 28th 1999 I attended an informational meeting scheduled by the NALC at the national level, this meeting was held in Manhattan Beach. The purpose of this meeting was to update us on contract negotiations.

National President Vincent Sombrotto stated that if we do not get a satisfactory offer from the USPS we will be going to arbitration, as I write this article the NALC is preparing to go to arbitration. The mediation process has not allowed the two parties to get any closer than they were before they went to the mediation process.

The rank and file letter carriers that attended that meeting as well as the other three meetings held in other parts of the country feel that we are entitled to a greater wage increase than the other crafts, because we do harder work than the other craft do. The buzz word at this meeting was (HARDER WORK HIGHER PAY) some people may be offended by that statement, we are not saying that the other craft employees do not work hard we are only saying that the work we do is harder work than the work they do. Therefore we should not except the same wage increase that was offered to the other craft.

Once the two parties got together again after January 4th to continue contract negotiations the first thing the USPS proposed to the NALC is why don't you take what the other two unions have taken, they are no different than the clerks and mailhandlers they are all craft employees. The Post Master General ask President Sombrotto to send the current proposal out to the membership to see what would happen and ask that Sombrotto give no recommendation as to the proposal that is being sent out. That is like asking me as your Vice President not to advise you of your contractual rights.

President Sombrotto response was that he would not send a contract proposal out to his membership to be ratified if he himself would not vote for it, and since he has not retired from the letter carrier craft he also would receive a ballot. This tells me that the USPS take us as letter carriers for granted they seem to think we are willing to work for peanuts.

The NALC is not interested in a contract that only last for two years but are willing to discuss contract term limits. The NALC interested in a substantial wage increase, which includes making all letter carriers level 6 and all level 6 carriers to get the appropriate wage increase as well as a percentage across the board for all letter carriers.

When we look at the amount of work we did five years ago we are doing more work today. DPS has changed the way we do our jobs and it do not make our jobs any easier, it is only design to decrease the office time. We are in a struggle and we must be prepared to stand together we as the rank and file letter carriers must let management know that we want our fair share, they must understand that we are the back bone of this company.

Public relation firms have been contacted and put in place to let our members know what a struggle it is going to be, there will also be adds place in newspapers in the 25 largest cities in the U.S. There will also be informational pickets that will take place across the country. Our target is the USPS and ourselves.

So be prepared to take a stand for your hard work do not allow the USPS to take you for granted. I am confident that our rep-

resentatives at the national level will do a great job at arbitration.

Arbitration Advocate Training:

As I write this article I am preparing to go back to Washington DC to be trained as an arbitration advocate for the NALC, I am very please and thankful that our National Business Agent Dale Hart has enough confident in me to send me for this training. I look forward to getting this training and I look forward to representing the NALC as an arbitration advocate. With this training I will be able to even better represent letter carriers in this region.

In unionism

TERRY HALL FOR MBA REPRESENTATIVE

I've been nominated to be the MBA Representative for Branch 2462 for the next term. I am currently the MBA Representative and have attended MBA workshop classes at the National Convention. I ask the membership to elect me to the position for two main reasons: one, I am experienced in MBA by my service as MBA Rep., and two, as the MBA Rep. I take a seat on the Executive Board and as such can contribute to the processes that ensure the proper use of your Union funds and functions. I have been an active, for the membership, shop steward for six years. I hold a Bachelor of Arts Degree in General Biology from California State University, Northridge. I am a past member in good standing with the Teamsters Union. I've been one of your delegates to the 1996 and 1998 National Conventions. I've served as your Editor on the Mail Call.

I ask you personally to vote in the election no matter who you choose; make informed choices for those who will stand for the membership and the good of the whole (Union).

Thank you for your past and present support.

Terry Hall
VNMO Shop Steward
Branch MBA Rep.

ART BOCEK FOR TRUSTEE

My name is Art Bocek and I am running for the office of trustee. I have been in the Post Office since 1969 and became a letter carrier in 1973. In the past I have held the positions of shop steward, MBA Representative, and Vice President. Currently, I am representing letter carriers in both EEO Complaints and OWCP cases. As a trustee, I would like to continue in the upholding of the budget and tracking of unions funds of Branch 2462. I would appreciate your vote.

