

## **PRESIDENT'S REPORT**

### **By Calvin Brookins**

#### **Contract Negotiations**

On August 18, 2011, the NALC and the USPS opened negotiations on a new collective bargaining agreement. The National Association of Letter Carriers promised to vigorously represent the country's most trusted federal employees and to defend the long-term viability of America's most trusted federal agency, the United States Postal Service, in negotiations for a new labor contract. NALC President Fredric V. Rolando called on Postmaster General Patrick Donahoe to bargain in good faith and to disavow the regressive and destructive path unveiled recently when the Postal Service unleashed a lobbying campaign to convince Congress to reduce postal services to the nation, to slash the postal workforce by 220,000 employees and to attack the collective-bargaining rights of America's hard-working letter carriers.

#### **USPS Bad Faith Bargaining**

In a press release President Rolando stated; "Despite the Postal Service's outrageous show of bad faith at the start of these negotiations, we are prepared to negotiate a fair, responsible and innovative labor agreement to reward our members and to position the Postal Service for a stronger and better future". As these negotiations opened they were overshadowed by the surprise pre-emptive attack by the USPS the week before. NALC President Fredric V. Rolando issued a statement denouncing Postmaster General Patrick Donahoe's latest "radical" legislative proposals; in his statement he stated the following;

Today, city letter carriers across the country received a mandatory stand-up talk from supervisors as part of a concerted campaign by top postal management to convince Congress to slash postal employees' health and pension benefits and override lay-off protection provisions in the postal unions' contracts. Just days before we formally open collective bargaining negotiations, the Postal Service has sent a clear message: It intends to use the financial crisis caused by the deep recession and the crushing congressional pre-funding mandates to strip postal employees of our bargaining rights. Although we are prepared to seriously bargain over any proposal, we will resist this blatant attempt to subvert and circumvent collective bargaining.

In addition to the stand-up talk, the Postal Service issued a press release to the media and distributed two "white papers" to congressional decision-makers. One paper, "Postal Service Health Benefits and Pension Programs," asks Congress to allow the USPS to set up its own health plan and pension plans outside the FEHBP and FERS/CSRS systems for all other federal employees. The other paper, "Workforce Optimization," takes the extraordinary step of asking Congress to void the lay-off protection provisions of the various postal labor contracts.

Although the stand-up talk claimed that the postal unions had been "briefed," the reality is quite different. The USPS developed their plans without any discussion or negotiation with NALC or any of the other unions. Not surprisingly, the health and pension proposals would dramatically cut employee benefits below those earned by other federal employees. **Let me be clear: "We would never agree to any benefit plan unilaterally designed by postal management"**.

#### **I issued the following statement to the press:**

The issues of lay-off protection and health benefits are specifically covered by our contract. Each of them has historically been covered in collective bargaining between NALC and USPS. The Congress of the United States does not engage in contract negotiations with unions and we do not believe they are about to do so.

Of course, pension benefits for federal employees, including postal employees, are set by law. But rather than advocating pie-in-the-sky proposals, we believe USPS and Congress should focus on pending legislation (H.R. 1351) that would allow the USPS to recover massive surpluses in its CSRS and FERS pension accounts. Under the bill, which has 181 co-sponsors from both parties, the surpluses would be used to cover the unfair burden of pre-funding future retiree health benefits a burden that no other company or agency bears and which accounts for 100 percent of the Postal Service's losses over the past four years.

Contract negotiations for NALC opened Thursday, August 18. USPS is free to bring these issues to the table. If they do so, we will bargain in good faith. These new legislative

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## ATTENDANCE CHART BRANCH MEETINGS

MONTH	J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N
MAIN OFFICE	2	2	5	3	2	1	2	2			
ENCINO	3	2	1	2	2	2	3	3			
CIVIC CENTER	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	1			
PANORAMA CITY	2	1	1	2	2	2	1	1			
SHERMAN OAKS	5	9	9	10	7	6	4	4			
SUN VALLEY	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	2			
TARZANA	2	2	3	2	2	1	2	2			
RETIREE'S	6	6	4	6	4	6	6	5			
TOTAL	23	25	26	28	22	21	21	20			

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

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

**OCTOBER**  
**4th**  
**"2011"**

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

**Oct 4, 2011**

**WEB PAGE.... WWW.NALCBRANCH2462.ORG**  
**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 breakfast will be on Oct 22, 2011 (4th Saturday) So, please mark your calendar....We hope to see you there.

Thank  
 You  
**Frank Brash**

**(Continued from Page 1)**

proposals constitute a transparent attempt to gut our benefits and reduce our bargaining rights without negotiations. Indeed, the USPS admits in the two white papers that if these radical proposals were to be put before an impartial interest arbitrator, the USPS would not likely prevail. It's time for postal management to negotiate; the time for unilateral legislative end-runs is over.

### Issa's Picket

On September 1, 2011, the NALC joined several other unions and the San Diego-Imperial Counties Labor Council to personally protest Rep. Darrell Issa's failure to represent working families and his continuing attacks to destroy the United States Postal Service. Since he took over as chair of the House Oversight and Government Reform Committee, one of Rep. Issa's main objectives has been to try to reduce the pay, benefits and collective-bargaining rights of postal employees.

