

**Representing the Stations of
Encino – Panorama City – Sherman Oaks – Sun Valley – Tarzana – Van Nuys Main**

VOLUME 58

MARCH 2021

NUMBER 3

PRESIDENT'S REPORT

By JANETTE DOLABSON

Thank you to those folks who attended our first virtual Branch meeting on Tuesday Feb. 2nd, 2021! It went pretty well, and we will continue to hold them virtually until it is safe for us to gather at the union hall to hold them in person. I would like to thank Paul Jeffrey for inviting Congressman Brad Sherman from district 30 to attend the meeting. It was nice to have his perspective about what is going on in Washington DC and have him answer questions about Letter Carrier issues. It was also nice to have our CSALC President, Harold Kelso, join the meeting to give us information about upcoming legislation regarding Letter Carrier issues. I will again send out a ZOOM link to those carriers who we have email addresses for. The link to that meeting will also be printed in this Mail Call.

Planning to Retire:

Our Branch has had a lot of carriers who have retired and a large amount of them planning to retire soon or who are eligible to retire. Here is some of the steps to take if you are thinking of retiring soon from the NALC.org website. While the Office of Personnel Management (OPM) makes all decisions regarding retirement entitlement, current employees are required to apply for retirement through the USPS Human Resources Shared Services (HRSSC). HRSSC can be reached by calling 877-477-3273, option 5. When calling HRSSC, be prepared to provide your Employee ID and PIN. Upon request, HRSSC will: Mail an individualized annuity estimate based on a projected retirement date provided by the employee; Schedule and provide telephonic individual pre-retirement counseling; Mail a packet of information (usually called the 'blue book') of forms and guidance.

HRSSC retirement services can alternately be accessed by employees close to retirement eligibility on-line using the LiteBlue eRetire application. Employees must know their Employee ID and USPS Pin numbers to access eRetire. The LiteBlue eRetire application allows the following: View and print individualized annuity estimates; Request and obtain a retirement application packet in one of two ways: Download and print a retirement application packet; Order a retirement application packet and receive it in the mail Schedule a

retirement counseling session.

In addition to information available from the USPS HRSSC, retirement information is available from OPM; and retirement information and advice is available to NALC members from the NALC Retirement Department.

The NALC Retirement Department publishes a leaflet titled "Preparing for Retirement," and Question & Answer booklets on retirement matters for CSRS and FERS Retirement counseling. Letter carriers approaching retirement eligibility have a contractual right to individual pre-retirement counseling from the Postal Service, upon request. The purpose of the counseling is to promote fully informed retirement decisions by employees. The Postal Service individual counseling is provided telephonically by a retirement specialist at the USPS Human Resources Shared Services Center (HRSSC). Letter carriers initiate and schedule the counseling session by calling HRSSC at 877-477-3273 option 5, or online at the Liteblue eRetire application.

Letter carriers have a right to this individual counseling on the clock, if desired. When a letter carrier wishes to receive the counseling on the clock, local management must arrange reasonably private space. The letter carrier has the right to have his or her spouse and/or an advisor present during the counseling. The counseling will include (but not be limited to) assistance with completing forms (e.g., StandSF2801 and any other forms related to FEGLI, FEHB, and TSP) and military and civilian service deposit issues.

If a letter carrier is unable to begin or complete a scheduled individual retirement counseling session, that issue will be addressed at the local level jointly by the union and management.

The Postal Service is required to provide individual and group retirement counseling. That obligation flows from law (the Civil Service Retirement Act and Federal Employees Retirement Act), Office of Personnel Management guidance (OPM is the federal agency that has authority to administer the CSRS and FERS), USPS Employee and Labor Relations Manual provisions (click here and here for the provisions), and national level settlements with the NALC.

(Continued on Page 4)

"The MailCall" is published monthly by "Heart of the Valley Branch 2462, NALC, 6910 Hayvenhurst Ave., Suite 104, 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.

