

PRESIDENT'S REPORT

By Calvin Brookins

New Contract

By now you all know that we have a tentative agreement on a new contract. Shortly after last month MailCall went to print we received word that a tentative agreement had been reached. While our national leaders were preparing to go to arbitration, they were also continuing to talk to the other side in an effort to reach an agreement that could be sent out for ratification.

The NALC reached a tentative agreement with the Postal Service on a new five year National Agreement covering all 217,505 active city letter carriers in the country. The settlement calls for general wage increases of 8.85 percent over the term of the agreement, along with nine cost-of-living adjustments.

The ballots and agreement were placed in the mail stream beginning August 6, to the rank and file membership for a ratification vote. All active members of the NALC in good standing as of April 13, 2007, will get the opportunity to vote on this new contract. Your ballot containing your vote must be received by the ballot committee by 11:59 p.m. on August 27, 2007.

Everyone that I have talked to seems to be overwhelmingly in favor of this new agreement, the only concern that I have heard is the percentage increase that the employee will have to pay over the life of the contract. But when you look at what is happening in the public sector with other union contracts I believe we are getting the best deal in this area.

A complete copy of the tentative National Agreement, including all Memorandum of Understanding's and related documents, will be sent to every active member with the ballot. A ratification vote will be announced as soon as possible. If the contract is ratified, a National Training Conference on implementing its terms will be held.

If you are eligible to vote on the tentative agreement and have not received a ballot by August 14, 2007, contact the union office or see your shop steward immediately. We will then contact the NALC Headquarters at (202) 393-4695, ext 836, no later than August 20, 2007 we would need to provide the NALC with your name, social security number, address, and branch number. A ballot will be mailed as soon as the member's eligibility is verified.

Under the terms of the proposed contract all city letter carriers would receive five general wage increases over the life of the contract, each calculated as a percentage of the basic salaries in effect at the end of the 2001-2006 National Agreement. The increases are as follows:

- 1.4 percent retroactive to November 25, 2006.
- 1.8 percent in November 24, 2007
- 1.9 percent in November 22, 2008
- 1.9 percent in November 21, 2009
- 1.85 percent in November 20, 2010

Since the agreed upon date for the first general wage hike has already passed, the increase would be paid retroactively to November 25, 2006. A date for issuing payments for full back pay including for overtime and other premium pay hours will be announced in the future, pending ratification. Only carriers in a pay status during the pay period immediately preceding the effective date of such payments will be eligible for back pay.

Under this agreement, the average letter carrier salary would increase \$4,200 over the life of the contract from wage increases only, this do not include any COLA's.

COLA's

This tentative agreement makes no changes to the formula for calculating semi-annual cost-of-living adjustments, but sets the May 2007 Consumer Price Index (CPI-W) as the base month index for future COLA payments. In lieu of the COLA that would have accrued under the formula from July 2006 and May 2007, the agreement calls for a one time cash payment of \$686.00. If this contract is ratified by the membership, it will provide for a total of nine COLA increases over the term of the 2006-2011 National Agreement.

The cost-of-living adjustment payments will depend on actual changes in the CPI-W over the next four years. The **estimated** cost-of-living adjustments is \$2,992 by the end of the contract, this is assuming that an inflation rate of at least 2.2 percent takes place. During the last contract, letter carriers received \$3,556.00 in COLA increases over a five year contract. When you combine the general wage increases and the COLA's over the life of the contract that adds up to and estimated \$7,192.00 raise over the life of this contract. That's over \$7,000.00 more per year than you are currently making.

(Continued on Page 2)

Wage Increases

"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.

Calvin Brookins

(Continued from Page 1)

Retirees Retroactive Pay

A report in the July 13, 2007, NALC Bulletin incorrectly stated that letter carriers who retired after the first general wage increase under the new contract (effective November 25, 2006) would not be eligible for retroactive back pay. The article on the tentative agreement stated: "Only carriers in a pay status during the pay period immediately preceding the effective date of such retroactive payments will be eligible for back pay."

In fact, letter carriers who retired after November 25, 2006 will receive full back pay for work performed after that date until their date of retirement. Their annuities will also be adjusted accordingly since the November 2006 general wage hike of 1.4% will increase their high three average salary and therefore their monthly annuities.

