

THE MAIL CALL



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VICE PRESIDENT'S REPORT By Art Bocek

Maximum Hours Allowed, Sect. 432.1 ELM

Except as designated in labor agreements for bargaining unit employees or in emergency situations as determined by the Postmaster General (or designee), employees may not be required to work more than 12 hours in 1 service day. In addition, the total hours of daily service, including scheduled workhours, overtime, and mealtime, may not be extended over a period longer than 12 consecutive hours. Postmasters and exempt employees are excluded.

"Merry Christmas, Merry Christmas," "Ho Ho Ho!" Wait a minute, we just finished celebrating Halloween. Now that route inspections and adjustments are in place, why are letter carriers in Van Nuys singing "Christmas Carole's?" Well, by the way management is working carriers in excess of 12 hours in violation of the ELM as cited above, and passing out "Penalty OT" just like regular candy overtime, carriers believe "Christmas" has come early this year.

Third Party Claims/OWCP

Letter carriers sometime sustain injuries in the performance of their duties under circumstances, which place a legal liability on a person or persons other than the United States Postal Service to pay damages. The person or persons responsible for the injury to the employee is generally referred to as a "third party". The term "person or persons other than the United States Postal Service" means someone other than the employing agency or the United States Government. Thus, a third party may be a private citizen or can even be another Federal employee, including (on rare occasions) a co-worker of the injured employee. These types of "third party" claims may include vehicle accidents, fights, falls on a customer's property, etc...

When an employee is injured, as a result of a third party's action, the employee can file a claim or suit against the third party or the third party's insurance company. This claim will be for damages resulting from the injury. Damages can include medical expenses, lost wages, property damage, pain and suffering, etc...

Under the Federal Employees' Compensation Act (FECA), when an injured employee, who is entitled to compensation for the injury, recovers money or other property as a result of a suit or settlement against a third party, the injured employee has an obligation to refund, to the United States Postal Service, the compensation that has been paid (COP is excluded from the amount that must be refunded). If the injured employee recovers more than what has been paid in compensation and medical expenses, he or she is said to have

a surplus. The employee's entitlement to future compensation payable for the same injury will be a credit toward the surplus and no additional compensation will be paid until the surplus is absorbed.

The United States Postal Service has an interest in recovering compensation when one of its workers suffers a job-related injury that was caused by a third party, so it is imperative that you contact the union office when you have been injured in order to protect your rights especially in a "Third Party Claim."

Temporary Disability

FECA provides compensation benefits to federal employees for temporary disability due to employment-related injury or disease. The injured employee is entitled to continuation of pay (COP) from the employing agency for up to 45 days of disability. If the disability continues for more than 45 days, compensation for lost wages is payable after a three-day waiting period in a non-paid status. No waiting period is required, however, if the disability causing the wage loss lasts longer than 14 days from the time compensation begins. The injured employee also has the option of using sick leave if it is to his or her benefit. COP does not apply to occupational disease or illness cases; compensation for lost wages is payable after an initial three-day waiting period in non-paid status. If the disability exceeds 14 days from the time compensation begins, no waiting period is required.

Permanent Disability

FECA provides compensation benefits based on loss of earnings capacity and schedule awards for the loss or loss of use of specified members, organs, and functions of the body when there are permanent effects of a job-related injury.

Disability Compensation Payout

If the employee has no dependents, compensation is generally payable at the rate of two-thirds of pre-disability gross wages tax-free; if the employee has one or more dependents, compensation is payable at the rate of three-fourths of pre-disability gross wages, tax-free.

**Remember, "Right's are like muscles,
use them or lose them."**

IN MEMORY OF
BILL LOLL
RETIREE
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 NIGHT OF 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 to the goals of the NALC, permission is granted to copy and/or use any material in this publication with our best wishes.