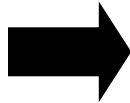
ATTENDANCE CHART BRANCH MEETINGS

MONTH J F M A M J J A S O N D

MAIN OFFICE	C 5
ENCINO	A 4
PANORAMA CITY	N 5
SHERMAN OAKS	C 1
SUN VALLEY	E 0
TARZANA	L 0
RETIREE'S	E 10
TOTAL	D 25

**MEETING PLACE OF BRANCH 2462, NALC
6910 HAYVENHURST AVE., SUITE 104
VAN NUYS, CALIFORNIA**

**NEXT MEETING
TUESDAY
MARCH
2nd**



**It Will Be Held Online
Using Zoom at 6:30 pm**

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

March 7, 2021

**WEB PAGE.... WWW.NALCBRANCH2462.ORG
BRANCH OFFICE.....818-786-8505
O P C PERSONNEL OFFICE.....818-374-5600
E-Mail.....Branch2462nalc@gmail.com**

"RETIREE CORNER" ATTENTION: !!!!

All Breakfasts have been cancelled until further notice. To all our Retiree's and Regular Members we hope that you are staying safe in your homes during this crisis.

Bob Johnson



SPECIAL NOTICE

Due to current Covid-19 Restrictions we are not allowed to conduct Regular Meetings in person at ASKEW HALL

We will be holding the All Regular Branch Meeting online, until further notice using the ZOOM APP

This program can be downloaded to any Smart phone, Tablet, Laptop or Computer that has a camera. It is compatible for Android, IOS, MAC, or PC. Below is the Meeting ID and Password which you will enter on your screen when you start the ZOOM Program

**Time: March 2, 2021 06:30 PM Pacific Time
(US and Canada)**

Join Zoom Meeting

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/83073006168?pwd=Z1VxT3JFS3piTXk3OGtoMHkvYWZiUT09>

Meeting ID: 830 7300 6168

Passcode: 820323

**One tap mobile
+16699006833,,83073006168#,,,,*820323# US
(San Jose)
+12532158782,,83073006168#,,,,*820323# US
(Tacoma)**

**Dial by your location
+1 669 900 6833 US (San Jose)
+1 253 215 8782 US (Tacoma)
+1 346 248 7799 US (Houston)
+1 301 715 8592 US (Washington DC)
+1 312 626 6799 US (Chicago)
+1 929 205 6099 US (New York)**

Meeting ID: 830 7300 6168

Passcode: 820323

**Find your local number:
<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/kqgiqHVwv>**

Vice President's Report

By

John Burton

NALC CCA Retirement Savings Plan is a retirement income plan designed for City Carrier Assistants (CCA's) to supplement your pension. You make small payments to the plan while you're young, so you can receive a lifetime of monthly payments after you retire—even if you live to be 200!

Under the NALC CCA Retirement Savings Plan, you can also request a guaranteed number of monthly payments.

City Carrier Assistants who participate in the plan may transfer their Traditional IRA funds to the Thrift Savings Plan once they become carrier letter carriers. The Surrender Charge will be waived in this instance only. Note: The Thrift Savings Plan is not set up to receive Roth IRA transfers at this time.

You choose the amount you want to contribute to your NALC CCA Retirement Savings Plan. It can be as little as \$15 per pay period (the minimum amount allowed). You may also select your method of payment: MBA can deduct payments automatically from your paycheck or bill you monthly or annually.

With as little as a one-time \$15.00 payment, you can start your NALC CCA Retirement Savings Plan and never have to make any additional deposits in order to maintain your policy in force. You may also make a lump sum deposit into the NALC CCA Retirement Savings Plan at any time to help build your plan's value.

As your NALC CCA Retirement Savings Plan grows, you can expect to earn competitive interest rates. The plan is tax-deferred, which means you do not pay taxes on any of your interest until you draw on it, further improving your yield.

When you're ready to retire, MBA offers a choice of four ways to collect monthly benefits:

Life Annuity With Period Certain. Receive a lifetime of monthly payments. You're guaranteed this income for as long as you live. If you die during a specified period (5, 10, 15 or 20 years), payments go to your beneficiary until the end of the period.

Life Annuity. Receive monthly payments through your lifetime. No further benefits will be paid after your death.

Joint Life Annuity. You or your beneficiary receive monthly payments as long as either of you live.

Full Cash Refund. Receive monthly payments as long as you are alive. When you die, the MBA will pay any money in your account to your beneficiary.

OWCP REPORT

BY

Jemmayen Macaraeg

OWCP claims for COVID-19

Hello! I hope everybody are staying safe and healthy through these unusual times! This month article is for a letter carrier who contracts COVID-19 while in the performance of their job duties would have the full coverage of the Federal Employees Compensation Act for related medical treatment and for wage loss or disability related to that condition or associated complications.

There are a lot of grievances that are being filed right now about management disapproving letter carriers requested Administrative Leave when they were exposed or diagnosed with COVID-19.

