

THE MAIL CALL



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PRESIDENT'S REPORT By Calvin Brookins

AUTOMATIC COLCPE

Voluntary withholding for COLCPE is now available using PostalEASE System. As I informed you in the October issue of the MailCall a letter from NALC President William H. Young has been mailed to all active members with information on how they can contribute to NALC's Committee on Letter Carriers Political Education (COLCPE) through payroll deductions. Easy to follow instructions appear on the reverse of the letter, advising NALC members to use PostalEASE to initiate voluntary withholding of COLCPE contributions. I suggest that any who have not signed up for COLCPE contributions using PostalEASE should consider doing so immediately.

COLA

The projected accumulation for the third regular cost-of-living adjustment under the 2001-2006 National Agreement declined for the third consecutive month to \$57.20 based on the CPI-W for December. The \$57.20 projected increase equals 2.75 cents per hour or \$2.20 per pay period.

NALC LEGISLATIVE ACTIVIST PROGRAM

Now that thousands of letter carriers have signed up to be NALC's legion of legislative activists and Congress is starting hearings on postal reform, NALC President William H. Young is transmitting his first e-Activist message. Look for the message on your computer and take action accordingly.

For those who have not yet signed up, you can do so by going to the union's website, www.nalc.org. Signing up will enable members to contact legislators and other public officials via the Internet when urgent action is necessary. After entering their e-mail addresses, members will be transported to a page containing an information form that, when completed, will put members on a list for periodic updates on legislative and other matters affecting active and retired letter carriers.

For those who do not have access to a computer contact the union office and I will supply you with a form that you can use to sign up as a legislative activist.

E A P

IMPROVING PARENT/TEEN COMMUNICATION

Good family relationships require good communication. When teenagers were asked to write down ways in which their parents could improve communication styles, here is what one group had to say:

1. Don't pressure us to achieve all the time. Remind us from time to time to slow down or goof off.
2. Praise us if we do OK. Sometimes, it seems like nothing we do is good enough.
3. Tell us you love us, even if we act like we don't want to hear it.
4. Be honest with us. Sooner or later we will find out the truth. It make us feel dumb if our parents lied to us.
5. Don't yell! Nothing makes us want to fight back more.
6. Let us form our own opinions. Chances are, they'll be a lot like yours.
7. If we have a major problem, help us to solve it, but don't feel you have to solve it for us. We'll never learn how to solve problems as adults if we aren't given the chance to try on our own.
8. Give us a chance to disagree with you without telling us that we're "talking back."
9. Never stop talking to us. You are the only ones we can count on for reassurance and love.

Your EAP4YOU Service Center can help you learn more about improving parent/teen communication, and how you can learn parenting skills. You can reach a live person to discuss your needs by calling 1-800-EAP-4-YOU.

PERSONAL-PRIVATE-PROFESSIONAL

**IN MEMORY OF
JAN ANDERSON**

**LETTER CARRIER--SHERMAN OAKS
BRANCH 2462**

"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.

Boo Hoo, I quit
From the UNION COURIER, JUNE 2003
CT Merged Branch 20

It may be the union's fault for not being able to instill into letter carriers the history, pride and utmost importance of union membership; and we should try harder to do that. However, the decision to become or remain a scab is an individual choice and is a clear reflection of the character of the individual, not a failure of the union.

Jack London aptly described the character of a scab in his classic essay that went like this:

"After God had finished the rattlesnake, the toad, and the vampire, he had some awful stuff left with which he made a scab. A scab is a two-legged animal with a cork-screw soul, a waterlogged brain, and a combination backbone made of jelly and glue. Where others have hearts, he carries a tumor of rotten principles...There is nothing lower than a scab."

Membership in the National Association of Letter Carriers is not mandatory, yet 92% of the letter carriers throughout the nation are proud members. Only 8% are freeloading non-members, and whatever reason they may give to justify being a scab, the real reason is that they are cheap, self-centered individuals who don't give a damn about anyone or anything that doesn't give them immediate personal gain. When I hear some of the pathetic excuses being used as a reason to quit or not join the union, I want to puke.

