

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

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NUMBER 8

PRESIDENT'S REPORT

By CALVIN D. BROOKINS

Entering the next phase of negotiations. A message from NALC Headquarters:

As previously reported, NALC has continued to negotiate for a new collective bargaining agreement with the U.S. Postal Service during the statutorily required 60-day mediation period. That period, which began with the formal expiration of the 2019-2023 Agreement on May 20, is set to expire on July 19. While discussions on the pay, benefits and working conditions of America's city letter carriers continue to be productive, the parties have yet to reach tentative agreement.

NALC President Brian L. Renfroe and Executive Vice President Paul Barner are working closely together along with the union's lawyers and a team of national officers and staff to reach an agreement with postal management that is worthy of the dedication and hard work of our active membership.

While reaching a voluntary settlement that properly rewards city letter carriers for the work they do delivering America's mail remains NALC's goal, preparation is ongoing for binding interest arbitration should that become necessary. The meticulous work of marshaling evidence and recruiting expert witnesses to make our case in interest arbitration proceedings has been going on for months.

Under the law, such an impasse would trigger the appointment of a three-member arbitration board comprised of a union advocate, a management advocate, and a neutral chair to conduct a binding arbitration to set the terms of a new National Agreement.

With the deadline of the expiration of the statutorily mandated 60-day mediation period looming, NALC will continue, as has been the case in the past, negotiating with the USPS as the next phase of the process begins.

"As we have in recent rounds of collective bargaining, we will remain at the table with postal management as long as

the prospects remain for reaching a tentative agreement that meets our goals," Renfroe said on July 14. "But we will move expeditiously to invoke the procedures required by law to resolve an impasse in bargaining should that prove necessary."

A message from me, your branch President:

I am going to write about the ongoing NALC contract negotiations with the USPS.

This time around we need to get a contract that fundamentally addresses the needs of Letter Carriers as well as improves the jobs of Letter Carriers. I am going to identify a few of the items that the NALC should try to negotiate during these contract negotiations.

Starting Pay:

Starting pay for CCA's and PTF's (in some locations) is not enough to compete with other workplaces. This has a chilling effect on retaining CCA's and some career carriers with as much as 5 years in the Postal Service.

This is a physically demanding job, work schedules vary too much, and in a lot of offices every day is a crisis, as management often schedules for each day with 2, 3, 4 or more routes down.

The pay along with the work environment, scheduling issues and unreasonable expectations placed upon carriers are the reason why some of them leave the Postal Service. Not to mention they are treated like crap.

Non-career workforce (CCA's):

We need to get rid of this and get back to an all-career workforce (PTF's/Full-time). The USPS advertise this as a non-career job, without telling new applicants about the path to career. The only time they hear about the path to career is when the Union talk about it during orientation or the Carrier Academy.

(Continued on Page 3)

"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.

VICE PRESIDENT REPORT

by

Jemmayen Macaraeg

SAFETY DEPENDS ON YOU!

Let me start with "safety is personal!" An injury does not stay in the office or on the street. It follows you everywhere you go, impacting every aspect of your life. That is why safety is not just professional. It is profoundly personal. It means getting home safe each day and enjoying your family, friends, and life to the fullest. Let us make it our mission to keep ourselves and others safe, so no one has to miss the parts of life that make it most worth living.

Together, we can make safety a priority - from the workplace to anyplace.

As a Letter Carrier who works under extreme heat conditions, it is particularly important that management is well trained to know how they can make sure that we get home safe each day and live our life to the fullest with our loved ones.

I want to share the memorandum from our NALC Director of Safety & Health, Manuel L. Peralta Jr. regarding USPS Heat Illness Prevention Program (HIPP) Training and the Update on outcome of Des Moines IA Challenge by USPS requiring supervisors to be HIPP Trained.

In his July Postal Record column, he quoted the final and binding settlement between OSHA and the USPS, recognizing that the USPS:

"...Did not furnish employment and a place of employment which were free from recognized hazards that were causing or likely to cause death or serious harm to employees, in that employees were exposed to the following recognized hazards when it failed to fully train all supervisory staff in the recognition of the symptoms of heat related illnesses and the appropriate response to report symptoms of heat related illness..."

Take a close look at the text of this settlement. This statement recognized that Letter Carriers are exposed to heat as a hazard and that management failed to train each and every supervisor to make sure they understand their responsibility and know how to respond to a distress call from an employee who is suffering a heat injury.

NALC Director of Safety & Health, Manuel L. Peralta Jr. have been on a rant about Heat Illness Prevention Program (HIPP) training since the July 2012 death of John Waltzlawick. Initially the USPS had no HIPP course, but they put one together after a Judge from the Occupational Safety and Health Review Commission (OSHRC) found management at fault and let the citation stand. However, when management put that material together, they refused to make it mandatory training for our letter carriers or their supervisors in spite of the NALC's demands. Management just wanted to make the training available in case anyone wanted to learn how to keep themselves alive, but they did not want to make it mandatory!