Health Benefit Seminar Report

by
JANETTE DOLABSON, HBR

Dear Union Brothers and Sisters, Beginning November 14th and continuing through December 12th, 2005 it will be Open Season. Open Season is the time of year that you may choose a Health Plan or change the one you have now to another. I would like to take this opportunity to tell you about our Union Health Plan. Companies are cutting Health Benefits. You hear about it more and more. We have over 20% of this country that has no health benefits. Our rising costs are there to cover the health benefit costs of these people. This is your plan. Its for you as letter carriers and you should support it. There simply is no other plan, benefit by benefit, that outshines this plan. Look beyond deductibles. HMO's are limited. You have to go to their doctors. Where is your protection when it comes to second opinions? Referrals? You don't need referrals with a PPO. A PPO is a Preferred Provider Organization. The PPO network for our plan is through First Health go to who you want to when you want to. If the doctor is not within the network you would pay standard benefits rather than the negotiated lower benefits costs of those within the network. With freedom comes liberation and the security of knowing that second opinion takes on into consideration your health. In 2006 the cost of the NALC Health Benefit Plan will be: Postal- Bi-Weekly Premium - Self only \$37.97 (+\$3.32 from last year).- Family \$59.97 (+6.42 from last year). Annuity- Monthly Premium - Self only \$136.71 (+10.37 from last year). -Family \$251.64 (+20.89 from last year). Here are some of the ways the plan has changed for the 2006 year. One of the biggest and best changes is that now you will pay nothing for covered outpatient lab services performed by Quest diagnostics. Previously you would have paid 15%. The plan now covers abdominal aortic aneurysm screening for men ages 65 through 75 with smoking history. The plan now pays a maximum of \$135.00 per day up to 50 days in a calendar year for nursing services. The plan now coordinates benefits with Medicare Part D. The NALC Health Plan's prescription drug program is better than what you would get if you signed up for the Medicare part D program. You don't have to get your prescriptions through a retail vendor and you can get a 90 day supply rather than just a 30 day supply. There is no penalty if you don't sign up for Medicare part D. The Prescription Drug Program is through a company called Caremark. They have a 24/7 customer service center. You can request prescriptions by phone or on-line or you can go to a retail center. Caremark Provides Many ways of educating and managing the health of their members. One of the ways is called the CarePattern's Programs. They send educational Materials through the mail. They even have a nurse call and check to see how you are managing your health through this disease. Diseases such as Congestive Heart Failure, Diabetes, Coronary Artery Disease, Chronic Obstructive Pulmonary Disease, Asthma, and Peptic Ulcer Disease. CarePatterns is the only disease management program fully accredited in the Prescription Benefit Management industry. To locate a Doctor, Hospital, Specialist, Urgent Care Center, Ambulatory surgical Center, Freestanding Radiology Facility you can call 1-(800) 622-6252. Call 24/7 anyday of the week, or you can go to the NALC website www.nalc.org/departments/hbp The website will even give you driving directions. Health Resource Line connects our members to First Health's professional nursing staff, 24/7, 365 days a year. Licensed nurses will answer your questions, direct you to the appropriate care and find an in-network doctor to address your concerns.

(Continued on Pg 4)

ATTENDANCE CHART BRANCH MEETINGS

MONTH	J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N
MAIN OFFICE	1	2	1	3	3	2	2	1	2	1	
ENCINO	3	7	6	6	6	4	6	5	6	6	
CIVIC CENTER	4	5	3	3	2	3	3	2	3	2	
PANORAMA CITY	1	3	2	3	2	2	1	3	3	3	
SHERMAN OAKS	4	5	6	8	4	3	4	3	5	3	
SUN VALLEY	1	1	2	1	1	2	3	1	1	1	
TARZANA	1	2	1	1	1	2	2	1	1	1	
RETIREE'S	4	5	4	6	4	4	4	4	5	6	
TOTAL	19	30	25	31	23	22	25	20	26	23	

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

**NEXT MEETING
6:30 PM**

**JANUARY
3rd
"2006"**

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

January 3, 2005

**BRANCH OFFICE.....818-786-8505
O P C PERSONNEL OFFICE.....818-374-5600
RETIREMENT PERSONNEL.....661-775-7030**

"RETIREE CORNER"

Our Breakfast Meeting will be held at Hart's Restaurant, (Corner of Saticoy and Balboa). It will begin at 09:00 AM. The next date will be November 26, 2005 (4th Saturday). So, please mark your calendar.....We hope to see you there.

Thank You

Frank Brash

The Human Example – Harry Hurst
(Excerpted)
A Memorial to a Man Who Trained Generations of Letter
Carriers
by
Theodore Dent

(Needing a job and after moving and being separated from family and friends, I signed on at Van Nuys Post Office as a letter carrier)

Monday, March 30, 1964, eight o'clock a.m. I looked at the wooden sign on the red brick building, "7775 Kester Avenue", checked to ensure that the address was the same as the address on my report notice, knocked on the door and waited.