Thank you.
Art Bocek

SAFETY'S LANDSCAPE

**by
JASON COLELLO**

Safety's Landscape

Continued from last month

As management moves postal landscapes to favor their safety blitz, vast quantities of hot air is released from the deep within. Hot air revealing management's gaseous hypocrisy. Management is so concerned with your safety they have provided us carriers with many dubious hazards. Like vehicles with no rear windows, nor anti-lock brakes or traction control. Provide said vehicles with retread tires (that's when there is less than 1/64th of an inch of tread remaining on the old retreads). They are replacing venerable 1046 tubs with new plastic ones that can only be maneuvered from one end, and has a nasty finger-breaking lip on the inside. Provide pens with caps, not spring loaded (an obvious aid for DPS mail!). They are reducing loading area space because of the DPS equipment management thinks they need\$feared that carriers will be too tempted to case DPS if it were anywhere near us. They casually block exits, claiming lack of staging areas (re DPS equipment). And of course your supervisor pressuring you to do the work of two people, regardless of the danger to you and those around you by working at breakneck speeds. This is the truest form of hypocrisy, and management knows it, and they do not care.

Take the delivery method of DPS as an example. Before DPS, all mail was cased in a controlled environment, at your case. Mis-sends, mis-throws, endorsements and CFS were handled at your case, with relatively no safety hassles. But, within a DPS environment all of those mis-sends, FOEs and CFS must be worked in the far more hazardous street environment. Was management thinking of your safety when they developed the DPS environment? Not likely. The DPS safety hazard could easily be eradicated by simply allowing letter carriers to case their DPS mail, thereby eliminating the widely variable street hazard factor. However, the Postal deities continue to pull the ground from under us with their ever-growing list of commandments: "Thou shalt not case DPS. Just work safer, and faster".

But just who is responsible for your safety, is it management, yourself, or both? The "budget" dictates the amount of safety management will provide a carrier, which is zero. But you are expected to be "safe" at whatever hazards management will make you traverse. Just do not think you have say in actual matters of safety that concern you directly. You know the story. A carrier had asked a supervisor who the safety captain was for Encino PO, the supervisor replied, "I like to think that every one is a safety captain." In principle, the supervisor's reply is accurate in indicating that each individual shall determine what is safe and what is not concerning themselves, and make others aware of unsafe situations. But in Postal theory, if the individual determines a situation is not safe, management will vehemently disagree with the carrier as to what is or is not safe. To management, there are no unsafe situations (such as a blocked fire exit), only unsafe carriers. They will tell you retread tires with 1/64th of an inch of tread is safe, until you hydroplane into a parked car during a rainstorm, then it's your fault. Even though you had requested new tires four times in the last year. You should know that near-bald tires are prone to easier hydroplaning, so drive safer\$but do not use any more time.

You see, it is far easier (and much cheaper) to be utterly ignorant to true employee safety, by requiring letter carriers to be responsible for management's safety deficiencies. Management cares about your safety. **BULL!**

As letter carriers, safely navigating management's ever churning landscape is problematic at best. And we must always keep in mind that they have done "nothing" in providing you with a safe working environment. You must "make" the environment that management dangles you in, as safe as humanly possible. Do not be intimidated into working faster to help them out; get the time you need. And if they refuse your request, do not stress out and run your assignment, call your supervisor back before 3 PM and make them earn their paycheck. Be very cautious with your postal driving: obey all of the rules of the road (including management's idiotic rules), and anticipate that any driving situation will turn into a challenge that will require a quick (and safe) reaction. Be mindful of your postal walking; don't let the mail (especially DPS) be the object of all of your attention. Watch where you're going, and finger mail only when it is safe to do so. And most important of all, do not let management stress you out; it's their stress, not yours. Simply just be professional, no matter how much it costs them.

As this Postal landscape of safety churns and rumbles, we are caught on the surface trying to maintain our footing on management seismic waves. Sometimes it seems like they throw hundreds of banana peels in front of you, then give you a direct order to walk on those peels without falling. This needs to change, for everybody's well being. However, a true safe working environment cannot be achieved until management seriously takes into account by both raising their minimum safety standards, and relieving the unsafe pressure they impose. Management must accept some accountability regarding the environment they make us work in, and they must "pay" the cost to keep us truly safe. Otherwise, further ignorance by management may result in a limited duty cataclysm that will reduce all of the Postal landmasses to rubble, for there will be no one left to carry the mail.

