

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

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PRESIDENT'S REPORT

**By
CALVIN D. BROOKINS**

Personal conduct, social media, and the Postal Service

The Postal Service and NALC have a long history of earning high levels of public respect and trust. City letter carriers are at the forefront in this history and always strive to present a positive image to the community. Acknowledging this tradition of respect, the Postal Service has certain expectations for the conduct of letter carriers. If you are new to USPS and NALC, these expectations may be unfamiliar to you. This article will briefly describe these expectations and summarize how they relate to employees' use of social media.

Section 665.16 of the Employee and Labor Relations Manual (ELM) outlines the overall expectations regarding conduct in and out of the workplace.

665.16 Behavior and Personal Habits Employees are expected to conduct themselves during and outside of working hours in a manner that reflects favorably upon the Postal Service.

Although it is not the policy of the Postal Service to interfere with the private lives of employees, it does require that postal employees be honest, reliable, trustworthy, courteous, and of good character and reputation.

The Federal Standards of Ethical Conduct referenced in 662.1 also contain regulations governing the off-duty behavior of postal employees. Employees must not engage in criminal, dishonest, notoriously disgraceful, immoral, or other conduct prejudicial to the Postal Service. Conviction for a violation of any criminal statute may be grounds for disciplinary action against an employee, including removal of the employee, in addition to any other penalty imposed pursuant to statute.

Chapter 1 Section 112 of the Handbook M-41, City Delivery Carriers Duties and Responsibilities, reads in part:

112.52 Conduct affairs of personal life in a way that will reflect creditably on both you and the Postal Service.

Keep the ELM and M-41 guidelines above in mind when interacting with the public or using social media. The official Postal Service social media policy is contained in Section 363 of the Administrative Support Manual (ASM). The USPS social media policy mainly addresses the conduct of employees who use social media in their official capacity to communicate with the public or other employees.

To review ASM Section 363, visit nalc.org and choose the Workplace Issues/Resources/USPS Handbooks and Manuals tab to view the complete ASM.

While the ASM guidelines do not limit an employee's participation in union social media activity, there are specific rules contained in the Hatch Act that apply to union political activity and social media. For more information on the "dos and don'ts" related to the Hatch Act and social media, visit the "Government Affairs" > "Political" tabs on the NALC website at nalc.org.

Recently, the Postal Service has issued reminders to employees about these expectations and specifically employees' behavior when interacting and posting on social media. A USPS Retail and Delivery stand-up talk issued in October reminds employees of the ASM rule prohibiting them from speaking on behalf of the organization on websites, blogs and social media without permission. Postal employees must receive written permission from the Postal Service social media team and the appropriate vice president before establishing any online accounts that represent the Postal Service.

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ATTENDANCE CHART BRANCH MEETINGS

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

MAIN OFFICE
ENCINO
PANORAMA CITY
SHERMAN OAKS
SUN VALLEY
TARZANA
RETIREE'S
TOTAL

**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**

"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)

The USPS does not intend to have this policy infringe on employees' ability to have their own social media presence or personal accounts. However, be cautious when making posts related to your job with USPS. The stand-up talk also reminds employees that they should not post while on the clock. This includes "selfies" in the plant, post office, vehicle, or other official workplace areas. While social media videos and reels of letter carriers performing their duties and interacting with customers can often be entertaining and heartwarming, be aware that these may not be favorably received by the Postal Service.

You have the right to use personal social media outside of work hours at your discretion; however, be careful. Comments or videos you make on social media may be misinterpreted by customers, co-workers or management, which could create difficulties in the workplace. The ASM reminds employees to always be respectful, whether in the actual or virtual world.

The Postal Service Standard of Conduct states:

"Employees are expected to maintain harmonious working relationships and not to do anything that would contribute to an unpleasant working environment.

" ASM Section 363.B advises employees to "not verbally attack other individuals or companies. This includes fellow employees, contractors, customers, vendors, and competitors."

Remember that anything you post might be visible to anyone—including postal managers and the public and could be there forever.

Be mindful of your personal conduct and what you are posting on social media. You never know who are watching. In other words, social media could benefit you, and it could be a detriment to you.