Patiently!

After several minutes, I knocked on the door a second time, then a third time, and after an interminable wait, an old man of about fifty appeared, stretched across what seemed like half the building from where he sat on a stool. He spoke with what seemed like a slow Gabby Hayes's voice but in a sporadic baritone.

"May I help ya?"

"I was told to report here."

"Yeah? Well, everyone uses the back door... Wait, here's Vern, the carriers supervisor."

"Hello, Theodore Dent? You're late!"

Verlin Sively had a white shirt and tie which made him even more intimidating.

"Sorry, I got lost."

"Lost? Hope you can deliver on the right street. I want you to train with Harry Hurst this first week.

I looked into Harry Hurst's calm eyes as he said,

"Theodore? Is it OK if I call you Ted?"

"That's OK, Mr. Hurst."

"Just call me Harry. Everybody does."

"Just wait here, I have to go check the redis and get my accountables and keys. Any questions?"

"Yeah, what're redis and accountables?"

"Well, I'll explain all that later. Any other questions?"

"Yeah. Did the clerks put all that mail in this cabinet for you?"

"Nope. I've been casing for two hours to get the mail ready for delivery."

I think I had easily set the record for stupid actions and questions in the first five minutes of a job. I watched as Harry pulled down the letters from his case, wrapping them with twine and cutting the twine without a knife, but with a swift, carefully-learned maneuver that probably is unknown except to those over sixty, replaced with the much faster, but not as aesthetic, rubber bands. We pushed the cart from under his case with all of his mail and parcels, and an extra satchel for me. Not all of the mail fit into the trunk of his car, and as I rode to his route in West Van Nuys, and tried to keep the parcels in the back seat, I listened to the first lessons in carrier philosophy which Harry presented in his slow drawl.

"You know, this job is more than just a job. We create an image of the federal government in the community. We need to be as perfect as possible."

Reaching our starting point, and as Harry loaded his satchel from the trunk of his car, we watched as a LAPD motorcycle cop sped by.

"Now, that's what I mean," Harry said. "It's OK to smoke a cigarette, but it shows a certain kind of unprofessionalism when a cop smokes on the job. And we want to look professional."

I quickly put my almost-lit-cigarette back in the box before Harry could see it.

Putting his leather satchel, which looked like it had been stolen from Benjamin Franklin, over his left shoulder, Harry directed me with,

"Now, I just want you to try to stay with me while I deliver this block."

Sometime later when other carriers told me that they called Harry, "Harry, the Horse" I didn't understand why they didn't call him "Harry, the Hollywood Park Horse". Keeping up with him was difficult even by slipping between hedges and by dodging sprinkler heads, lawn decorations, and cracked sidewalks.

As we returned to his car after finishing the first Park and Loop section, Harry informed me that,

"Well, we're supposed to stay on the sidewalks, but

"We don't make much money, but we have a lot o'

Listening and resting, I thought, if only I can be successful! I had almost got my breath back when Harry continued,

"I'm gonna let you deliver this street alone. I just wanna tell you to be careful about putting your hands near the mail slot in the doors. Some of these little pooches can be vicious."

I heeded his advice and brought a nearly empty satchel and, unbelievably, my ten fingers back to the car. Harry was already there, having delivered two streets to my one. He leaned on the car with a countenance of cheerfulness despite the cloudiness which had developed. As the first drops fell, Harry asked me,

"Where's your rain gear?"

"I didn't bring any."

I thought to myself, "So this will be my career as a mailman: mistakes, ignorance, no speed, lack of preparation - two hours and hit the road."

However, Harry was ready.

"Well, you gotta be prepared for everything to be a carrier. I've got a raincoat and a helmet. Which one do you want?"

I thought to myself, "He can't be serious. How can I take someone's rain gear?"

Harry repeated the request, "Come on. You'll have to choose one or the other."

I was speechless. Here I was, the guest of a man the same age as my father, treating me better than even my father had.

"Well, you take the raincoat. I can stay pretty dry with just the helmet. Come on. Put it on. Put the flap of the raincoat over the satchel, or you can use the flap in the satchel also to keep the mail dry if it really starts to come down. You'll be alright."

Harry was right. I strode forward, keeping the mail dry, the patrons happy, and letting whatever came, just roll over me and off me. That day I learned that in Van Nuys, California there was a human named Harry Hurst who set an example for me of how to be a letter carrier and how I could give of myself, have faith in others, and be rewarded with knowing that I had done even more than just the right thing.

