

PRESIDENT'S REPORT

**By
CALVIN D. BROOKINS**

I want to start this month's article by honoring all our members who are military Veterans and thanking them for their service to our country. Because of their willingness to serve we enjoy certain freedoms and privileges in this country that we all sometimes take for granted. So, let's remember the reason why we have the freedom that we enjoy in the United States of America. So, to all of you who are Veterans a big Thank You for your service to this great country of ours.

Discontinuance of COVID-19 Protocols

It appears that some carriers are not completely aware of how the discontinuation of COVID-19 protocols affects them.

On May 12, 2023, the Postal Service discontinued all COVID-19 specific protocols, including all COVID Memoranda of Understanding, policies, and work practice restrictions and requirements.

This will affect employees in three different ways:

**Reporting
Return to Work Clearance
Social Distancing**

Reporting –

Employees are no longer required to report positive findings of COVID-19 or potential exposure through close contacts. Employees who are ill will continue to be advised to remain at home. Basically, if you test positive for COVID you will still need to stay home while you are sick.

Return to Work Clearance –

Occupational health clearance is no longer required for any employee to return to work following recovery from COVID-19. Employees are required to follow all postal leave usage regulations and policies in effect prior to the COVID-19 pandemic. In this case you do not have to be cleared by the Postal Health nurse, but you do need to follow the provisions you were following prior to COVID.

(Continued on Page 2)

--SPECIAL-- NOTICE

**NO BRANCH MEETING
IN DECEMBER
BRANCH 2462 HOLIDAY
PARTY
SATURDAY EVENING
DECEMBER 2, 2023
AT
MASONIC LODGE
14750 Sherman Way, Van Nuys, CA
DOORS OPEN 6:00 PM-DINNER 7:00 PM
ALL MEMBERS AND THEIR
IMMEDIATE FAMILY
ARE INVITED TO ATTEND**

FREE FOOD - FREE DRINK - FREE FUN

**DOOR PRIZES FOR MEMBERS
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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	3	2	4	
ENCINO	3	4	3	3	4	4	2	4	4	4	
PANORAMA CITY	1	5	4	4	3	6	8	10	6	7	
SHERMAN OAKS	1	5	5	5	5	8	5	5	6	7	
SUN VALLEY	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	
TARZANA	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	
RETIREE'S	7	5	7	8	6	10	5	7	5	6	
TOTAL	16	22	23	26	20	32	26	29	23	28	

NEXT MEETING TUESDAY JANUARY 2nd "2024" 6:30 p.m. BRANCH OFFICE

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

Jan 12 , 2024

WEB PAGE.... WWW.NALCBRANCH2462.ORG
BRANCH OFFICE.....818-786-8505
O P C PERSONNEL OFFICE.....818-374-5600
[E-Mail.....Branch2462nalc@gmail.com](mailto:Branch2462nalc@gmail.com)

"RETIREE CORNER" ATTENTION: !!!!

We have concluded our Saturday Retiree Breakfasts for the year. Thanks to all those who attended and for the Branch for sponsoring our event. We look forward to resuming again after the first of the year. We wish all happy holidays. Thank You

PRESIDENT REPORT (Continued from Page 1)

Social Distancing -

Driver Safety Instructors are permitted to be in the vehicle during driver training. All social distancing requirements for drivers and all other classroom training and meetings have been terminated. All the COVID-19 standard work instructions preventing contact with other employees within six feet are no longer in effect. This language is self-explanatory, no social distancing required.

Waiving 8 Hour Work Guarantees.

At our last Branch meeting we had an extended discussion on the 8 hour work guarantee. I am once again addressing the Contractual requirements.

The Step 4 settlement H4N-2D-C 40885, November 14, 1988 (M-00879) provides that "Management may not solicit employees to work less than their call-in guarantee, nor may employees be scheduled to work if they are not available to work the entire guarantee. However, an employee may waive a guarantee in case of illness or personal emergency." This procedure is addressed in the ELM Section 432.63.

The waiving of this guarantee does not come unfettered, in most cases you will have to show documentation to prove the legitimacy of such an illness or personal emergency.

