

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

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NUMBER 1

PRESIDENT'S REPORT

By JANETTE DOLABSON

Happy New Year to all of you and your families.! I hope you all had a wonderful Holiday Season! I know a lot of you are just glad you survived it! I want to thank all the active carriers and members who worked so hard over the peak period to service your customers! I know it was hard work and long hours.

General Interest from the USPS

The Commuter Program (Commuter Benefits Solutions) has added a new commuting benefit option. This will allow Postal Service employees to pay for qualified commuting costs using pre-tax money. Effective immediately, the newly added option will allow employees to use their prepaid card interchangeably for both transit and parking orders. You will be able to use up to \$270.00 of unused funds from any prior benefit month to carry over each month and used for parking or transit expenses. For information go to www.liteblue.usps.gov/humanresources/benefits/elections/anytimeelections.shtml?#commuterprogram

The USPS is testing an electronic Arrow Lock for use on collection boxes and cluster box units. With this e-arrow lock the carrier would use their MDD device to communicate with the e-arrow lock on the collection or CBU boxes, then use the Arrow Lock Key to open the lock on those boxes. Sounds easy but it also sounds like extra time will be needed to do this function on routes with a lot of those types of boxes. Like everything else it will probably be a long while before this is implemented here or anywhere beyond where it's being tested.

The NALC Mutual Benefits Plan is offering a Short Term Disability plan. It has been a very long time since they have offered anything close to a Disability plan. If you are interested in getting this Plan, please go on www.nalc.org/mba

Safety

There has been, already this Quarter 1 of the year several vehicle accidents. Most of them were hitting fixed

objects. I believe some of the reason for the drastic increase in accidents is partially due to the influx of new hires, the time change that makes it now darker earlier, and the increase in volume of parcels and mail and the fact that our offices are short-handed and carriers are working long hours nearly every day. The past few years, it has shown that this first quarter of the year seems to be the one that has the most accidents, and the spring quarter was close behind that in accidents. Please, be safe. Wear your seat belts and close your doors. Check your clearance on both sides of your vehicle when parking, changing lanes and passing other vehicles. Just know that with the increase in accidents there will be a lot of street observations done out there. Work as if you are always being observed. You just might be.

Letter Carrier Political Fund

The Letter Carrier Political Fund is a non-partisan political action committee (PAC) established for the purpose of electing qualified candidates who support letter carriers and who are committed to maintaining a strong and innovative U.S. Postal Service.

Each year, NALC fights to fend off attacks in Congress that threaten letter carriers' collective-bargaining rights, retirement benefits and livelihood. We've been successful so far, and we want to continue helping to elect House and Senate candidates who will protect us, promote our issues and deliver our message to Washington.

Since union dues can't be used to support candidates for political office, NALC relies 100 percent on member contributions to the LCPF, which in turn helps us support those on Capitol Hill who defend the issues that matter most to us. Our PAC brings together in Washington strong letter carrier advocates—from all political parties—who are dedicated to helping to defend a strong USPS that provides universal, innovative and affordable service.

Please donate to our LCPF today. Its easy to do and it goes far in our ability to help elect representatives that support letter carrier issues.

(Continued on Page 3)

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ATTENDANCE CHART BRANCH MEETINGS

MONTH	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	D
MAIN OFFICE	6	6	6	4	3	6	6	3	3	2	3
ENCINO	3	5	2	3	3	4	4	3	4	2	3
PANORAMA CITY	5	6	6	4	4	4	3	3	5	4	4
SHERMAN OAKS	1	2	2	2	2	3	6	2	2	2	2
SUN VALLEY	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
TARZANA	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
RETIREE'S	11	9	9	7	5	8	9	11	10	9	9
TOTAL	26	28	25	20	17	25	28	22	24	19	21

NEXT MEETING
TUESDAY 
JANUARY
4th

2022

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

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

Jan 9, 2022

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.