In Unionism



VICE PRESIDENT REPORT

by

Jemmayen Macaraeg

National Rap Session

At NALC rap session, President Renfroe updates state and branch leaders on:

- **Contract negotiations**
- **Crimes against carriers**
- **Heat safety**
- **Improving representation • Legislation and politics • New initiatives**

More than 1,000 letter carrier activists representing branches across the United States gathered in New Orleans to take part in NALC's 2023 National Conference. The NALC Constitution calls for the union to hold a national conference in non-convention, odd-numbered years, with the date set by the Executive Council.

Contract negotiations

Renfroe then moved on to the topic of contract negotiations. "That is always our top priority," he said. "It's at the top of my mind for me every morning, night and minute in between."

He explained that NALC is working on dual tracks, finalizing preparations for interest arbitration even as it continues to engage at the table with the Postal Service for a negotiated agreement.

"We have been hard at work for some time in preparation for the possibility of us reaching the interest arbitration process, and we are not completely finished with that preparation, but we have a very strong case put together. And should that be where we ultimately end up, we feel very good about the case that we can put on," Renfroe said.

The president said the parties are in the process of selecting a neutral arbitrator to chair the panel and will schedule hearing dates shortly after that.

"We will proceed as if we're going there, but at the same time, we are going to continue to negotiate," he said. "I think both sides feel like it is well worth our time and our energy to continue to try to work toward an agreement."

Renfroe said that while the parties have made progress toward reaching an agreement on the economic terms of a potential agreement, a gap remains between what the Postal Service is willing to pay and what the union believes would constitute a fair agreement that rewards NALC members for their value and contributions to the Postal Service's success. "We started with a pretty large gap," he said. "We are going to keep working at it, and hopefully we can finally get to the point of agreement."

Another topic of negotiation is the status of the non-career workforce. Renfroe said that if the non-career workforce does exist in the next contract, it needs to change considerably, particularly in pay.

"There is a scenario where we could reach a tentative agreement that includes the continuance of a non-career workforce in some form, if they are willing to pay all letter carriers what we believe we deserve," he said. "Of course, there's also a scenario where we reach a tentative agreement that does not include a non-career workforce."

If the parties go to arbitration, NALC will present an official economic proposal that the union would support in its interest arbitration case and seek to achieve in the process, and if so, the president outlined what he was fairly certain would be in that proposal: "A single pay table, as we just talked about. We would go into the process proposing to eliminate the non-career category. We would propose that our cost-of-living adjustments be restored to 100 percent, starting at Step A and all the way through the process. And then we would, of course, propose that we receive significant annual general increases."

Enough is Enough

Renfroe then talked about the increase in robberies and assaults targeting letter carriers, which have risen exponentially over the past three years, with more than 2,000 such assaults in that period. Of those, only 14 percent have resulted in an arrest and federal prosecution. "Unfortunately, there is no simple, quick solution to this," he said. "This is something that's going to take time. But we are beginning to make progress." The Postal Service has made both public and private commitments to replace all of the Arrow Locks in the field and has tested a number of electronic solutions to devalue the Arrow Keys, which have been a primary target of thieves.

Renfroe said that increasing federal prosecution rates is another important component. The Postal Service is funding about a dozen prosecutors in U.S. attorneys' offices to spend a majority of their time prosecuting these crimes. But more is needed, and that is why NALC has been holding "Enough is enough" rallies.

The rallies boost media awareness of the issue and generate robust news coverage, which in turn prioritizes the issue for residents and U.S. attorneys, thereby helping raise prosecution rates. (For more on the rallies, see the December Postal Record.)

In addition to the rallies, NALC has been working with members of Congress on crafting and introducing legislation to help combat the issue. Renfroe said that the bill would be NALC's primary legislative priority and that he will call for a day of action to quickly grow the support of co-sponsors and public awareness.

"For the longest time, most of us in this room carried mail and nobody ever messed with us," he said. "There was a thought, if you mess with a letter carrier, that's a federal employee, you're going to jail. We have to make that a reality. That's ultimately what deters these crimes."

Heat safety

The president next addressed heat safety, which has resulted in letter carrier deaths. He said that the Postal Service has acknowledged the widespread problem with getting area and district managers to hold the mandatory heat training.