TE's/Casuals

The contract will also end the use of casuals in the letter carrier craft. They will be replaced with bargaining unit Transitional Employees. The Postal Service has agreed to convert all existing casuals into TE's within 90 days of the date of ratification, providing them coverage under the NALC contract and an immediate \$6.00 an hour wage increase. We hope that as these new employees come under our wing they will join the NALC to enjoy all of the benefits of membership in this union and to participate in the many activities of NALC branches.

I strongly urge every member of Branch 2462 to approve this contract by checking "I Accept". I believe that it is a good contract that benefits every letter carrier and rewards letter carriers for their contributions to the success of the Postal Service.

HEALTH BENEFIT NEWS !

by

HBR Janette Dolabson

Union Brothers and Sisters,

Nothing is more personal and private than your health information. The NALC Health Benefit Plan now gives you the ability to create your own individual Personal Health Record from their secure internet site, <https://nalc.org/depart/hpb>. Within this website, members can create their own complete and comprehensive PHR containing information on allergies, current medications, medical history, names and addresses of facilities and providers, and much more and its all password protected and accessible only by you or individuals you allow. Members and spouses can also create individual Personal Health Records for their children under the age of 18. The PHR may include information that a physician may not have like dietary and exercise habits and records of glucose or blood pressure readings.

ATTENDANCE CHART BRANCH MEETINGS

MONTH	J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N
MAIN OFFICE	1	1	1	1	1	0	1	2			
ENCINO	5	6	5	5	5	6	4	5			
CIVIC CENTER	0	1	1	1	1	1	1	2			
PANORAMA CITY	1	10	6	3	10	3	3	7			
SHERMAN OAKS	3	9	5	3	6	4	5	6			
SUN VALLEY	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1			
TARZANA	1	2	3	2	2	2	1	4			
RETIREE'S	4	5	4	4	2	5	7	6			
TOTAL	16	35	26	20	28	22	23	33			

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

NEXT MEETING

*****6:30 PM*****

**SEPTEMBER
4th
"2007"**

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

Sept 4, 2007

**BRANCH OFFICE.....818-786-8505
O P C PERSONNEL OFFICE.....818-374-5600
E-Mail.....NALCBRANCH2462@sbcglobal.net**

"RETIREE CORNER"

Our Free Breakfast Meeting will be held at Denny's Restaurant, Corner of De Celis and Sherman Way. It will begin at 09:00 AM. The next 2 dates will be September 22, 2007 and Oct 27th (4th Saturday) We hope to see you there.

Thank
You
Frank Brach

VICE PRESIDENTS REPORT

Art Bocek

Santa Anita "Day at the Races" Picnic

Well, by now you already have heard that this year's picnic will be on Sunday, October 21, 2007 at "Santa Anita Race Track. There will be carnival games, Ferris wheel, and a train ride for all and everyone to enjoy in the general infield area. In Branch 2462's private area there will be a moon bounce, candy, bingo, and door (member's only) prizes for all who are in attendance. There will be plenty of bingo games for those who are less fortunate with the feeding of the "ponies." The reason for the charging of a fee for those who will be in attendance is because both Branch 2462 and Santa Anita Race Track need to have an actual and accurate count of how many people will be in attendance in order for Santa Anita race Track to plan the picnic event. Branch Member's will pay \$10.00, spouse or (1) in lieu of \$10.00, Children 4-17 \$5.00, 3and under free, Adult Guest \$26.00. Member's "only" who attend will have "their" \$10.00 returned at the picnic event. Retiree's who wish to attend, need to call either the union office (818) 786-8505 or Frank Brash to order tickets. Paid adult tickets will receive both a program and parking pass. Signup sheets will be passed out at the station shortly after Labor Day Holiday.