432.63 Pay Computation

As a general principle, when employees are told to *clock out* by management prior to the end of the guaranteed period, the employees are compensated for the hours of the guaranteed period at the rate of pay they would have received had they actually worked the hours. There are, however, conditions under which employees are not compensated for the remaining hours of the guaranteed period. Generally, this occurs when an employee requests to leave the postal premises because of an illness or for personal reasons or leaves without proper authorization.

Whether you are calling it a personal emergency or personal reasons, the union has the obligation to enforce the contract and handbooks and manuals. Our job is to police the contract. If we look at clock rings and see carriers going home before their guaranteed 8 hours, we are going to question management as to why and if they cannot show a legitimate documented reason for it, we will grieve it and request that the carrier be appropriately compensated for it.

If you have any questions, please contact your shop steward or call the Union office.

In Unionism

VICE PRESIDENT REPORT

by

Jemmayen Macaraeg

“UNDERTIME”

Have you ever wondered where management gets the idea that you have undertime no matter what your mail volume is?

It's from a Web program called **City Delivery Pivoting Opportunity Model (CDPOM)** that accesses a database and graphically displays the information. It's a tool that helps management to determine that your route has undertime. CDPOM uses historical productivity assumptions from the **Delivery Operations Information System (DOIS)**. These assumptions include:

1) credit for cased letters and flats; 2) current DPS performance; 3) based fixed office time; 4) base street efficiency index; and 5) credit for new deliveries. Each route in DOIS uses those assumptions to calculate the projected work hours based on the current day's volume.

In short, they are basing your undertime base off **Delivery Operations Information System (DOIS) or Performance Engagement Tool (PET)**. You have the right to ask management where they are getting their information that determines you have undertime. If they tell you from DOIS or PET please reach out to your shop steward.

What is **Delivery Operations Information System (DOIS)**? The Delivery Operations Information System (DOIS) replaces the Decision Support Information System, the Route Examination System, and the Projected Office and Street Time System. DOIS was designed to provide actionable data to the delivery unit supervisors, assisting them in managing the office activities, planning of street activities and managing the route inspection and adjustment activities. Used properly, the data provided by DOIS will assist the delivery unit supervisor in making sound business decisions related to carrier operations.

What is **Performance Engagement Tool (PET)**? Performance Engagement Tool (PET) is the most recent computerized data generating program, in a long list of previous programs, designed by the Postal Service for use by its supervisors to project the daily workload of letter carriers. The way PET works is it attempts to compare a letter carrier's past street time performance and mail volumes with the current daily situation and then uses that information to determine how long the program thinks it should take a letter carrier to perform his or her duties on that day.

Remember, you are the one who determines if your route has undertime or not.

The Letter Carriers reporting requirement has not changed. Handbook M-39, Handbook M-41 and several national-level settlements have defined a process that both letter carriers and managers are required to follow when a letter carrier cannot complete his or her daily assignment within their normally scheduled time frame.

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The Benefits of Labor Unions

by Steve Seyfried

Introduction:

Labor unions have played a pivotal role in shaping the modern workforce, advocating for workers' rights, fair wages, and safe working conditions. Throughout history, these organizations have been instrumental in addressing imbalances in power, fostering collective bargaining, and promoting social and economic justice. This essay explores the importance of labor unions in contemporary society, examining their historical significance, impact on workers' rights, and contributions to the broader socio-economic landscape.

Historical Context:

The roots of labor unions can be traced back to the industrial revolution when workers faced harsh conditions, meager wages, and grueling work hours. The formation of unions was a response to the exploitative practices of early industrialists, providing workers with a collective voice to demand better working conditions and fair compensation. Historical events such as the Haymarket affair and the Triangle Shirtwaist Factory fire underscore the need for organized labor to champion the cause of worker safety and advocate for fundamental workplace reforms.

Workers' Rights:

Labor unions have been at the forefront of championing workers' rights, ensuring that employees are treated with dignity and respect. Collective bargaining, a cornerstone of union activities, empowers workers to negotiate fair wages, reasonable working hours, and comprehensive benefits. Unions act as a counterbalance to the power dynamics between employers and employees, preventing the exploitation of labor and advocating for just workplace policies.