**\$\$CHICHING!,
\$\$CHICHING!!!**

The Holiday grievance filed by Terry Hall in 1996 has finally been settled. The grievance was filed for improper mandating of holiday or designated holiday employees in violation of the National Agreement placed in the Local Contract. The settlement provides for 50% more pay to those improperly mandated employees for the hours worked on their holidays. The settlement also requires the Local Contract to be corrected and that non-scheduled employees (O/T) are to be mandated prior to holiday or designated holiday employees (straight time). \$Chiching, \$Chiching!

**Teenamarie Gallegos
Sgt. -at-Arms**

**JEFFREY H. AUSLANDER
FOR
MBA REPRESENTATIVE**

Vote and Elect an M.B.A. (Mutual Benefits Association) Representative that has shown interest in our Union. He has had the M.B.A. Insurance for approximately 13 years (since 1986). He is a shop Steward at Sherman Oaks Station, attends Union meetings, conventions, training and rap sessions. He is actively involved in our Union regularly. He is the one for the job. He is your right choice. He is-----

**JEFFREY H. AUSLANDER
CARRIER----- SINCE 1984
STEWARD----- SINCE 1998
MBA REPRESENTATIVE FOR 1999 !**

**RICHARD H. REIMER
FOR
TRUSTEE**

MEMBERS

I am running for the office of Trustee, with 30 years of Postal Service. I would like a chance to make some changes with some of our union dues. The Branch Outing and Retiree Dinner, such as better prizes. Four Ticket Pass to Disneyland, Lego Land, First Prize \$ 500 cash. At the Dinner instead of candy, how about a 3 day and 2 night stay in Las Vegas. This would help bring more members to our functions. The Trustees we have now are doing a good job. I would like a chance to make it better.

**Truly
Richard H. Reimer, for Trustee**

**BOB ENZ
FOR
SGT. AT ARMS**

I AM A 30-YEAR POSTAL EMPLOYEE. I HAVE BEEN A UNION STEWARD FOR THE PAST TEN YEARS AND DELEGATE TO THE LAST FIVE STATE AND NATIONAL CONVENTIONS. I HAVE BEEN A MEMBER OF THE CONTRACT ADMINISTRATION UNIT, LOCAL NEGOTIATION TEAM, STEP TWO DESIGNEE, TECHNICAL ASSISTANT AT ARBITRATION'S, AND MOST IMPORTANT SGT. AT ARMS FOR ONE TERM.

EXPERIENCE COUNTS

**VOTE FOR
BOB ENZ**

THANK YOU

VELMA J. MCCLINTON

**FOR
BRANCH 2462
TREASURER**

CONTINUE WITH EXPERIENCE

DURING THE YEARS I HAVE BEEN PROUD TO SERVE OUR BRANCH IN ANY CAPACITY OF THE NEEDS OF ACTIVE AND RETIRED LETTER CARRIERS. OVER THE PAST SIX YEARS AS TREASURER I CONTINUE TO FOCUS ON MAKING IT EASIER FOR UNION MEMBERS TO UNDERSTAND HOW OUR MONEY IS BEING SPENT.

AN EXAMPLE, I HAVE ADDED 17 NEW CATEGORIES TO OUR ANNUAL BUDGET. THESE ACTIONS FOR ADDITIONAL CLARIFICATION HAVE BEEN VOTED ON BY THE EXECUTIVE BOARD MEMBERS AND ADOPTED.

COMING FROM AN ACCOUNTING BACKGROUND I AM STILL COMMITTED TO PROVIDING YOU WITH QUALITY AND EFFICIENT SERVICE OF OUR FUNDS. PLEASE AGAIN PLAN TODAY FOR TOMORROW AND VOTE FOR VELMA J. MCCLINTON.

IN UNIONISM

**MICHELLE MARIE HALL
FOR TREASURER**

I've been nominated for the position of Treasurer for Branch 2462 of The National Association of Letter Carriers. My qualifications for the position include: an Associate of Arts Degree in Business Administration with a Minor in Finance including academic courses in Accounting, Finance, Small Business Management, Business Mathematics through Statistics, and Business Law with an overall GPA of 3.6 and Dean's List distinction; I've received a Certificate of Recognition for Outstanding Achievement in Business Studies by The National Management Association; I've been an active Union member since joining the Postal Service ten years ago; and most recently served as A National Delegate to the National Association of Letter Carriers National Conventions in 1996 and 1998. I am also an alternate steward for Van Nuys Main Office. I believe I can provide excellent service in support of the membership.