His legislation is designed to eliminate thousands of middle-class positions from the current Postal Service workforce and to close thousands of community post offices across the nation. This could be avoided if Rep. Issa would agree to endorse and move forward on [H.R. 1351](#), a bill that would allow the USPS to use its pension surpluses to cover its pre-funding costs for future retiree health benefits, thereby resolving the immediate financial crisis without causing collateral damage. To date, the congressman seems to believe that the country would be better served by destroying the Postal Service instead of by saving it.

**Remember: "By the stroke of a pen Congress can take everything we have worked so hard for away"! What will it take for each and every member to hear these words and take action?**

**You have a representative in Congress contact them and urge them to co-sponsor H.R. 1351, and join us with automatic deduction for COLCPE and become an e-activist. The job you save could be your own.**

### HRSSC

Human Resources Shared Services Center (HRSSC) will begin processing all Family Medical Leave Act (FMLA) requests for all employees starting September 10, 2011. FMLA requests will continue to be handled in accordance with the policy outlined in the Employee Labor Relations Manual (ELM).

The FMLA packet will be updated to reflect a return address and fax option change to that of the HRSSC. An HRSSC Processing Specialist will now be the point of contact rather than an FMLA Coordinator.

The HRSSC staff will be available for case specific questions, Monday through Friday from 7:00 a.m. until 8:30 p.m. EST. More information can be found at: <http://blue.usps.gov/uspslaw/general/FMLACentral>

## **Proposed Change to By-Law # 1**

Proposed to amend Article VI, Section 1, which now reads:

Section 1. Shop Stewards shall be elected by the membership of their respective stations and elections shall take place at the stations by the members, at a time and place to be determined by the Election Committee.

PROPOSED TO READ:

Section 1. Shop Stewards shall be appointed by the President of the Branch for each station. The President, by virtue of the elected office shall be the Chief Steward. There shall be representation in accordance with the National Agreement.

If proposed By-Law change is adopted and approved by the National Committee of Laws the change will become effective on July 1, 2014.

Submitted by members in good standing:

JOHN BURTON  
JANETTE DOLABSON  
CALVIN BROOKINS  
ROBERT F. JOHNSON

## **Proposed Change to By-Law # 2**

Proposed to amend Article VI, Section 2, which now reads:

Section 2. Shop Stewards may be removed from office on petition of the majority of the members, in good standing, of the station represented.

PROPOSED TO READ:

Section 2. The President of the Branch may remove Shop Stewards. Shop Stewards may also be removed from office on petition of the majority of the members, in good standing, of the station represented.

If proposed By-Law change is adopted and approved by the National Committee of Laws the change will become effective on July 1, 2014.

Submitted by members in good standing:

JOHN BURTON  
JANETTE DOLABSON  
CALVIN BROOKINS  
ROBERT F. JOHNSON  
LARRY DOLABSON

## **Proposed Change to By-Law # 3**

Proposed to amend Article XII, Section 6 (A), which now reads:

Section 6 (A) There shall be set aside, in a Contingency Fund, Two Dollars (\$2.00) per active member per pay period.

PROPOSED TO READ:

Section 6 (A) There shall be set aside, in a Contingency Fund, One Dollar fifty cents (\$1.50) per active member per pay period.

If proposed by-law change is adopted and approved by the National Committee of Laws the change will become effective on the first of the month following approval.

Submitted by members in good standing:

JOHN BURTON  
JANETTE DOLABSON  
CALVIN BROOKINS  
ROBERT F. JOHNSON  
LARRY DOLABSON

## **Proposed Change to By-Law # 4**

Proposed to amend Article XII, Section 8 (A), which now reads:

Section 8 (A) The MBA Representative shall receive an amount equal to the Branch dues per month.

PROPOSED TO READ:

Section 8 (A) The MBA Representative shall receive an amount equal to the dues he or she pays per month.

If proposed by-law change is adopted and approved by the National Committee of Laws the change will become effective on the first of the month following approval.

Submitted by members in good standing:

JOHN BURTON  
JANETTE DOLABSON  
CALVIN BROOKINS  
ROBERT F. JOHNSON  
LARRY DOLABSON

## **Proposed Change to By-Law # 5**

Proposed to amend Article XII, Section 10, which now reads:

Section 10 One Hundred Dollars (\$100) will be given to the next of kin of any active and/or retired member in good standing. Retired members must have retired as Letter Carrier.

PROPOSED TO READ:

Section 10 Delete Section

If proposed by-law change is adopted and approved by the National Committee of Laws the change will become effective on the first of the month following approval.

Submitted by members in good standing:

JOHN BURTON  
JANETTE DOLABSON  
CALVIN BROOKINS  
ROBERT F. JOHNSON  
LARRY DOLABSON

## **Proposed Change to By-Law # 6**

Proposed to Add a new Article XII, Section 11, to read:

Section 11 Each month there shall be set aside in the Regular Saving Account Seven Hundred Fifty Dollars (\$750.00) to help offset the cost of the Branch Picnic, if need.