In addition to negotiating for better compensation, unions are instrumental in safeguarding workers against arbitrary dismissals and unfair labor practices. The presence of unions often deters employers from engaging in discriminatory actions, creating a more equitable work environment. Through legal advocacy and representation, unions become a powerful ally for workers seeking justice in cases of workplace harassment, discrimination, or unjust termination.

Economic Equality:

Labor unions contribute significantly to reducing income inequality by advocating for fair wages and equitable distribution of wealth. Through negotiations and collective action, unions ensure that workers receive a just share of the profits generated by their labor. This not only benefits individual workers but also contributes to a more equitable distribution of wealth within society.

Moreover, unions play a vital role in promoting economic mobility. By negotiating for higher wages and better benefits, unions empower workers to improve their standard of

living and provide a better future for their families. This upward mobility not only benefits individual families but also contributes to the overall economic growth of communities and nations.

Workplace Safety:

Ensuring the health and safety of workers is a critical aspect of labor union advocacy. Throughout history, unions have been at the forefront of campaigns to improve workplace safety standards. From the establishment of the Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) in the United States to similar organizations globally, unions have been instrumental in pushing for regulations that protect workers from hazardous conditions. Unions serve as a collective voice to demand safer working environments, proper training, and the implementation of safety protocols. By holding employers accountable for maintaining high safety standards, unions contribute to the reduction of workplace accidents and occupational hazards.

Social Justice:

Labor unions extend their influence beyond the workplace, championing broader social justice causes. By advocating for policies that address systemic inequalities, unions contribute to creating a more just and equitable society. Issues such as gender pay equity, racial equality, and the fight against discrimination find strong allies in labor unions, which often leverage their collective power to influence legislative changes.

Collective Bargaining and Workplace Democracy:

One of the hallmarks of labor unions is the practice of collective bargaining, wherein workers negotiate with employers as a united front. This process not only ensures that workers have a say in their working conditions and compensation but also fosters a sense of workplace democracy. By empowering workers to collectively make decisions about their terms of employment, unions contribute to a more inclusive and participatory work environment.

Challenges and Contemporary Relevance:

Despite their historical successes, labor unions face challenges in the contemporary landscape. The rise of globalization, technological advancements, and shifts in the nature of work have presented new obstacles for organized labor. However, the importance of unions remains undiminished, and they continue to adapt to new realities by embracing technology, expanding their focus to include diverse sectors, and collaborating with other advocacy groups.

In conclusion, labor unions have played a crucial role in shaping fair and equitable workplaces throughout history. From their origins in response to the industrial revolution to their present-day efforts in addressing contemporary challenges, unions have consistently advocated for workers' rights, economic equality, workplace safety, and social justice. As we navigate an ever-evolving global economy, recognizing and preserving the importance of labor unions is essential for ensuring a fair and just society where the rights and well-being of workers are protected and prioritized.

Health Benefits Report

By
JANETTE DOLABSON, HBR

FEHB Open Season Dates begin on November 13th, 2023, and end on December 11th 2023 for the year 2024.

I highly recommend that if you do not already have the NALC Health Benefit Plan, you take a look at the best plan for Letter carriers and their families. The NALC Health Benefit Plan is Union owned and operated by the NALC. It is specifically designed for Letter Carriers and their Health needs.

Here are just some of the incredible benefits this plan offers.

A quick overview:

NALC HBP High Option plan PPO:

New in 2024 the Plan has added and expanded many features for you, including:

Bend's Behavioral Health Coaching Program through Optum.

It is a live video-based service that supports children and families seeking to modify challenging behaviors to achieve their behavioral health goals.

Telehealth virtual Dermatology:

Receive virtual dermatology services through the Telehealth app which gives adults and children of any age an online program to help manage chronic conditions like acne, rosacea, psoriasis, or skin cancer checks by scheduling with board certified dermatologists. Asynchronous visits are available 24/7, where patients will receive a written summary of treatment within 72 hours, including prescribed medications if medically necessary. All for a low cost of \$10.00 copay per visit.

