

## PRESIDENT'S REPORT By Calvin Brookins

### Economy and the Postal Service

The American economy faces some challenging times and because of the worsening economy the Postal Service will be affected as well. On Friday October 3, 2008, I attended a meeting at the Sierra Coastal District offices alone with all of the other NALC Branch Presidents. We were briefed on the current financial situation of the Postal Service. The Postal Service is expected to lose 2.5 Billion dollars this Fiscal Year. In the month of August the Postal Service lost one billion dollars that is a lot of money to lose at any time let alone in one month. The Postal Service faces these financial losses because of the constant drop in mail volume. The declining mail volume presents a challenge that the Postal service is facing for the first time in the history of the USPS. We have also been made aware that the business mailers that do a lot of advertising through the mail have also started to make plans to exit the mail stream as well and go to the internet. They had plans to do this over the next ten years, but that effort will be accelerated to less than ten years.

USPS Headquarters has instructed this district to eliminate 511,000 hours in function 2, which is the carrier craft. The Postal Service expect mail volume to continue to decline according to their budget forecast the Postal Service will lose nine million pieces of mail this year. In order for the Postal Service in this district to eliminate 511,000 they will need to get the overtime down to 5.5 percent and lose 132 routes. Management believes that in order to achieve this they need to inspect about 2000 routes, that mean that there may be full blown route inspections between January and May of 2009 and possibly in the fall of 2009. The Postal Service may also cut management positions by 10 percent.

Another way that management plans to cut into that 511,000 hours is to go to what they are calling a Street Route Concept. This is a concept where one carrier will come in early say about 7:00 am or earlier if possible to case and pull down three routes. The goal would be to have the first route ready to go to the street at 8:30 am, another carrier will report for duty at 8:30 am perform a vehicle check, get their accountable mail and take that first route directly to the street.

The plan is to have the other route ready by 9:00 am and a second carrier will report at 9:00 am perform a vehicle

check, get their accountable mail and take the second route directly to the street. Then the carrier who came in early to case the first two routes will then go over and case his or her own route which will now have a reduced street time and take that route to the street for delivery. This all means that a carrier who is doing nothing but street delivery could find themselves on the street for anywhere from 7 to 7.50 hours. There is a possibility that all of these carriers may return from the street before their eight hours are completed. At that point they may perform duties such as casing standard mail or picking up mail from collection boxes.

That is a brief explanation of what the Street Route Concept is. This concept has not been discussed with the NALC at the national level and President Young has denounced such a concept, management will probably go ahead and do it anyway and it will quickly become a national level dispute. While the video on this concept that was released and stated that the full-time street concept will be introduced in 2009, district management have plans to attempt this in some of the offices that have been recently inspected and adjust some of those routes using the Street Route Concept.

The NALC will not accept any concept developed unilaterally by postal management outside the route inspection task force. President Young is urging all members to remain calm, the NALC is proceeding with the negotiations with the Postal Service through the task force. President Young has stated that if the Postal Service seeks to unilaterally implement any change in city route structure without the NALC consent the NALC will vigorously resist its introduction with every tool at its disposal.

The district also talked about changing some routes to what they are calling green routes. This is where they will take the vehicle off of a route that is close to the station in delivery points and use a bike to deliver that route. Basically the carrier will be riding a big tricycle with a box on the back of it. It will be interesting to see if all of the mail for that route will fit into this box on the back of this big tricycle. It cost the Postal Service \$6000.00 a year to operate a postal vehicle this green route may save money in that area.

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IN MEMORY OF

YOUNG CHANG  
ENCINO

"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.

by  
Janette Dolabson

## ATTENDANCE CHART BRANCH MEETINGS

MONTH	J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N
MAIN OFFICE	3	0	1	2	1	3	5	7	3	1	
ENCINO	4	5	5	5	2	5	5	5	4	4	
CIVIC CENTER	1	1	1	2	2	1	2	0	1	1	
PANORAMA CITY	3	3	3	2	3	2	3	3	3	4	
SHERMAN OAKS	4	3	9	4	6	4	6	2	6	5	
SUN VALLEY	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	3	1	1	
TARZANA	1	1	1	2	1	2	2	2	2	2	
RETIREE'S	6	6	5	5	5	5	5	4	4	5	
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>23</b>	<b>20</b>	<b>26</b>	<b>23</b>	<b>21</b>	<b>23</b>	<b>29</b>	<b>26</b>	<b>24</b>	<b>23</b>	

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

NEXT MEETING  
\*\*\*6:30 PM\*\*\*

NOVEMBER  
4th  
"2008"

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

Nov 4, 2008

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

### "RETIREE CORNER"

Our Breakfast Meeting will be held at Denny's Restaurant, (Corner of Sherman Way & DeCels). It will begin at 09:00 AM. The next 2 dates will be Oct. 25<sup>th</sup> & November 22, 2008 (4th Saturday) So, please mark your calendar.....We hope to see you there.