This article will help letter carriers that was diagnosed with COVID-19 during the performance of their job duties with getting paid by the USPS rather than using your own earned leave when quarantined and if you paid for your COVID-19 test.

Letter carriers who have been diagnosed with the COVID-19 virus and are suffering symptoms related to the virus may file claims with the Office of Workers' Compensation Programs, OWCP. You should submit factual evidence concerning exposure as well as supporting medical evidence. The Postal Service will be expected to provide OWCP with any information they have concerning the alleged exposure and to indicate whether they are supporting or controverting the claim. If the Postal Service supports the claim including that the exposure occurred and the CA-1 is filed within 30 days, you are eligible to receive Continuation of Pay for up to 45 days.

OWCP will then develop the claim and review evidence provided by you and the Postal Service concerning work-related exposure and a COVID-19 diagnosis. Should the claim be accepted for COVID-19, you are entitled to receive all medical services, appliances or supplies which a qualified physician prescribes or recommends, and which OWCP considers necessary to treat the work-related injury.

Exposure to COVID-19 alone does not constitute a work-related injury. You must actually be diagnosed with COVID-19 to potentially be afforded coverage.

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PRESIDENT'S REPORT

(Continued from Page 1)

Should you encounter any difficulties obtaining individual retirement counseling, contact the NALC Retirement Department for assistance.

Annuity Estimates

HRSSC mails individualized computer-generated report called the annuity estimate is mailed twice each year to the home address of those employees currently eligible for retirement. Employees who are within three years of retirement eligibility may request and receive individualized annuity estimates by calling HRSSC. Employees within 5 years of retirement eligibility may view and print individualized annuity estimates on-line at LiteBlue using the eRetire application. The NALC Retirement Department provides generalized monthly charts showing annuity estimates under both CSRS and FERS.

New Provision Highlights if new contract is approved:

MOU Re: Full-Time Regular Opportunities – City Letter Carrier Craft

Formerly known as M-01876, this memorandum of understanding has been incorporated into the 2016-2019 National Agreement. The MOU can be found on page 159 of the National Agreement. Grievances filed due to alleged violations of the MOU are processed in accordance with the grievance procedure set out in Article 15 of the National Agreement until they get to Step B. At that point, the DRT sends the grievance to Alternate Dispute Resolution (ADR). ADR consists of NALC and USPS representatives at the headquarters level who are responsible for resolving these disputes. In order to have your grievance resolved as quickly as possible, include the following documents in any grievance related to the MOU RE: Full-Time Regular Opportunities – City Letter Carrier Craft: The original job posting for the residual vacancy associated with your grievance. The “no bid” award posting for the residual vacancy associated with your grievance. The seniority list for your installation. The relative standing list for your installation. A list identifying any unassigned regular carriers in your installation (including those assigned to your installation who are detailed to a 204b position). A copy of your LMOU if the posting or award language differs from that of Article 41 of the National Agreement

Change to Article 8.5.C

All overtime, including overtime worked on a letter carrier's own assignment, will count toward quarterly equitability for overtime desired list carriers. In past agreements, overtime worked on a letter carrier's own assignment did not count toward quarterly equitability.

LOI Re: Opting Duration

Prior to the 2016-2019 National Agreement, and absent a locally negotiated practice, letter carriers on a hold-down who were converted to full-time regular status on a

different assignment did not have the option of voluntarily ending their hold-down. With ratification of the 2016-2019 National Agreement, the Letter of Intent (LOI) Re: Opting Duration (found on page 222) has been amended to give letter carriers the right to voluntarily end their hold-down in order to assume their full-time duty assignment.

Safety:

Recently we had a Letter Carrier who was robbed by gunpoint while on the job delivering mail. All carriers who encounter such a dangerous situation should always remain as calm as they can and comply to what the perpetrator asks them to do. Let them take the mail. Do not put yourself or others in harms way by arguing or refusing to give up the mail. Your safety is the most important thing. If you ever find yourself in this situation, as soon as, you are safely able to do so. Call 911 immediately and report the incident. Try to provide a description of the perpetrator (clothes, height, weight, nationality etc.), the car they were driving, any possible witnesses in the area who may have seen anything. Call your supervisor/Station Manager and report the incident. Your office Supervisor/Manager should immediately come on scene, call the postal inspection service and report it. They will make a detailed report of the incident and make sure you are safe and should also call EAP and schedule an appointment for you on the clock and have them do a standup within the next work day possible to all employees and offer counseling to anyone who may feel they need it. EAP is jointly administered by NALC, the American Postal Workers Union (APWU) and the U.S. Postal Service. All EAP counselors have at least a master's degree in counseling or social work, as well as experience in dealing with a wide range of personal and workplace concerns. Reasons a postal employee might seek help from EAP include difficulties with family, children, marriage, divorce, care of an elderly person, child care, depression or anxiety, grief or loss, substance abuse, job performance problems or personal or work relationship problems. Discussions with EAP are confidential, even when they relate to work. EAP services are provided by an independent contractor—letter carrier's discussions are never shared with postal management. Communications with EAP are confidential—your privacy is protected by strict federal and state confidentiality laws and regulations and by professional ethics standards for counselors. Through technology, EAP has enhanced the way it serves postal employees and their families. In addition to person-to-person or phone communication, employees or family may use video counseling, counseling, messaging through a phone or tablet using its Talkspace tool; use the many online tools offered through the myStrength portal; or find articles, locators, assessments, trainings, webinars, calculators, advice, videos and recipes in the health resource library—all through the EAP's website, eap4you.com. Letter carriers seeking EAP services can call 800-EAP-4YOU (800- 327-4968), TTY 877-492-7341 or visit eap4you.com. It is 100% confidential and 100% free to Postal workers and their family members.

OWCP REPORT

BY

Jemmayen Macaraeg

(Continued from Page 4)

To establish coverage, you must submit a medical report from a qualified physician reflecting a positive test result for COVID-19 based on established work-related exposure to COVID-19.

Letter carriers claiming an injury due to contact with COVID-19 must be in the performance of duty when exposed to be covered. You have the same burden to establish the basic requirements of coverage as other injured workers and must submit medical evidence in support of an identifiable injury in the performance of your letter carrier duties, and any related period of disability.

OWCP requires letter carriers exposed to the COVID-19 virus provide a detailed statement that explains:

How you were exposed to the virus;

When the exposure occurred;

How long and how frequently were you exposed; and

Where and why the exposure occurred.

You should also explain if other individuals and co-workers were exposed. You should provide a timeline of activities for the days leading up to your exposure or the onset of your symptoms. The Postal Service will be required to provide similar documentation, such as comments from a knowledgeable supervisor on the accuracy of your statements, whether the agency concurs, and if possible, confirmation of a positive COVID-19 test result for any co-workers or customers.

If exposure to COVID-19 arose out of and in the course of your employment, it is generally said to have occurred in the performance of duty. The facts in your case must show that a work factor or requirement gave rise to the resulting COVID-19 diagnosis.

Proof that you have been exposed to an individual who has tested positive for COVID-19 in the office or out on the street will be necessary. Postal Service tracking data; TACS, RIMS and scan records should be requested and submitted to OWCP to support proof of exposure.

You will also need a medical report from a qualified physician reflecting that the positive COVID-19

diagnosis resulted from a work-related exposure while in the performance of your duties. You must explain the nature of your work exposure to your physician and make sure it is referenced in a medical report.

OWCP will only pay for the COVID - 19 test upfront (prior to accepting a case), if a claimant was exposed to a person with a confirmed diagnosis of COVID-19 in the performance of duty. Otherwise, OWCP will pay for the test, if the case is accepted, through a reimbursement.

Due to the rapid onset of COVID-19 symptoms, it is in your best interest to register in OWCP's electronic claim filing portal, ECOMP prior to exposure or diagnosis. You can register in ECOMP (<https://www.ecomp.dol.gov>) and find directions on how to use the ECOMP web portal on the Injured on the Job page at nalc.org or call Branch 2462 OWCP Hotline at (818) 419-7723.

****When calling the Branch 2462 Hotline please leave your name, office you work at, call back number and a brief message. If you do not want to leave a voicemail you can also leave a message thru text messages. ****

I hope you guys enjoyed this article

**PLEASE ALWAYS BE SAFE and WISHING
EVERYBODY GOOD HEALTH!**

**COVID-19 IS NO JOKE !
WEAR A MASK**



**SAVE A LIFE
MAYBE YOURS !**



"THE MAIL CALL"
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Branch Meeting Minutes
February 2, 2021

By
Steve Seyfried, Secretary

The Meeting was held VIRTUALLY on the ZOOM APP, as published in the February MailCall and Posted at all Stations. It was called to order by PRESIDENT J. DOLABSON at 7:17 PM after a 37 minute session with Congressman BRAD SHERMAN D-30TH, his District Office Mgr. SCOTT ABRAMS, and CSALC President HAROLD KELSO. The Pledge of Allegiance was led by SGT-AT-ARMS POWERS

MOMENT OF SILENCE--In Memory of All Letter Carriers who have passed this year.