(Continued on Page 4)

ATTENDANCE CHART BRANCH MEETINGS

MONTH	J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N
MAIN OFFICE	4	3	4	6	0	4	6				
ENCINO	3	4	3	3	4	4	2				
PANORAMA CITY	1	5	4	4	3	6	8				
SHERMAN OAKS	1	5	5	5	5	8	5				
SUN VALLEY	0	0	0	0	0	0	0				
TARZANA	0	0	0	0	0	0	0				
RETIREE'S	7	5	7	8	6	10	5				
TOTAL	16	22	23	26	20	32	26				

**NEXT MEETING
TUESDAY
SEPTEMBER
5 th
2023
6:30 p.m.
BRANCH OFFICE**

**DEADLINE DATE FOR THE NEXT
ISSUE OF "THE MAIL CALL" IS
Sept 10 , 2023**

**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: !!!!

Our next Breakfast Meeting will be held at Denny's Restaurant , (Corner of Sherman Way & DeCelis). It will begin at 09:00 AM. Date will be SEPTEMBER 23, 2023 (4th Saturday) So, please mark your calendar.....We hope to see you there. Thank You

PRESIDENT'S REPORT

(Continued from Page 1)

Contract Compliance:

Management violates the contract repeatedly. We struggle as a Union to enforce the terms of the National Agreement and Handbooks and Manuals. We are getting monetary remedies for the Grievant and the Union or escalating remedies, and yet we still have these violations.

There are no incentives for management to follow the National Agreement and Handbooks and Manuals. We must have a contract that is enforceable and ensures contract compliance. Contract compliance should be a priority and it should be included in this round of bargaining.

Mandatory Overtime:

This should be eliminated. We have a rampant mandatory overtime issue. Understanding that overtime is necessary and possible. I am not talking about overtime as per the Letter Carrier Paragraph. I am referring to mandatory overtime off your assignment or on your non-scheduled day.

This is doable, as Rural Carriers already have language that addresses this in their Collective Bargaining Agreement.

Here are just a few other items that should be negotiated such as:

Transfer Rules-----Scheduling
Staffing/Full-time Assignments
Cross Craft and Starting times.

Keep in mind pay raises and COLAs for all employees are always part of the negotiations.

We should not accept another bad or so, so contract this time around.

We should not accept another 'contract' where management is comfortable ignoring the terms. We should not accept another contract where the work rules do not make sense, and we are made to pay for poor management decisions.

I encourage you all to contact your National Business Agent and other Executive Council members and let them know that we must have a contract that fundamentally addresses all the needs of Letter Carriers and improve the jobs and working conditions for all Letter carriers. Contact information for the National Business Agent and other Executive Council members can be found in the Postal Record and at NALC.org. Remember these are your rights and working conditions they are bargaining for; you should have a say in this matter. Please exercise your right to voice your opinion.

In Unionism, Stay Safe!

Health Benefits Report

By

JANETTE DOLABSON, HBR

The Job of a Letter Carrier is stressful. Here are some DIY ways to reduce stress. Find some that may work for you.

Reducing stress helps keep your mind and body healthier.

1. Exercise- 20 minutes a day. Walking, weights, yoga, anything you will do regularly.
2. Breathe- Inhale, filling your lungs completely and hold it in a few seconds then exhale slowly and completely. Do this several times. Deep breathing calms you and reduces your stress.
3. Healthy Diet- sounds obvious but it makes a huge difference in your stress level. Less carbs, sugar, salt and caffeine. Add more protein, veggies and fruits and healthy fats.
4. Listen to music- Whatever music that you love helps reduce your stress level!
5. Laugh- Find someone or something that makes you laugh.
6. Meditate- 5 minutes of peace and quiet reaps the benefit of meditation.
7. Spend time outside- not working, but just taking in nature and all that it is. Parks, hikes, trips to the ocean or mountains will help reduce stress.
8. Chamomile tea- calms the stomach and relieves migraine symptoms.
9. Essential oils- lavender, rose, orange blossom and many others stimulate your sense of smell and reduce stress.
10. Chew gum- 10 minutes of chewing gum can reduce your stress level.
11. Dark Chocolate- reduces the stress hormone Cortisol levels.
12. Helping Others- It is good to give. It can seriously help reframe the way you think about stressing out.

VICE PRESIDENT's REPORT

(Continued from Page 2)

In his October 2015 column, he shared a few horror stories that had been reported by our membership throughout the country. These stories were shared to emphasize the need for all of our craft and all of the management staff to be trained in HIPP.