New Expanded Medical services such as:

Expanded Hearing Aids:

Did you know that wearing hearing aids could improve your balance and help protect you from stress and depression? If you have hearing loss, your health could be better if you are using hearing aids. We have increased our hearing aid benefit for adults to \$2,500 with replacements covered every three years. We have also increased our hearing aid benefit for children through age 18 to \$2,500 with replacements covered annually. Does not include the related exam.

New A1C testing.

One hemoglobin A1C test, which assesses your average blood sugar levels annually, is now available through the NALC Health Benefit Plan. This allows early diagnosis, which can lead to education and awareness at an earlier stage. The A1C preventive screening is for ages 18 and older.

New Expanded foot Orthotics.

Custom foot orthotics can help do the following by distributing weight evenly and properly. Improve balance, improve movement, reduce back and knee pain, relieve heel pain and arch pressure, reduce muscle fatigue, create better motion control. With carriers in mind, we have increased our

custom functional foot orthotic benefit to 2 pairs annually without a maximum plan payment amount.

New Skin Cancer Screening:

Letter Carriers are often in the sun. Annual screenings could help with detecting skin disorders before they become cancerous, and they can also be a tool in preventing skin cancer from spreading to other areas of the body. We have added a new benefit for annual skin cancer screenings under our diagnostic testing benefit. If a PPO provider is used, the Plan will cover 85% of the contracted Plan allowance.

New Infertility:

In 2024, the Plan is expanding our coverage under infertility services. To help combat fertility issues faced by many members, we will now cover up to three cycles annually of certain artificial insemination (AI) procedures. In addition to this coverage, we will cover up to three cycles of IVF- related drugs. Some fertility drugs are considered Specialty drugs and require a prior authorization.

New SilverScript Prescription Drug Plan:

We are excited to offer Medicare-eligible retirees a new prescription drug program under the NALC Health Benefit Plan High Option. SilverScript is affiliated with CVS Caremark and is an employer-provided group Medicare part D Prescription Drug Plan with additional coverage provided by the NALC HBP to close the gaps between the standard Part D plan and your current coverage. The coverage has been custom-tailored for participants in the NALC HBP so you will see little, if any, change from your current plan. In many cases, you will see additional cost savings on prescriptions with the SilverScript enrollment and participation includes a \$600 annual credit towards each enrollees' Medicare Part B premiums. If you and/or your eligible dependents are enrolled in Medicare and are not enrolled in Medicare Advantage Plan (part C), you will be automatically enrolled in SilverScript and the NALC HBP will submit your enrollment to Medicare. This is voluntary and you have the choice to opt out. If you opt out you will not receive any reimbursement toward your Medicare B premium.

New NALC Health Benefit Plan Broad Vaccine Administration Network:

When the NALC HBP is the primary payor for medical expenses, the plan will cover FDA-approved vaccines when administered by a pharmacy that participates in the NALC HBP Broad Vaccine Administration Network.

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SPECIAL ASSISTANT TO
NALC PRESIDENT 2001 - 2002

"THE MAIL CALL" BRANCH 2462, NALC

John Burton, Editor

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Branch Meeting Minutes

November 7, 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 6:45 p.m. The Pledge of Allegiance was led by SGT-AT-ARMS GODDARD

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

ROLL CALL OF OFFICERS

PRESENT--BROOKINS, MACARAEG, WILSON, MULLINAX, GODDARD, L. DOLABSON, JOHNSON, J. DOLABSON, BURTON

ABSENT--SEYFRIED, VALENZUELA

MINUTES ACCEPTED AS PRINTED IN MAIL

APPLICATION FOR MEMBERSHIP--DESTINY GONZALEZ, KEITH ASLEY JR., JACOB NEHORAYAN, LORENZO VASQUEZ, FELIX CISNEROS

BILLS READ--NONE

COMMITTEE REPORTS

AUDIT & BUDGET--TRUSTEES The Budget meeting will be held January 10, 2023, and the Audit will be held on January 31, 2024. Both will be held at the Union Office.

SAFETY & HEALTH--MACARAEG Lately safety district is out in the street to "try and help prevent accidents". Be aware that they are out there. If they observe violations of safety issues, they will issue disciplinary actions, including placing carriers out on a 16.7.

RETIREES 7 Retiree's present tonight. !!