Thank  
You

Frank D...L

I went to a Health Benefit Seminar and would like to give you some information I picked up while there. I'll let Larry tell you about the plan changes but I learned a few things I was surprised to hear myself. Did you know that John McCain wants to tax our Health Benefit Plan? We already pay taxes on it. Did you know that CIGNA is more competitive in discounts than any other plan? Did you know that 1% of wealthy people in this country control more income than 50% of everyone else? Did you know that the Postal Service pays 83% of the medical Benefits for the NALC Health Benefit Plan? Did you know that \$437,000,000 a year can be saved if we all belonged to the same Health Plan. If every letter carrier was in this plan we would be able to structure most of the benefits towards the health needs specific to letter carriers like, knees, feet, shoulders, Carpel Tunnel etc. Our National President is dedicated to making this happen by our next contract. I urge you to take a look at the plan now and switch over. You will be glad you did. It is union owned and operated and not for profit. Unlike all the other plans offered to letter carriers. In 2009 you will only have to carry one card instead of two.

On the Political front, by the time you get this newspaper it will be election time. You can not sit back and let others decide for you who will be elected to run this country. VOTE!!!!

By now the picnic will be over. I am sure everyone would have had a good time. What I would like to say is, this branch has nearly 500 member, less than 75 members bothered to sign up for the picnic this year. It's a lot of work and money to put these events together for the membership and it's really discouraging to get such poor response from the members. Everyone had a great time last year at Santa Anita yet we have a poorer showing this year. Maybe it's the economy or the date, whatever the reason we are going to have to make a decision on whether to even have a picnic next year at all. Perhaps we will look into doing something different. If you have any suggestions please give me a call. 661 373-2224.

Pictured above is RALPH PETERSON, punching out for the last time at the Sherman Oaks Station. Congratulations to Ralph on his Retirement after 28 years of service. (Photo courtesy of Gloria Henry)

# PRESIDENT'S REPORT

(Continued from Page 1)

## Customer Connect

FYI - Customer Connect - Sierra Coastal District Customer Connect Lead Ranking Report as of September 15, 2008, moved up to # 22 in the nation at 974 leads YTD.

Customer Connect Revenue Ranking Report is at # 22 nationally, at \$5,213,666 in sales YTD.

Customer Connect Carrier Participation Ranking Report shows our district ranks 59th in the nation with YTD carrier participation at 29.47% the YTD.

Congratulations to Peter Axt from the Encino station on his recent customer connect Priority Mail lead for \$13,000.00

## COLA

No accumulation yet for fourth COLA.

The accumulation towards the 2009 retiree COLA declined from 6.2 percent to 6.0 percent based on the August CPI-W.

The COLA for Federal Employees Compensation Act (FECA) beneficiaries in the year 2009, stands at 4.6 percent based on the August data down from 5.1 percent in July.

## Ray Kreyer Award

There was a vote for the Ray Kreyer at this last Executive Board meeting and there is a recipient for the award and that will be announced at the Retirees Luncheon/Installation on October 19th. The nominees were Steve Seyfried, Larry Dolabson and Calvin Brookins. Again the award will be presented at the Retirees Luncheon/Installation to one of these individuals on October 19<sup>th</sup>.

## Early Out

Those of you who are eligible for the early out that is being offered by the Postal Service should receive an annuity estimate letter some time this month or in the near future. Then about a week later you should receive a letter formally issuing the offer and providing info on how to proceed.

## Health Benefit Update

By

Larry Dolabson

Well we just got back from the Health Benefit Seminar in Las Vegas and I am very excited about some of the new changes to the Health Plan this year. We are really going to put forth the effort to get 20,000 new enrollees this season and with these new changes the plan is very competitive. OPEN SEASON IS NOV.10<sup>TH</sup> - DEC.8<sup>TH</sup>. The cost for 2009 is \$32.71 for self and \$62.84 bi-weekly for family. The NALC Health

Benefit Plan is the Top rated FEHB Plan offered to federal employees. Here are some of the new changes.

You now pay only a \$15.00 co-pay for office visits rendered for both PPO providers and non PPO providers.

You now only pay \$15.00 for outpatient consultations for a PPO provider. You used to pay \$20.00.

You now pay 10% for covered services rendered by a PPO provider. It used to be 15%.

You now pay 25% for covered services rendered by non PPO physicians and other health care professionals. It used to be 30%.

The Plan no longer applies the PPO calendar year deductible to covered adult preventative care services rendered by a PPO provider.