If proposed by-law change is adopted and approved by the National Committee of Laws the change will become effective on the first of the month following approval.

Submitted by members in good standing:

JOHN BURTON  
JANETTE DOLABSON  
CALVIN BROOKINS  
ROBERT F. JOHNSON  
LARRY DOLABSON

# "THE MAIL CALL" BRANCH 2462, NALC

**Steve Seyfried, Editor**

**6910 Hayvenhurst Ave., # 101  
Van Nuys, CA 91406**

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## **Branch Meeting Minutes**

**Sept 6 , 2011**

**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 6:45 p.m. The Pledge of Allegiance was led by Sgt-at-Arms ROGER ASKEW

**MOMENT OF SILENCE**—In Memory of all Military & those who lost their lives on 9/11/01

### **ROLL CALL OF OFFICERS**

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

**ABSENT**—JACKSON

**MINUTES ACCEPTED AS PRINTED IN MAIL CALL**

**CORRESPONDENCE READ**

**APPLICATION FOR MEMBERSHIP—NONE**

**BILLS READ—NONE**

### **COMMITTEE REPORTS**

**RETIREES** Retiree Luncheon will be on Sunday Oct. 23<sup>rd</sup>. at Encino Glen Restaurant.

**MDA FUND-ASKEW** Currently \$661.00 in fund

**LEGISLATION UPDATE-ASKEW** Remember HR 1351 we are in support of, HR 2309 we are opposed.

**HBR—L. DOLABSON** Looking forward to HBR Seminar in Las Vegas next month. Watch for further info.

**MDA--ANGER** Fill the Satchel Day is October 2nd. We expect to raise a lot more money through this program this year. LA GALAXY tickets available for Oct 16<sup>th</sup> Game. Bowl-a-thon will be November 6<sup>th</sup> at Matador Bowl

**MBA--ENZ** Just finished helping 2 members with paper work. Contact me if you need any help.

**FINANCIAL/TREASURERS REPORT—JOHNSON**

**MOTION—Accept Financial reports as read** M/S/C  
**VICE-PRESIDENT J. DOLABSON** Sign up sheets for Picnic are in the Stations. Shop Stewards will be handling tickets.

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

**BRANCH WISHED FRANK BRASH A VERY HAPPY 89<sup>TH</sup> BIRTHDAY. ALSO RAY KREYER AWARD NOMINATIONS WILL BE ACCEPTED & VOTED ON BY THE E-BOARD ON 9/29. ANYONE WISHING TO SUBMIT A MEMBER SHOULD DO SO BEFORE THEN**

### **MDA DRAWING**

\$ 4 CALVIN BROOKINS—CIVIC CENTER

\$ 5 TIA WILSON—SUN VALLEY--DONATED

Meeting Adjourned 8:21 PM

## **Janette Dolabson**

### **THE PROBLEM: WHY IS THE POSTAL SERVICE FACING A FINANCIAL CRISIS**

"The Postal Service has lost \$20 billion over the past four years (2007-2010) and it is fast approaching its \$15 billion debt limit. As a result, the USPS has announced that it will not be able to meet certain end of the fiscal year payments that are due in September and October – a \$ 5.5 billion payment to pre fund its future retiree health benefits and \$1.2 billion to pay the Department of Labor for workers' compensation costs. Although mail volume is falling, the Internet is not killing the Postal Service and neither is the weak economy. A huge Congressional mandate is killing the Postal Service. The Postal Service is in trouble because of a Bush era (2006) law that requires the USPS to massively pre fund the cost of retiree health benefits over the next 75 years in just 10 years' time. This cost covers not only current employees, but employees who have yet to be hired – and it is on top of the cost for health benefits for current retirees. No other company or agency in America is required to pre fund future retiree health benefits. Ten annual payments of about \$5.5 billion per year to fund future retiree health benefits were mandated in the postal reform law of 2006, beginning in 2007 just when the Great Recession caused mail volume and revenue to plummet. (The same law required an additional \$2.9 billion transfer in 2007, raising the total cost to \$8.4 billion that year. This additional cost was the escrow account set up by an earlier law, the CSRS funding reform law of 2003.) The \$20 billion in deficits over the past four years have been the direct result of the \$21 billion in pre funding payments dictated by the Postal Accountability and Enhancement Act of 2006. In the absence of this mandate, the USPS would have been moderately profitable over this period despite the worst recession in 80 years and it would still have borrowing authority left to weather the bad economy. Congress and the Obama administration must take urgent action to avert a financial train wreck this fall at the Postal Service. The USPS will not be able to pay the next \$5.5 billion payment to pre-fund future retiree health benefits. But this payment is totally unnecessary. The Postal Service Retiree Health Benefit Fund already has more than \$42 billion in it – enough to cover retiree health premiums for the next 20 years." The time is now to contact your representatives and urge them to support HR 1351. This legislation address's these issues and is necessary for the future of the Postal Service and our jobs.

**DON'T FORGET THE PICNIC THIS OCTOBER 9TH AT VASA PARK IN AGOURA.**

## **Vice President's Report**

**By**