Postal Inspectors/ Your Rights

Letter Carriers are all too frequently being called into the office by either a Postal Inspector (PI) or Office Inspector General (OIG) for an investigatory interview without union representation. Because of this exact 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 PI's or OIG's 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 "Lifer's," here are some questions and answers **you need to know.**

Who are the PI's or OIG? What do both the PI's or OIG's primary mission? What rights do letter carriers have? Postal Inspectors are employees of USPS, OIG's are neither craft nor managements, but a separate part of the USPS or Office of Inspector General. What do they do? They both investigate mail fraud, mail theft, and they also investigate employees. They both monitor the day-to-day operations of the USPS. 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 either PI's or OIG's? 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. Neither the PI's or OIG's do not determine the penalties. Steward have the right to interview both PI's or OIG's, may cross examine, ask for the PI's or OIG's notes, for 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 either PI's or OIG's 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."

"THE MAIL CALL" BRANCH 2462, NALC

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

Address Service Requested

Branch Meeting Minutes

Aug 7, 2007

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 BROOKINS at 6:31 p.m. The Pledge of Allegiance was led by SGT-AT-ARMS ROGER ASKEW

MOMENT OF SILENCE—In Memory of all members who have passed this year.

ROLL CALL OF OFFICERS

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

ABSENT—NONE

MINUTES ACCEPTED AS PRINTED IN MAIL CALL

APPLICATION FOR MEMBERSHIP—NONE

BILLS READ—MOTION TO PAY M/S/C

COMMITTEE REPORTS

TRUSTEES Audit was held and all books & items were in order.

SAFETY & HEALTH No Report

RETIREES 6 retiree's present tonight.

Date annual Retiree Luncheon has been changed to October 14, 2007. It will be held at Encino Glen Restaurant. No host bar at 1:00 pm followed by lunch at 2 pm. Cost to attend will again be \$ 5.00. Contact Frank Brash for tickets and further info.

MBA--ENZ Currently updating info

FOOD DRIVE—J DOLABSON No Report

HBR--J DOLABSON Article will be in MailCall

COLCPE \$ 550 currently in the fund

GIMME 5--JACKSON No Report

EDITOR SEYFRIED No Report

FINANCIAL REPORT—JOHNSON

TREASURERS REPORT—JOHNSON

MOTION—Accept Financial reports as read M/S/C

VICE-PRESIDENT BOCEK Recommend that the annual Picnic be held at Santa Anita Race Track on October, 21, 2007.

MOTION—Accept the recommendation for Picnic M/S/C

PRESIDENT BROOKIN Gave his report on latest info regarding contract and other important items which he will cover in his article in the MailCall.

OLD BUSINESS

BY-LAWS

MOTION—Branch accept the bylaw change for ART VII, Sec 1 as published in the MailCall M/S/C

MOTION—Branch accept the bylaw change for

ART XII, Sec 3 as published in the MailCall M/S/C

MOTION—Branch accept the bylaw change for ART X, Sec 4(A) as published in the MailCall M/S/C

MOTION—Branch accept the bylaw change for ART XII, Sec 7 as published in the MailCall M/S/C

MOTION—Branch accept the bylaw change for ART XII, Sec 4 as published in the MailCall M/S/C

MOTION—Branch accept the bylaw change for ART XII, Sec 4 as published in the MailCall M/S/C

MOTION—Branch accept the bylaw change for ART XII, Sec 4 as published in the MailCall M/S/C

EXECUTIVE BOARD MINUTES READ

NEW BUSINESS

MOTION—Branch renew the liability insurance policy with State Farm. Cost to Branch \$ 950.00 M/S/C

UNDERLINED DENOTES UNANIMOUS VOTE

GOOD OF THE ASSOCIATION

JOHN BEAUMONT, President of the State Association gave a brief update on what is happening in the union on a State and National level.

SPECIAL AWARDS

SAUD SIDDIQUI, son of Sherman Oaks Carrier MOHAMMED SIDDIQUI, was presented with the State Associations SAXEMEYER SCHOLARSHIP in the amount of \$ 1250.00. Congratulations to Saud, he plans on attending USC in the fall. RICHARD REIMER, JACK WINKEL & BOB JOHNSON were presented with 25 year NALC pins.

COLCPE DRAWING

\$ 5 JEFF JACKSON—PANORAMA CITY--DONATED

\$ 5 MAKAYLA DOLABSON—GUEST

\$ 5 MAKAYLA DOLABSON—GUEST—DONATED

\$ 11 MAKAYLA DOLABSON—GUEST--DONATED

MEETING ADJOURNED 8:35 PM