You now pay nothing for adult immunizations and screenings by a PPO physician.

The Plan now covers a routine general health panel blood test, basic or comprehensive metabolic panel blood test, complete blood count, urinalysis, electrocardiogram, and chest x-ray for adults, one annually.

Routine annual mammograms for women 65 and older are now covered.

Annual routine physicals for camp, school, and sports are covered for kids 3-21.

You now pay only \$15.00 co-pay for physical, occupational, or speech therapy visits by a PPO provider up to 75 visits. It used to be \$20.00 and only 50 visits.

Hearing aids and related examination for neurosensory hearing loss, with a maximum payment of \$1000 per lifetime are now covered.

You now only pay a \$100.00 co-payment per admission for non maternity inpatient room and board and other hospital services and supplies in a PPO hospital. You previously paid 10% for other hospital services and supplies.

You now pay nothing for immobilization by casting of a sprain, strain or fracture and simple repair of a laceration within 72 hours.

You now can get up to a 90 supply of covered drugs and supplies at a local CVS/Caremark pharmacy and you pay applicable mail order co-payment.

The plan now covers prescription medications for smoking cessation

The plan covers dental care necessary repair sound natural teeth resulting from an accidental injury when treatment is obtained within 72 hours.

The plan offers a Weight Management Program that offers guidance and information to create an individual living plan that will lead to a healthy weight for life.

These are some of the changes to the plan. If you have any questions call me at 661 373-2223.

# "THE MAIL CALL"

## BRANCH 2462, NALC

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

NONPROFIT ORG.  
U.S. POSTAGE  
PAID  
VAN NUYS, CA  
PERMIT No. 314

Address Service Requested

### Branch Meeting Minutes October 7, 2008

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 6:35 p.m. The Pledge of Allegiance was led by SGT-AT-ARMS ROGER ASKEW

**MOMENT OF SILENCE**—In Memory of **YOUNG CHANG, Active Carrier at Encino Station**

#### ROLL CALL OF OFFICERS

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

**ABSENT**— NONE

**MINUTES ACCEPTED AS PRINTED IN MAIL CALL**

**CORRESPONDENCE READ**

**APPLICATION FOR MEMBERSHIP**—NONE

**BILLS READ**—**MOTION TO PAY** M/S/C

#### COMMITTEE REPORTS

**TRUSTEES** No Report  
**SAFETY & HEALTH** Watched video, on what can happen if you leave your Vehicle running while you exit.  
**RETIREES** 5 retiree's present tonight. Please note that Retiree Breakfast is being held on the 4<sup>th</sup> Saturday each month at DENNY'S RESTAURANT, corner of Sherman Way and DeCelis. Remember Retiree Luchon and Officer/Steward installation is Sunday, Oct. 19<sup>th</sup>, at 1 pm at Encino Glen Restaurant.

**MBA**—ENZ Waiting for forms.

**HBR**—L. DOLABSON Gave brief report on new changes in Health Plan. Showed HB video on the plan. Watch for my article in the Mailcall.

**MDA** \$ 223 currently in the fund

**FINANCIAL/TREASURERS REPORT**—JOHNSON

**MOTION**—Accept the Financial reports as read by Brother Johnson M/S/C

**VICE PRESIDENT DOLABSON** Annual Picnic will be held at Santa Anita Race Track on October 12, 2008. Branch 4006, of Canoga Park will be joining us this year

**PRESIDENT BROOKIN** Gave his report on latest important items which he will cover in his article in the MailCall.

**OLD BUSINESS**—NONE

**EXECUTIVE BOARD MINUTES READ**

**NEW BUSINESS**

**MOTION**—Branch cancel the December meeting and hold a Holiday party at a place and date to be announced

M/S/C

**MOTION**—Branch send the Financial Secretary And one other member, to the non-profit tax Seminar. Cost not to exceed \$ 525.00

M/S/C

**MOTION**—Branch renew the lease on the Union Office.

M/S/C

**MOTION**—Branch raise the mileage rate to \$ 0.585 per mile, to coincide with the NALC national

rate

M/S/C

**MOTION**—Branch donate \$ 50.00 to the North Valley Caring

Services

M/S/C

**MOTION**—Branch donate \$ 50.00 to United Ways, Turkeys and

Toys

M/S/C

**MOTION**—Branch donate \$ 50.00 to Special Olympics of Southern California

M/S/C

UNDERLINED = UNANOMOUS VOTE

GOOD OF THE ASSOCIATION

#### MDA DRAWING

\$ 5 TIA WILSON—SUN VALLEY

\$ 5 TIA WILSON—SUN VALLEY

\$ 10 FRANK BRASH--RETIREE

MEETING ADJOURNED 8:39 PM