BRANCH MEETING INFORMATION

Topic: NALC Branch Meeting 1/4/22 6:30PM
Time: Jan 4, 2022 06:30 PM Pacific Time (US and Canada)

Join Zoom Meeting
<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/89253762365?pwd=SEt3Vy82dFZLZmRLd1BDTWNRSWg3QT09>

Meeting ID: 892 5376 2365
Passcode: 438635

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+1 929 205 6099 US (New York)
+1 301 715 8592 US (Washington DC)

Meeting ID: 892 5376 2365
Passcode: 438635

Find your local number:
<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/89253762365>

HAPPY NEW YEAR



FROM ALL THE MEMBERS OF THE
EXECUTIVE BOARD
WE WISH ALL ACTIVE AND RETIRED
BRANCH MEMBERS AND THEIR
FAMILIES A
HAPPY, HEALTHY AND PROSPEROUS
NEW YEAR

PRESIDENT'S REPORT

(Continued from Page 1)

The easiest way to become a member is to contribute through automatic payroll deduction. Contact the branch office or your local shop steward (off the clock). You can contribute or use the forms from links on <https://www.nalc.org/government-affairs/political-activity>, Through PostalEase (online), PostalEase (phone) Electronic Funds Transfer (EFT) or from an annuity. Any amount donated helps. It is job security. Do your part to secure the future of your jobs.

Political News

Congress passed a continuing resolution that will fund the government until Feb. 18. House members voted 221-212 and Senators voted 69-28, which sent the bill to President Biden's desk. Lawmakers narrowly avoided a government shutdown by passing this legislation before the Dec. 3 deadline.

This short-term fix includes funding to sustain federal agencies until the Feb. 18 deadline, \$7 billion to help resettle refugees from Afghanistan and \$1.6 billion to assist migrant children who arrive at the border without a parent.

The new Feb. 18 deadline gives lawmakers time to focus on moving the Build Back Better Act through Congress and raising the debt limit, which will likely expire by the end of the month.

COLA's

Contract COLA: Accumulated COLA is \$582 through October 2021. The projected accumulation toward the fifth regular COLA under the 2019-2023 National Agreement stood at \$582 annually in November following the release of the October 2021 Consumer Price Index.

On November 10, 2021, the Bureau of Labor Statistics announced that the CPI for Urban Wage Earners and Clerical Workers (CPI-W, 1967=100) stood at 808.869 in October, 63.493 points above the base level of 745.376 in July 2019. The accumulated COLA through October stood at 28 cents per hour or \$582 annually.

The fifth COLA will be based on the increase in the CPI-W between the base index month and January 2022, less any previously calculated COLAs, and will be payable the second full pay period following the release of the January 2022 index. The four COLAs that have been calculated under the 2019-2023 National Agreement, totaling 130 cents per hour, are as follows: 1st COLA, 8 cents per hour (\$166 annually), 2nd COLA, 9 cents per hour (\$188 annually), 3rd COLA, 20 cents per hour (\$416 annually), and the 4th COLA, 93 cents per hour (\$1,934 annually). The first three COLAs will be paid retroactively to their contractual effective dates.

2023 Retiree COLAs Projection: 1.2% as of October 2021. The 2023 COLAs for CSRS and FERS benefits are based on the increase in the average CPI-W between the 3rd quarter of 2021 (268.421) and the 3rd quarter of 2022 (TBA). Based on the October 2021 CPI-W (1982-84) of 271.552 the 2023 CSRS and FERS COLAs are currently projected to be 1.2%. The 2023 retiree COLA calculation will be finalized in October 2022 with the release of the CPI-W for September 2022.

CSRS annuities receive full COLAs; COLAs for FERS annuities are payable for retirees 62 and older and may be reduced by up to one percentage point from the increase in the CPI.

2022 FECA COLA Projection: 6.9% as of October 2021. Based on the release of the October 2021 CPI-W (1982-84=100), the 2022 FECA COLA projection is 6.9%. The October 2021 CPI-W of 271.552 was 6.9% above the December 2020 base index (254.081). The 2022 FECA COLA calculation will be finalized when the December 2021 CPI-W is published during the month of January 2022.

FECA COLAs are applicable only in cases where death or disability occurred more than one year prior to the adjustment's effective date.

Retirement Fun Facts & Tips

By
Tia Wilson

When can I retire?

The following is for immediate retirement. An immediate annuity is one that begins within 30 days after your separation from employment.

CSRS Employees

Age 62 = 5 years
Age 60 = 20 years
Age 55 = 30 years

FERS Employee

Age 62 = 5 years Full Benefits
Age 60 = 20 years Full Benefits
MRA = 30 years Full Benefits
MRA = 10 years Reduced Benefits

MRA = Minimum Retirement Age. This depends on what year you were born.