MDA FUND-- \$ 1,302.00 in the fund

HBR--J. DOLABSON Report will be in my article in the MailCall.

MDA--MACARAEG No Report

MBA-- New MBA Representative will

be appointed at the January meeting.

POLITICAL--BURTON Windfall Elimination Bill now has enough supporters in the House, hopefully we can get enough supporter's in the Senate to have this become law. CCA buy back bill (HR5995) is still short of the number needed for passage, this would allow eligible carriers to buy back their time spent as CCA's. Happy to say that we signed up 5 new members at the Retiree luncheon for LCPF. **EDITOR--BURTON** MailCall was mailed out on October 30th.

ELECTION COMMITTEE No Report

FINANCE REPORT--MULLINAX Thanks to those who attended the Retiree Luncheon, we collected \$ 810.00 towards the cost. The final report will be given at the next meeting.

TREASURERS REPORT--WILSON Financial Reports were read by the Treasurer.

MOTION TO ACCEPT REPORTS AS READ M/S/C

VICE-PRESIDENT MACARAEG Congratulations to PEDRO MORALES, who passed his Steward Training class.

PRESIDENT BROOKINS CSALC & NALC will be holding a training and Rap Session in April of 2024. Full dates and motions will be presented early in the new year. Postal Service will be raising the cost of first-class stamps to 68 cents sometime in March of 2024. The COVID protocol has been discontinued. Mail theft continues to be a major problem. Also spoke on the process of Collective Bargaining,

Route adjustments under the TIAREAP plan and Safety issues. Also happy to announce that JOHN BURTON has been appointed to the position of MBA Representative and that LUCY JACOBS has been appointed to the position of EDITOR. Congratulations, I am sure that they will serve the Branch with professionalism as always.

OLD BUSINESS--NONE

NEW BUSINESS

MOTION--Move that the Branch Donate \$ 100.00

To the North Valley Caring Services for the Christmas Celebration M/S/C

MOTION--Move that the Branch Donate \$ 100.00 to the Salvation Army for Thanksgiving M/S/C

MOTION--Move that the Branch Donate \$ 100.00 to the Salvation Army for Christmas M/S/C

MOTION--Move that the Branch Donate \$ 100.00 to the Wounded Warrior Project M/S/C

MOTION--Move that the Branch Donate \$ 100.00 to the Marines "Toys For Tots Foundation" M/S/C

MOTION--Move that the Branch Donate \$ 100.00 to the American Cancer Society, in the name of ROGER ASKEW M/S/C

MOTION--Move that the Branch give JESUS CRUZ our MDA "Poster Child", \$ 50,00 for his birthday M/S/C

MOTION--Move that the Branch give the CRUZ family \$ 100.00 for Christmas M/S/C

MOTION--Move that the Branch cancel the Regular Branch meeting for the month of December, and hold a Christmas party on Saturday, Dec. 2nd at the Van Nuys Masonic Lodge. M/S/C

MOTION--Move that the Branch empower the Executive Board to conduct, any and all, business of the Branch, from November 8, 2023, through January 2, 2024. M/S/C

UNDERLINED INDICATES UNANIMOUS VOTE

GOOD OF THE ASSOCIATION

DAN RATHBONE spoke on the importance of having a guaranteed 8-hour day from the perspective of his years in the service. Congratulations to ART BOCEK on receiving his GOLD CARD for 50 years of NALC Membership. He also spoke on the importance of donating to the Letter Carrier Political Fund (LCPF), and the fact that BROTHER RATHBONE is also a GOLD CARD recipient. BOB JOHNSON received his 40 Year Membership Pin & WILLIAM QUINTON was presented with a NALC watch in honor of his recent retirement. Discussion was held on why Carriers cannot just go home early on overtime when they want to, as this is a violation of the Contract which guarantees 8 hours of work per day.

MDA DRAWING

\$ 5 RAFAEL PEREZ--PANORAMA CITY--DONATED
\$ 5 BOB JOHNSON--RETIREE (VN MAIN)--DONATED
\$ 5 JOSE JIMENEZ--SHERMAN OAKS--DONATED

Meeting Adjourned 9:09 PM