Those of you who have been here a while should enlighten our new brothers and sisters as to how management can be without the vigilance of the Union. The atmosphere in which you work, the overtime you are paid, the vacation you are guaranteed and every other right and benefit you enjoy was fought for and won by your union. These rights and benefits will be kept and maintained only if you are wise enough to understand that it is you who are the union and you must constantly maintain a vigil over your hard won rights and benefits. Your officers and stewards are only as strong and effective as you make them. If you are weak and disorganized, your union will be weak and disorganized. If you let individuals bad mouth the union on the floor without responding, you weaken your union. When you talk and joke with a scab, you weaken your union.

Every union leader that has served carriers for any length of time knows the frustration of trying to motivate members into being active, caring brothers and sisters, but it can and must be done. Let me leave you with one thought. The principles and ideals of unionism are more important today than ever. In a world full of people whose main focus is "me", your union is a vehicle of "you". It is a vehicle that allows you to do the right thing, not the most expedient thing. It allows you to take the time to ask, "How are you, what can I do to help?"

As you age and mature, you will understand that there is nothing more important than what you have done for others. You will realize that cutting your brothers and sisters' throat for a lousy hour of overtime and just taking care of yourself will come back to haunt you when you are forced by age or health to reflect on what you have done with your life. He union is family, and we support family right or wrong, through thick and thin. If you are a union member, never quit. If you are not, join now! All letter carriers, speaking with one union voice, can say to management loud and clear, "Don't mess with family!"

ATTENDANCE CHART
BRANCH MEETINGS

MONTH	J	F	M	A	M	J	J	S	O	N
MAIN OFFICE	4	4								
ENCINO	8	7								
CIVIC CENTER	1	1								
PANORAMA CITY	4	4								
SHERMAN OAKS	5	2								
SUN VALLEY	0	2								
TARZANA	2	2								
RETIREE'S	5	6								
TOTAL	29	28								

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

NEXT MEETING
6:30 PM

MARCH
2nd
"2004"

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

March 2, 2004

BRANCH OFFICE.....818-786-8505

"RETIREE CORNER"

Our Breakfast Meeting will be held at Cocos Restaurant , 16835 Sherman Way (Corner of Sherman Way and Balboa). It will begin at 09:00 AM. The date for the next 2 will be Mar 27th and April 24, 2004 (4th Saturday) So, please mark your calendar.....We hope to see you there.

Thank You

Frank Brash

VICE-PRESIDENT'S REPORT

By Art Bocek

Postal Inspectors/ Your Rights

Letter Carriers are all too frequently being called into the Postal Inspectors' office for investigatory review without union representation. Because of this fact, there are fewer carriers working for the postal service. It is paramount to your job and career that **you** understand the role of the inspectors and your rights. I have in the past written on this subject, but it is most important to remind even an experienced carrier not to mention newer members who might be brought into the office for an **"Investigative Interview."** For the new and some of you "Lifers," here are some questions and answers **you need to know**.

Who are the postal inspectors? What do the postal inspectors do? What rights do letter carriers have? Postal Inspectors are employees of USPS. They are neither craft nor management's, but a separate part of the USPS. What do they do? They investigate mail fraud, mail theft, and they also investigate employees. They monitor the day-to-day operations of the USPS. They also prosecute employees plus they harangue-and arrest employees.

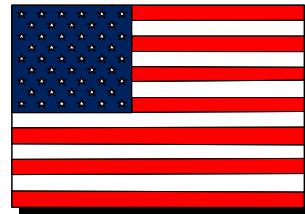
So what can I as an employee do to help myself ?