Before 1948	Age 55	In 1953-1964	Age 56
In 1948	Age 55 & 2mos	In 1965	Age 56 & 2mos
In 1949	Age 55 & 4mos	In 1966	Age 56 & 4mos
In 1950	Age 55 & 6mos	In 1967	Age 56 & 6mos
In 1951	Age 55 & 8mos	In 1968	Age 56 & 8mos
In 1952	Age 55 & 10mos	In 1969	Age 56 & 10mos
		In 1970 & After	Age 57

For more information visit opm.gov

VICE-PRESIDENT'S REPORT

By
JEMMAYEN MACARAEG

Injured on the job? Let an RWCA, not a lawyer, handle the claim

There are more than 100,000 claims filed by injured federal workers every year. Letter carrier claims account for more than 10 percent of the total. While the Office of Workers' Compensation Programs (OWCP) is responsible for processing claims and providing medical and wage-loss benefits, the bill for those benefits is ultimately paid by the Postal Service. Last year, the Postal Service sent a \$1.4 billion check to OWCP to cover the combined medical and wage-loss compensation for all postal employees.

That number has not gone unnoticed by people eager to tap into the stream of money flowing between OWCP and the Postal Service. It seems like every year a new organization pops up offering workers' compensation services to injured workers. These organizations are run by a variety of people including doctors, lawyers, and chiropractors. Some claim to employ former OWCP claims examiners to assist in getting claims accepted. They may also identify themselves as Unions, but do not be fooled by promises that many times to unfulfilled, or just drag on forever.

These organizations get funded in a number of ways. Some employ their own doctors and make a profit by handling the billing to OWCP and extract a percentage of the billing paid. Injured workers' benefits are normally not affected by those organizations. These organizations offer one-stop shopping for injured workers and claim to have "experts" who will help manage your claim. The names of these "experts" are difficult, if not impossible, to find.

Lawyers who advocate for injured workers are regulated by OWCP and must submit detailed billing statements for the time spent on each claim. It is explicitly against the law for a lawyer handling an OWCP case to request a retainer fee from an injured worker. When an attorney handles your case, the billable hours are paid by the injured worker from their compensation. Lawyers often claim to be able to do things for injured workers that a union representative cannot do. In one instance that is true: lawyers can bill you \$300 per hour.

NALC employs eight full-time Regional Workers Compensation Assistants (RWCAs) to help members who suffer on-the-job injuries. RWCAs do nothing but research and advise injured members with claim development, billing issues, appeals and schedule awards. In the past two years RWCAs have assisted NALC members in receiving over \$11 million in schedule awards.

To receive assistance from an RWCA, injured workers should contact their national business agent (NBA).

The profusion of organizations and lawyers offering assistance to injured workers has not gone unnoticed by OWCP. Last year, OWCP released two Federal Employees' Compensation Act (FECA) bulletins regarding fraud. The first, FECA Bulletin 17-04, focused on investigations related to claimant fraud. The second, F ECA Bulletin 17-05, focused on investigations related to medical fraud, primarily fraudulent billing practices.

To identify potential fraud cases, OWCP accepts referrals from the Department of Labor's Office of Inspector General (DOL OIG), OWCP's Program Integrity Unit and non-DOL OIG such as the Postal Service OIG. The DOL OIG investigates all referrals and decides what actions are appropriate.

Several organizations offering help to injured workers have been investigated and indicted for FECA fraud. Many of the cases involve improper billing, bribes and kickbacks involving OWCP, Medicare and Medicaid.

The renewed attention to medical provider fraud is a welcome change at OWCP. There is a myth that injured workers are slackers, content to sit at home and collect workers' compensation. In fact, most injured letter carriers return to work as soon as they are physically capable of doing so. We should be thankful that OWCP is finally investigating the real fraud in the system.

If you are reading this column, you are likely a NALC member. Members do not need lawyers or organizations to assist them with their claims. OWCP benefits belong to the injured worker, not to a lawyer or organization. Your RWCAs are all fellow letter carriers who learned their skills through enforcing the contract. RWCAs continually develop expertise in the claims process.

Update on Juneteenth Holiday

President Biden signed into law the Juneteenth National Independence Day Act on June 17, 2021, making June 19 a federal holiday commemorating the end of slavery in the United States. However, the law did not apply to the Postal Service.

NALC is aware of an internal Postal Service communication indicating that the holiday will be observed beginning in 2022 for full-time and part-time career employees. We have had informal discussions about the Juneteenth holiday with the Postal Service and will continue to discuss additional issues related to the observance of this holiday for all city letter carriers.

MDA YARD SALE!!!!