Who wouldn't want to spend a career with family members who would give more than they would possibly receive?

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BRANCH 2462, NALC
Steve Seyfried, Editor
6910 Hayvenhurst Ave., # 101
Van Nuys, CA 91406

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Branch Meeting Minutes
November 1, 2005

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 VICE PRESIDENT ART BOCEK at 6:37 p.m. The Pledge of Allegiance was led by SGT. AT ARMS ASKEW
MOMENT OF SILENCE--BILL LOLL Retired Carrier and all the men and women who have sacrificed there lives in the defense of our country.

ROLL CALL OF OFFICERS

PRESENT--BOCEK, SEYFRIED, JOHNSON, McCLINTON, MULLINAX, JACKSON, L. DOLABSON, ASKEW, J. DOLABSON, ENZ

ABSENT--BROOKINS

MINUTES ACCEPTED AS PRINTED IN MAILCALL
CORRESPONDENCE READ
APPLICATION FOR MEMBERSHIP

FLORENCIO GUERRA

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

TRUSTEES Budget meeting will be on January 5, 2006 and the Audit will be held at a later date to be announced.

SAFETY & HEALTH Safety is still # 1 priority. However Safety meeting does not seem to be as big, since the last 2 meetings have been canceled.

RETIREEES--BRASH 6 present tonight. The Retiree Luncheon was a success. 71 attended. The final cost was \$ 1557.83, 692.17 under budget.

MBA--ENZ No Report
HBR--DOLABSON Report in Mailcall
COLCPE--ASKEW \$ 578.00 in the fund

FINANCIAL SECRETARY REPORT--NONE GIVEN

TREASURERS REPORT--McCLINTON

PRESIDENT BROOKIN's Calendars have arrived they are being passed out. Ray Kreyer award winner was announced at the Retiree Luncheon TIA WILSON was the winner.

OLD BUSINESS--NONE

EXECUTIVE BOARD MINUTES READ

NEW BUSINESS

MOTION--Branch renew the lease on the
Branch Office for a period of 3 years
M/S/C

MOTION--Executive Board be given the authority
to conduct the business of the Branch between
November 2, 2005 thru January 3, 2006
M/S/C

MOTION--Branch donate \$ 100.00 to the
North Valley Caring Services and United
Methodist Church for their Thanksgiving
Holiday dinner

M/S/C
MOTION--Branch donate \$ 100.00 to the
Salvation Army for Thanksgiving Dinner

M/S/C
MOTION--Branch donate \$ 100.00 to the
Salvation Army for Christmas Dinner

M/S/C
UNDERLINED DENOTES UNANIMOUS VOTE

COLCPE DRAWING

\$ 5 RICHARD MORENO--SHERMAN OAKS--DONATED
\$ 5 TED DeMAIRE--RETIREE
\$ 7 FRANK BRASH--RETIREE

MEETING ADJOURNED 7:36 P.M.

HBR REPORT

(Continued from Pg 2)

United Behavioral Health, Mental Health/Substance abuse Benefits will help members with issues, such as, Stress, Depression, Eating disorders, Schizophrenia, Mood disorders, Anxiety, Mental disorders, Physical abuse, Coping with grief/loss, Anger management, and Alcohol/drug Dependency. For information on this go to www.liveandworkwell.com. One of the greatest benefits you have with this plan is me. I am your personal representative. No other federal plan offers that. If you need help, I am here for you. If you want me to represent you with First Health make sure that I am on your HIPAA form authorizing me access to your information. That is the required privacy form you must fill out at your health facilities and health plans. Call me at (661) 373-2224. This is how you enroll in the plan. If you have access to PostalEASE through the Employee Web on the internet or through an Employee self-service Kiosk, you can enroll in the NALC Health Benefit Plan by following the screen instructions. Otherwise, call PostalEASE at 1(877)-4PS-EASE (1-800-477-3273). Just follow the prompts. Enter your Employee ID, your USPS PIN, and other required information. Make sure you get a confirmation number and write it down. If you don't get one your enrollment isn't complete. If you have any questions for me, please do not hesitate to call me. If I don't know the answer I will find it out for you. I hope you will take the time and consider this Health Plan. You will be proud of it, as I am. I will be writing more about it in next months mail call. If you have suggestions for me on issues to cover I would certainly welcome them. Thanks for your time.