On May 12, a CCA, who has since resigned, was hospitalized because of dehydration. Management attempted to defend itself to OSHA by stating that it encourages employees to "take extra breaks in shaded areas."

On May 22, a career letter carrier was hospitalized as a result of heat illness for a period of four days, and then almost two months later, the USPS issued her a letter of warning for failing to work in a safe manner. According to the letter of warning, she had failed to keep herself properly hydrated. A grievance and an OSHA Whistleblowers complaint were filed. The discipline was thrown out.

On June 10, a letter carrier called in, advising his supervisor that the heat was making him sick, to which the supervisor responded: "The heat is worse in other parts of the world, and how hot do you think it is in Afghanistan?" He then instructed the carrier to keep going. Upper management took some action, but as he was writing this, OSHA was conducting a formal investigation. On the same day in a neighboring state, another employee suffered heat exhaustion, severe dehydration, and other issues. Her supervisor sent her home then contacted 911 to have an ambulance go to her home. Why?

On July 15, a letter carrier called his supervisor to report that he was vomiting and cramping due to the heat. The supervisor did not immediately call 911, causing a one-hour delay in providing medical attention that resulted in hospitalization. Two months later, this employee has not returned to work.

On July 29, during a 105-degree heat index day, a carrier tried to call his supervisor, but was unable to speak. A customer took the phone to speak to the supervisor, who was first asked how much mail does he have left? The customer told the supervisor that she would take the carrier to the hospital. The supervisor told her not to and that he would go to the route to take him. The supervisor then picked up the carrier, delayed taking him to the hospital, and instead took him to the office to get paperwork while leaving the injured carrier in a hot vehicle. The customer provided a statement to make sure that the union had proof of what happened that day.

In his September 2019 column, he referenced that the USPS finally agreed to make annual HIPP training mandatory for all our letter carriers and their supervisors. **Mandatory but not really!!!**

The required training did not really happen because there was no mechanism to make certain it took place. The 2019 HIPP (USPS4437) was distributed to you all in May of 2019, but few saw the training and fewer of your supervisors bothered to share it with you or take the course themselves.

In his June 2020 column, he shared that management moved its HIPP training material to the Hero Platform. Seeing that, He took the course, downloaded the transcript (for your use on his Extreme Weather Page) and then noticed that their Hero Platform falsely claimed that he had taken a number of safety training courses and stand-up talks.

He encouraged you to see your steward and file necessary grievances if management falsely claimed you had attended the training as indicated.

In his November 2022 column, he detailed management's legal and contractual obligations to train employees on safety and then explained how steward should go about investigating and preparing a grievance when it is discovered that management is making false claims about the training they give.

It all begins with you opening up your Lite Blue page and looking at Hero Training, to compare management's false claims with the truth as you know it.

In his column for April of this year he quoted from a decision of the OSHRC that found management had in fact failed to train its supervisors/managers on HIPP. This was a hazard because those managers (in Des Moines IA) did not know what to do when receiving a distress call from one of our letter carriers.

If you have read everything in this memo up to this point, here is the ask.

We need to investigate whether or not every one of our supervisors/managers are ready to react to a distress call from a carrier reporting that they are suffering heat illness symptoms. We need to determine if each of them is prepared to observe and form the correct opinion as to whether or not we are suffering any heat illness symptoms.

Supervision in Des Moines, Iowa has been put on notice that they contributed to an unsafe environment because its personnel were not fully trained on the USPS HIPP.

We can force management to conduct the training by following the recommendations in his November 2022 column he reference above.

Make management train its team so that they can help save a life instead of shrugging their shoulders and later pretending they cared.



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John Burton, Editor

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Branch Meeting Minutes

August 1, 2023

By

Steve Seyfried, Secretary

The Meeting was held at the Branch 2462 Union Hall 6910 Hayvenhurst Ave., #104 Van Nuys California. It was called to order by PRESIDENT BROOKINS at 6:39 p.m. The Pledge of Allegiance was led by SGT-AT-ARMS GODDARD

MOMENT OF SILENCE--In Memory of LETTER CARRIERS & RETIREES that have passed in 2023.

ROLL CALL OF OFFICERS

PRESENT--BROOKINS, MACARAEG, SEYFRIED, WILSON, MULLINAX, GODDARD, L. DOLABSON, VALENZUELA, J. DOLABSON, VARGAS, BURTON

ABSENT—JOHNSON

MINUTES ACCEPTED AS PRINTED IN MAIL CALL

CORRESPONDENCE READ

APPLICATION FOR MEMBERSHIP--NONE

BILLS READ—MOTION TO PAY

M/S/C

COMMITTEE REPORTS

AUDIT & BUDGET—TRUSTEES

The audit was held Thursday July 13th at the Union Office. The books were found to balance and be in good order.