On December 4, 2021, we had a Fundraising Yard Sale event for the MDA, and we raised \$150.00. We would like to thank the people who donated their things for the yard sale. Your treasures will help MDA to find a cure for the children that suffers from Muscular Dystrophy. Make a difference DONATE

ON SALE NOW! FOR ONLY \$10.00!

JAMBA JUICE BOGO FREE X 6



NALC

MUSCULAR DYSTROPHY FUNDRAISING!!!

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GREAT FOR CHRISTMAS GIFT !!!

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REMEMBER !!!

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MUSCULAR DYSTROPHY**

DON'T BE LEFT OUT---GET YOURS TODAY

"THE MAIL CALL"
BRANCH 2462, NALC
Francisco Valenzuela, Editor
6910 Hayvenhurst Ave., # 104
Van Nuys, CA 91406

Address Service Requested

Branch Meeting Minutes

December 7, 2021

By

Steve Seyfried, Secretary

The Meeting was held Virtually on Zoom due to a new outbreak of Covid Variant O. It was called to order by PRESIDENT J. DOLABSON at 6:41 p.m. The Pledge of Allegiance was led by PRESIDENT DOLABSON

MOMENT OF SILENCE--In Memory of All the Letter Carriers and MEMBERS who have passed over the past year. And in remembrance of those who were lost at Pearl Harbor on this date in 1941.

ROLL CALL OF OFFICERS

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

ABSENT--NONE

MINUTES ACCEPTED AS PRINTED IN MAIL CALL
CORRESPONDENCE READ

BILLS READ----NONE

APPLICATION FOR MEMBERSHIP

DANIELLE ROBINSON, ERIC MACATANGAY, ALEX VASQUEZ, CHRISTINA SANCHEZ, JOAQUIN VILLANUEVA, LUIS FREIRE, ERSHELLE POST, ERIC HERNANDEZ, TIFFANY CUBIAS, IVAN PORRAS, BRIAN REYES, BABAK MONTEVASELANI, KAREN CURIEL-CERVANTES, KIMBAR QUEST, LEWIS ZUNIGA, ADRIANA FAUSTO, SIHOMARA ESCOBAR, ERICK CONTRAS.

COMMITTEE REPORTS

AUDIT & BUDGET--TRUSTEES Budget meeting will be held on January 5, 2022, and the Audit will be on February 3, 2022. They will be at 6:30 pm at the Union Office.

SAFETY & HEALTH--DUENEZ Continue to work in a safe manner. While accidents were down last year, so far this year we have matched or exceeded those numbers. Be vigilant at all times when working.

RETIREES 9 retiree's present tonight. Retiree Luncheon will be postponed until next March.

MDA FUND--POWERS Currently \$1620.00 in fund

HBR--L. DOLABSON Open season has ended, I hope that you checked out the great deal the NALC Health Plan offers.

MDA--MACARAEG This month's yard sale was a success, we raised over \$ 120.00 for MDA. New great offer on Jamba Juice cards for the holidays, check it out on Page 5 of this month's MailCall. All money raised goes to MDA

MBA--DUENEZ New Short Term Disability Plan has been announced by MBA. If you are interested please contact me through your Shop Steward. I would love to go over it with you.

EDITOR--VALENZUELA All is Well

POLITICAL--BURTON No movement on the various bills in Congress regarding the Postal Service. We will be sending 3 to Washington, DC in February to Lobby for these bills.

FINANCE REPORT--MULLINAX Read

TREASURERS REPORT--WILSON Read

Motion--Accept financial report's as read M/S/C

VICE-PRESIDENT MACARAEG Focusing on Article 8's at all Stations. Also addressing on going usage of improper Time Clock Codes for Parcel Deliveries.

PRESIDENT J. DOLABSON Gave her report which will be published in the MailCall.

OLD BUSINESS--NONE

NEW BUSINESS

MOTION--Move that the Branch double the usual Station expenses for their Holiday Parties again this year. Cost to the Branch \$ 3,200.00 M/S/C

MOTION--Move that the Branch reimburse CALVIN BROOKINS \$ 323.40 for overpayment of 2021 Union Dues M/S/C

MOTION--Move that the Branch purchase 2 Lenovo Laptops, one for the President and one for the Recording Secretary. Cost not to exceed \$ 3,000.00 M/S/C

UNDERLINED INDICATES UNANIMOUS VOTE

Meeting Adjourned 8:04 PM