Your not only electing the new Treasurer but also installing that person as a member of The Executive Board which oversees the Union local's functions pertaining to the allocation of and use of your Union Funds.

I would appreciate your support in the upcoming election.

**In Unionism,
Michelle Marie Hall**

"THE MAIL CALL"

BRANCH 2462, NALC

Steve Seyfried, Editor
6910 Hayvenhurst Ave., # 101
Van Nuys, CA 91406

Address Correction Requested

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Branch Meeting Minutes April 6, 1999 By Steve Seyfried, Secretary

The Meeting was held at the Branch 2462 Union Hall 6910 Hayvenhurst Ave, Van Nuys California. It was called to order by PRESIDENT ROGER ASKEW at 6:03 p.m. The Pledge of Allegiance was led by SGT-AT-ARMS TEENAMARIE GALLEGOS. The invocation was led by FRANK RIMKUS
MOMENT OF SILENCE--IN MEMORY OF
CHUN CHUANG--MAIN OFFICE & WARREN DAHL--
RETIREE

ROLL CALL OF OFFICERS

PRESENT--ASKEW, BROOKINS, SEYFRIED, JOHNSON, McCLINTON, GALLEGOS, T.HALL, BRASH, TUKESBREY, SCARBOROUGH, RATHBONE

SPECIAL GUEST--Manny Peralta, Regional Admin Asst.
MINUTES ACCEPTED AS PRINTED IN MAILCALL
CORRESPONDENCE READ

APPLICATION FOR MEMBERSHIP--NONE

BILLS READ MOTION TO PAY M/S/C

COMMITTEE REPORTS

AUDIT--TRUSTEES Books are fine, budget is in order at this time.

COLCPE--GALLEGOS \$ 210 in the fund

RETIREEES There were 8 retirees present at tonight's meeting. On the Sick List we have CARMEN ROMERO who just had a baby girl. We wish them much happiness and healthy life.

DISTRICT 6--McCLINTON H R 22 still moving through Congress, we will have to watch for the final wording. More info will be coming later. Senate legislative websites are available, contact Branch office. Legislative liaison from Washington, DC, who was supposed to speak at our next Branch meeting, will now be speaking at Pasadena Branch office on May 4, 1999 at 6 pm. Friday April 30th is boycott Gas day !!!

MBA--T. HALL No Report

HBR--TUKESBREY No Report

SAFETY & HEALTH--HENRY No Report

FINANCIAL SECRETARY REPORT--JOHNSON

TREASURERS REPORT--McCLINTON

VICE-PRESIDENT--BROOKINS Picnic will be at Magic Mountain on Sunday, September 5, 1999. (Day before Labor Day) Watch the MailCall for further information.

PRESIDENT ASKEW Contract negotiations are now going to binding arbitration after mediation failed to settle any of the questions. Sherman Oaks carriers will receive Route Inspection classes, now scheduled for May 5 & 6th. Extra Calendars have been ordered, they will sell for \$ 3.00 each. Contact Steward to buy one.

OLD BUSINESS--NONE

NOMINATIONS FOR BRANCH OFFICERS

PRESIDENT.....

VICE PRESIDENT

RECORDING SECRETARY

FINANCIAL SECRETARY

TREASURER

MICHELLE HALL

SGT-AT-ARMS

TEENAMARIE GALLEGOS

HEALTH BENEFITS REP

MUTUAL BENEFITS REP.....TERRY HALL

EDITOR

* ELECTED BY ACCLAMATION

STEVE SEYFRIED appointed as Chairman of the Election Committee by President ASKEW

BRIEF MESSAGE GIVEN BY MANNY PERALTA

EXECUTIVE BOARD MINUTES READ

NEW BUSINESS

MOTION--Any candidate running for a Branch office be allowed to submit an article for the May MailCall not to exceed 250 words. M/S/C

MOTION--Branch file Unfair Labor charges against the Van Nuys Post Office for failure to bargain in good faith, failure to provide Union requested time, failure to provide Union requested information failure to provide Union access to witnesses, within a timely manner. M/S/C

Underlined means unanimous vote

COLCPE DRAWING

\$ 3 JIM TUKESBREY--RETIREE--DONATED

\$ 3 RICHARD REIMER--SHERMAN OAKS--DONATED

\$ 3 VELMA McCLINTON--MAIN OFFICE--DONATED

\$ 3 VELMA McCLINTON--MAIN OFFICE--DONATED

MEETING ADJOURNED 7:45 PM