1. Be professional and do your job in a proper manner at all times
2. KNOW your rights and EXERCISE your rights!
 - A. Contractual: Article 17, Section 3, Paragraph 5: "If an employee requests a steward of Union Representative to be present during the course of an interrogation by the Inspection Service, such request will be granted."
 - B. Weingarten Rights: "...The right to have Union Representation during investigatory interviews, or if the employee believes that discipline may result from the investigatory review.
 - C. Miranda Rights: You have the right to remain silent; anything you say can be used against you in a court of law. You have the right to the presence of an attorney prior to questioning and to be with you during questioning if you so desire; if you can not afford an attorney, you have the right to have an attorney appointed for you prior to questioning. Do you understand these rights? Will you voluntarily answer my questions?"
 - D. The right to know the purpose of the interrogation prior to questioning.
 - E. The right to have criminal charges read and Miranda Rights read prior to questioning.
 - F. The right to refuse to answer any questions should the investigatory interview become accusatory.
 - G. ELR Manual, Section 666.6: Cooperation in investigations: "Employees will cooperate in any postal investigation."

Once a carrier has been given his/her Miranda Rights, the best you can do as a shop steward is to advise the carrier to not sign anything or make any statements until he/she has engaged in legal counsel ! What is the role of the shop steward or Union Representative during the investigation by the Postal Inspection Service? Stewards have the right to know the purpose of the interrogation; to have private conversations with the aggrieved carrier prior to questioning; to call time-out at any time during the interrogation, and as many times as he/ she feels necessary; to give advice, ask questions and actively recommend a course of action during the interrogation; to bring out facts favorable to the carrier during the interview. Stewards also have the right to keep the carrier from being intimidated and harassed during the interview, and to keep the carrier from incriminating himself/herself.

Stewards do not make deals with Postal Inspectors, just as the Postal Inspectors do not determine the penalties. As a steward, you always conduct yourself in a professional manner, as you can be asked to leave the interview if you shout, scream or use obscene gestures. Remember, it is your job as a steward is to represent and protect! If a steward feels that a Postal Inspector has acted in less than a professional manner during the interview, you can protest these actions to the Inspector General of the Inspection Service. Postal Inspectors do not determine the penalties. Steward may interview Postal Inspectors, may cross examine, and may ask for the Postal Inspector's notes, as those notes are the foundation for discipline. The proper remedy to ask for when Article 17, Section 3, rights and Weingarten Rights have been violated, or when Postal Inspectors refuse the union access to their notes or refuse to be interviewed is: "The employee is to be made whole; reinstated; completely exonerated, and the matter is to be expunged from the employee's file or records."

Remember, "Rights are like muscles, the only rights you have are the rights you exercise."



**REMEMBER OUR TROOPS
THEY FIGHT OVERSEAS
SO THAT YOU AND YOUR
FAMILIES MAY LIVE IN
PEACE HERE AT HOME**

"THE MAIL CALL" BRANCH 2462, NALC

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Branch Meeting Minutes

February 3, 2004

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 CALVIN BROOKINS at 6:35 p.m. The Pledge of Allegiance was led by SGT-AT-ARMS ASKEW
MOMENT OF SILENCE--In memory of JAN ANDERSON, Active Carrier Sherman Oaks Station.

ROLL CALL OF OFFICERS

PRESENT--BROOKINS, BOCEK, SEYFRIED, JOHNSON, HENRY,JACKSON, MULLINAX, ASKEW, DOLABSON, T. HALL

ABSENT--McCLINTON

MINUTES ACCEPTED AS PRINTED IN MAILCALL

CORRESPONDENCE READ

APPLICATION FOR MEMBERSHIP--NONE

BILLS READ--MOTION TO PAY M/S/C

COMMITTEE REPORTS

AUDIT--TRUSTEES Audit was on Jan 22nd. all went well except for Picnic account which will be done at a later date.

SAFETY & HEALTH There will be mandatory stand-ups given at all stations regarding SARS.