SAFETY & HEALTH

HEAT HEAT-HEAT, Ear buds may not be worn when you are moving. Seat belts must always be used when sitting in the vehicle. Postmaster has requested a joint standup be given by her and Pres BROOKINS. Details are to be figured out.

RETIREES

7 Retiree's present tonight. Retiree luncheon will be on October 29th and Breakfast on September 23rd.

MDA FUND--

\$ 681.00 in the fund

HBR—J. DOLABSON

Spoke on Stress, which will be covered in detail in her article in the Sept MailCall. Make sure you read it as it will contain useful information affecting all Carriers.

MDA—MACARAEG

Garage Sale was very successful, and we raised over \$437. Special thanks to JASON COLELLO, CARLOS VARGAS, LIZ BOCANEGRO, PAUL JEFFREY and FRANCISCO VALENZUELA for their help and assistance in making this such a success. Jamba Cards are still 4 sale, and plans are in the works for a Bowl-a-Thon later sometime in the near future.

POLITICAL—BURTON

Looks like HR 82 (Windfall Elimination) may be moving thru Congress soon, we hope. CCA BUY BACK bill is still stalled and a new bill to allow the Postal Service to deliver alcohol has been introduced.

EDITOR—BURTON

MailCall's were mailed out last Friday. Our postage account is running low, and we will have a motion later in tonight's meeting.

FINANCE REPORT—MULLINAX

We continue to work on Non-Members. We currently have 4 CCA's and 7 Regular's that are not signed up. We will be reaching out to these Carriers in an attempt to have them join everyone else as MEMBERS !!

TREASURERS REPORT—WILSON

Financial Reports were read by the Treasurer.

MOTION TO ACCEPT REPORTS AS READ

M/S/C

VICE-PRESIDENT MACARAEG

Visited Tarzana Station this week and spoke with Carriers and Postmaster. Training continues, I met with PEDRO MORALES, the new Shop Steward in Main Office and

WILLIAM POWERS of Encino on Article 8 training. I will be continuing to hold these training sessions. USPS & OSHA have come to a binding agreement regarding Safety & Heat related illness.

PRESIDENT BROOKINS Reported on:

Next phase of National Contract negotiations: Step AA pay adjustments being delayed for some PTF Carriers: Heat Illness Prevention Program (HIPP) training (RFI): Prevent Heat Illness (know the signs & act): Sorting & Delivery Centers (S&DC) update: Integrated Mail Processing Support Systems(IMPSS): Enterprise Resource Management System(eRMS) update: Surface Transfer Center(STC): Testing new system to use an Electronic key on multiple receptacles, to replace the old ARROW KEY system: Mail theft in Sherman Oaks on July 29th. Carrier was not threatened: COP meeting in October.

OLD BUSINESS—NONE

NEW BUSINESS

RECORDING SECRETARY SEYFRIED was sworn into office, by Past President JANETTE DOLABSON. Secretary SEYFRIED thanked the members present for their support.

MOTION—Move that the branch join Costco. cost to the branch \$ 120.00 per year

M/S/C

MOTION—Move that the branch send the Vice

President to the cop meeting on October 14-15

2023 in Las Vegas. cost not to exceed \$ 1475.00

M/S/C

MOTION—Move that the branch purchase 375 Letter

Carrier calendars. Cost to the Branch \$ 1,687.50.

M/S/C

MOTION—Move that the Branch purchase a desk

to be used in the Vice President area. Cost not to

exceed \$ 700.00

M/S/C

MOTION—Move that the branch pay the Workers

Compensation bond from 8/28/23 thru 8/28/24.

Cost to the Branch \$ 530.00

M/S/C

MOTION—Move that the branch send JOHN BURTON

& FRANCISCO VALENZUELA to the Political Action

class on Sunday October 1, 2023 in Ontario, CA.

Cost not to exceed \$ 200.00.

M/S/C

MOTION—Move that the Branch deposit \$ 1,500.00

into the Bulk Mailing account for the MailCall.

M/S/C

UNDERLINED INDICATES UNANIMOUS VOTE

GOOD OF THE ASSOCIATION

Brother JASON COLELLO spoke some very kind words about Secretary SEYFRIED. PAUL JEFFREY spoke on the importance of new and younger Members attending the Branch Meetings and being involved in Branch matters.

MDA DRAWING

\$ 4 PAUL JEFFREY—RETIRED (ENCINO)—DONATED

\$ 4 CALVIN BROOKINS—RETIRED (CIVIC CENTER)—DONATED

\$ 7 EDWIN BORJAS—SHERMAN OAKS—DONATED \$ 5.00

Meeting Adjourned 9:01 PM