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VICE PRESIDENT REPORT

(Continued from Page 3)

Along those lines, he said, “We are going to continue to engage them to ensure this training looks a whole lot different for 2024 by the end of or by April 1 of next year.”

A major part of the issue is that the United States does not have a heat safety standard for workers. The Biden administration is working on one, which the NALC has vowed to help with. “We will continue to use every avenue we possibly can until we get to the point where they have a heat-illness prevention program that includes all the elements that are accepted by experts in this field, to protect people that are working from the dangers of excessive heat,” he said.

Improving representation-Delivering for America Plan

Renfroe told attendees how the union is trying to improve representation for the branches, mostly small, that are not fully functioning—not active in representing their members—by working to merge those branches with nearby functional branches that can improve the representation for the members. He said that 113 of these branches have been merged with other branches, resulting in improved representation for those members.

On the Postal Service’s 10-year plan, the union is remaining engaged with the Postal Service in order to maintain a seat at the table and offer feedback, but also to enforce compliance with the National Agreement as more letter carriers start delivering from Sorting and Delivery Centers (S&DCs). He also warned members to not listen to local managers talking about routes that will be moved to a future S&DC. “If you’re going to be impacted by one of these in any way, you will hear well in advance from your regional office and from us at Headquarters to prepare for that,” he said.

Politics and legislation

President Renfroe outlined NALC’s legislative and political agenda, starting with the union’s efforts to educate the Biden administration on the need for implementation of the “Segal” pension valuation method for CSRS. Convincing the White House to issue an executive action to institute the private-sector pension valuations would save the Postal Service billions of dollars annually.

In Congress, NALC continues to add support for the Social Security Fairness Act (H.R. 82), the bill that would repeal the Windfall Elimination Provision and the Government Pension Offset. Another piece of legislation is the Federal Retirement Fairness Act (H.R. 5995), the bill that would allow former non-career employees—including CCAs, TEs and casuals, all the way back to Dec. 31, 1988—to make deposit (or buy back) their non-career time and have it credited for retirement. A little-known fact, Renfroe said, is that 64 percent of active letter carriers would be affected by this legislation, which shows why it remains a legislative priority.

However, President Renfroe said that members needed to be realistic about the chances of passage in Washington. He pointed to the many years it took of building support for postal reform through Congress after Congress, so that when a certain election went a certain way, it was possible to finally get the legislation enacted.

Unfortunately, the president said that there was not time to outline the process for Medicare integration under the Postal Service Reform Act, but that the “You Are the Current Resident” podcast posted on the same day had many details for members. The podcast is available on nalc.org, Spotify, iTunes and other places you listen to podcasts.

New initiatives

To end the speech portion of the meeting, Renfroe outlined four new initiatives NALC is working on:

- A new online learning program to complement the in-person training that NALC does well on a local, regional and national level.
- An emergency response team of letter carriers to help NALC members when they’re dealing with trauma, not to serve as counselors, but rather to offer peer-to-peer support in situations like suicide awareness, suicide prevention, mental health issues or substance abuse.
- A mentoring program for women in the union. “The idea behind this is to structure a program that for any of our members that face challenges just because of the fact that they are a woman, they have someone they can reach out to help them navigate that challenge,” he said.
- A standing committee for diversity issues. “Everyone in our union deserves and should have the opportunity to learn and to be involved, no matter who they are, no matter where they’re from,” he said. “And if we do that, and we make conscious efforts to ensure that as we move forward, we give all those who express interest that opportunity, it will allow us to continue to do something we’ve done for a long time, but I think even move to the next level, of embracing and utilizing the strength that we have through our diversity.”

He then moved to the “rap” portion, taking approximately an hour’s worth of questions from the attendees, primarily about issues related to contract negotiations, uniforms and route adjustments, before adjourning the meeting at about 11 a.m.



**WISHING ALL MEMBERS AND THEIR
FAMILIES A VERY HAPPY & PROSPEROUS
NEW YEAR !**

BRANCH 2462 2023 CHRISTMAS PARTY FUN FOR ALL



"THE MAIL CALL" BRANCH 2462, NALC

Lucy Jacobs, Editor

**6910 Hayvenhurst Ave., # 104
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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