ROLL CALL OF OFFICERS

PRESENT--J. DOLABSON, BURTON, SEYFRIED, WILSON, MULLINAX, POWERS, JEFFREY, MACARAEG, JOHNSON, L. DOLABSON, DUENEZ, VALENZUELA

ABSENT—NONE

MINUTES ACCEPTED AS PRINTED IN MAIL CALL

CORRESPONDENCE READ

APPLICATION FOR MEMBERSHIP--RANDY GUINTU

BILLS READ--NONE

COMMITTEE REPORTS

AUDIT & BUDGET—TRUSTEES Audit was held on Jan 21, 2021& all books were found to be in good order.

SAFETY & HEALTH Van Nuys meeting was cancelled pending rescheduling. Burbank's/SV will be held next week Virtually. Safety blitz's are still underway, be safe. You as Carriers **MUST WEAR MASKS INSIDE P.O.** Carriers are being disciplined for violating this **MANDATED ORDER**. If you have a condition which does not allow you have a mask, then you must wear a Plastic Shield.

RETIREES 10 retiree's present

MDA FUND--POWERS Currently \$887.00 in fund

HBR--L. DOLABSON Still waiting to here from National on how many new members, and new roster.

MDA--MACARAEG No new fund raising events planned due to Covid-19. However if you have anything for Yard Sale contact the office to drop it off.

MBA--DUENEZ Waiting for new info

EDITOR--VALENZUELA MailCall fund is up to date

FINANCE REPORT--MULLINAX All Pins are being assembled and we are hoping that we will be able to give them out at the Fall Retiree Luncheon.

TREASURERS REPORT--WILSON READ

Motion—Accept financial report as read M/S/C
VICE-PRESIDENT BURTON Bill HR 47, to prevent Privatization of the Postal Service now has 79 Co-sponsors and we hope for some action on this soon. Senate bill S-145 which would end the prefunding mandate, only has 1 sponsor, but we hope to have good news soon with the new Congress.

PRESIDENT J. DOLABSON
be published in the MailCall

Gave her report which will

OLD BUSINESS

11 actions taken by the Executive Board since November, 2020 were read. These actions totaled \$ 3,998.20.

MOTION—Pay the total of the Executive Board actions. Cost to the Branch \$ 3,998.20 M/S/C

NEW BUSINESS

MOTION—Branch purchase Food Drive Posters

Cost to the Branch \$ 40.00 M/S/C

MOTION—Branch pay Shop Stewards who attended

the Shop Steward Training Class on Sunday 11/15 \$ 150.00 Cost to the Branch \$ 300.00 M/S/C

MOTION—Branch pay JEMMAYEN MACARAEG For 49.59 hours, for work during P/P 23 & 24 2020

Cost to the Branch \$ 1550.68 M/S/C

MOTION—Branch deposit \$ 1000.00 into the MailCall postage account M/S/C

MOTION—Branch renew the membership in the L.A. County Federation of Labor for one year.

This will cover 2 delegates.

Cost to the Branch \$824.16 M/S/C

MOTION—Should the Branch be unable to hold a Virtual or "in Person" Regular Branch meeting, the Executive Board shall conduct the business of the Branch. M/S/C

MOTION—Branch send JEMMAYEN MACARAEG to the O.W.C.P. Training Class on February 15, 2021 from 12 – 4 pm. Cost not to exceed \$ 125.00 for all expenses. M/S/C

MOTION—Branch pay JANETTE DOLABSON 4 hours of assignment time for work during P/P 3 2021. Cost to the Branch \$ 125.08 M/S/C

MOTION—Members accept the Budget for 2021 As printed in the February 2021 MailCall M/S/C

UNDERLINED INDICATES UNANIMOUS VOTE

GOOD OF ASSOCIATION

Vice President BURTON would like to Thank President DOLABSON and Trustee MACARAEG for their support and help over the last few weeks.

MDA DRAWING

NONE

Meeting Adjourned 8:50 PM