RETIREEES 6 present tonight. The Retiree Luncheon was a success. ROBERT KURZALS received his GOLD CARD, and TERRY BEAUVAIS and ROGER ASKEW received their Retiree Pins. The event came in \$ 168.84 under budget with about 96 in attendance. On the Sick List we have MONTY MOORMAN, ODIL SABBE, DAVE WALLACE, RAY KELWIN and IRWIN SCHNYDER.

MBA--T. HALL No Report

HBR--DOLABSON No Report

EDITOR--SEYFRIED No Report

DISTRICT--McCLINTON Anyone interested in working at the polls for Primary Election contact the Union Office for details. Van Nuys Main and Tarzana will soon have Passport sections, this should help those who need to get a passport. The sections will be open from 4 pm to 8 pm. Watch for more info. LA County Fed is asking that we support Prop R.

COLCPE \$ 582 currently in the fund

FINANCIAL SECRETARY REPORT---JOHNSON

TREASURERS REPORT--JOHNSON

VICE-PRESIDENT BOCEK Starting to plan for this years Picnic at Rancho San Antonio, watch for planning dates

PRESIDENT BROOKIN's State Convention will be held at the Riviera Resort & Racquet Club in Palm Springs on May 21 - 22, 2004. Spring COP will be held in St. Louis, still

not sure whether I will want to attend or not. Omega name badges for all Shop Stewards and Branch Officers have been order. Brother DAN RATHBONE (Retired) has graciously do-

nated the funds to cover these. Dont forget to Thank Dan the next time you buy uniforms. We are having some problems with the electrical wiring in the Branch office. We have contacted an electrician and will be looking into the problem. This will not effect us and we will be business as usual at the Office.

OLD BUSINESS

2004 BUDGET SUBMITTED

MOTION--Accept the budget as printed in the Mailcall M/S/C

MOTION--Item # 17 be accepted as printed in Mailcall M/S/C

MOTION--Item # 20 be accepted as printed in Mailcall M/S/C

MOTION--Item # 21 be accepted as printed in Mailcall M/S/C

MOTION--Item # 23 be accepted as printed in Mailcall M/S/C

MOTION--Item # 24 be accepted as printed in Mailcall M/S/C

MOTION--Item # 30 be accepted as printed in Mailcall M/S/C

MOTION--Item # 52 be accepted as printed in Mailcall M/S/C

DIVISION CALLED--YES--22, NO--6 MOTION

PASSES

EXECUTIVE BOARD MINUTES READ

NEW BUSINESS

MOTION--Branch renew the subscription to the Postal Record. Cost to the Branch \$ 20.00 M/S/C

MOTION--Branch pay any member who attends the Legislative Activists Training session at Branch 24 on Sunday Feb. 8, 2004 from 9 am to 2 pm, be paid \$ 50 for the entire day. M/S/C

MOTION--Branch hold an organizing evening at the Branch Office, at a date to be announced. Cost not to exceed \$ 300.00. M/S/C

MOTION--Branch renew the Officers Bond for \$ 35000.00 coverage. Cost to Branch \$ 240.00 M/S/C

MOTION--Branch renew the yearly Bulk Mailing Permit. Cost to the Branch \$ 150.00 M/S/C

MOTION--Branch pay any Delegate who attends the State Convention and qualifies for funds, no more than \$ 500.00. M/S/C

MOTION--Branch divide all remaining Convention Funds equally among the Delegates who qualify for National Convention funds and attends the National Convention. No Delegate shall receive more than \$ 1800.00 M/S/C

MOTION--Branch place a 1/4 page ad in the State Convention program. Cost to Branch \$ 100.00 M/S/C

UNDERLINED DENOTES UNANIMOUS VOTE

COLCPE DRAWING

\$ 5 TIA WILSON--SUN VALLEY

\$ 6 TED DeMAIRE--RETIREE--DONATED

\$ 7 TROY YOUNG--RETIREE

MEETING ADJOURNED 8:43 P.M.