

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

**VOLUME 61**

**FEBRUARY 2024**

**NUMBER 2**

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## **PRESIDENT'S REPORT**

**By  
JEMMAYEN MACARAEG**

### **Claim denied? Don't despair. Appeal!**

Letter carriers file a total of about 24,000 injury claims yearly with the Office of Workers' Compensation Programs (OWCP). Approximately 90 percent are for traumatic injuries—the rest are for occupational diseases. OWCP generally attempts to adjudicate traumatic injury claims in 45 days. Occupational disease claims take about 90 days.

During the adjudication process, OWCP accepts many traumatic injuries as short-form closures. These are claims where the injured worker is expected to incur less than \$1,500 in medical expenses and have his or her lost time covered by Continuation of Pay (COP).

Injured workers will get a letter explaining the shortform closure that advises them to file a CA-7 for wage loss compensation if they exceed the 45 days of COP. Once the CA-7 is filed, OWCP will notify the worker by letter that the claim will be formally adjudicated.

If the OWCP claims examiner does not think the claim has sufficient factual or medical evidence for acceptance, a development letter will be issued, giving the worker 30 days to provide the necessary evidence for formal adjudication.

Some workers get the formal adjudication notice or development letter and incorrectly think that their claim has been denied. Every letter from OWCP should be thoroughly examined. Many claims are denied because the worker did not respond to the development letter. Injured workers can avoid this by checking their ECOMP dashboard daily. Development letters are found under the "Letter" tab, labeled as Response Required, allowing the worker to respond to the letter immediately.

Most development letters will ask for a medical report where a doctor provides an explanation of how the injury was caused by the work event. Workers need to read the entire letter, as there may be specific questions for them to answer at

the end of the letter. Despite having sufficient medical evidence to get the claim accepted, the claim will be denied if the worker fails to answer the questions at the end of the letter.

OWCP will issue a Notice of Decision when a claim is accepted or denied. An acceptance letter will list the accepted conditions and include important information regarding claims for compensation and OWCP billing procedures. Injured workers should carefully read the accepted conditions, as OWCP will generally accept the claim for the least-impairing condition.

For example, a knee injury may be accepted as a sprain even when there is evidence in the file indicating a torn meniscus or ligament. When that happens, the worker needs to contact his or her doctor and get an additional medical report that links the tears to the original injury.

Getting additional medical conditions accepted at the beginning of your claim is essential in getting further treatments authorized.

### **When your claim is denied**

When you receive a Notice of Decision denying your claim, don't despair!

Carefully read the denial letter and look for the explanation provided in the Basis for Denial section. There, you will find the exact reason or reasons why the claim was denied. In most cases, the denial is based on the lack of a rationalized medical report providing the causal relationship between the injury and specific work factors.

The Basis for Denial section of the denial letter should be given to your doctor immediately so that additional medical evidence can be provided as soon as possible.

**(Continued on Page 2)**

"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
<b>MAIN OFFICE</b>	<b>2</b>										
<b>ENCINO</b>	<b>3</b>										
<b>PANORAMA CITY</b>	<b>2</b>										
<b>SHERMAN OAKS</b>	<b>7</b>										
<b>SUN VALLEY</b>	<b>0</b>										
<b>TARZANA</b>	<b>0</b>										
<b>RETIREE'S</b>	<b>7</b>										
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>21</b>										

## NEXT MEETING TUESDAY FEBRUARY

**6th**

**"2024"**

**6:30 p.m.**

## BRANCH OFFICE

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

**Feb 11 , 2024**

**WEB PAGE.... [WWW.NALCBRANCH2462.ORG](http://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)

OWCP will include an appeal form with every decision. If your claim is denied and you want to present your factual and medical evidence directly to an OWCP employee, check off the box for an oral hearing with the branch of hearings and review. Carefully fill out the bottom of the form, making sure that you list the date of the decision you are appealing. You can upload the completed form via ECOMP, choosing "Branch of Hearings and Review" in the drop-down menu.

Oral hearings are preferable when there are questions regarding the fact of injury. It gives the worker the opportunity to explain the facts surrounding the injury and allows the hearing's representative to ask questions that can further clear up any misinformation regarding the injury, including letters or challenges provided by the Postal Service.

The only downside of requesting an oral hearing is that it can take three to six months to get the hearing scheduled, and then up to 75 days to get a decision.

However, if you get sufficient evidence into the file prior to the hearing, the hearings representative can accept the case without it ever going to hearing. Oral hearings must be requested within 30 days of the date of the decision.

Whatever appeal route you may choose, don't despair! Contact your national business agent's office and ask for a referral to a regional workers' compensation assistant who can offer expert guidance on your appeal.

Resource: Kevin Card, June 2022 Postal Record

## Health Benefits Report By JANETTE DOLABSON, HBR

Make sure you mark your calendars for a Special Enrollment Period (SEP) that will be offered to most Postal Service Annuitants and their family members.

Starting in April of 2024, individuals who are eligible for Medicare Part A and are not currently participating in Medicare Part B, will have a 6 month opportunity to select Medicare Part B without incurring a late enrollment penalty.

As part of the Postal Reform Act, the USPS will pay the late enrollment penalty.

Keep in mind, if you were previously eligible for Medicare Part B and chose not to enroll but now have experienced some regrets, this one-time SEP is significant to your health and finances.

JANUARY 2024 THRU DECEMBER 2024

	ESTIMATE EXPENDITURES	BUDGET 2023	SPENT 2023	BUDGET 2024
	NALC Per Capita Tax:			
	Regular Members			
	340 at \$ 268.06	\$ 93,548.00	\$ 90,546.24	\$ 91,140.00
	Retiree's			
	110 at \$ 7.08	\$ 770.00	\$ 785.52	\$ 780.00
	State Per capita Tax:			
	Regular Members			
	340 at \$ 10.40	\$ 3,640.00	\$ 3,517.20	\$ 3,536.00
	Retiree's			
	110 at \$ .60	\$ 55.00	\$ 66.15	\$ 66.00
1	Contingency Fund (regular members) (350 @ 2.00 x 26 pay periods)	\$ 18,200.00	\$ 17,586.00	\$ 17,680.00
2	Contingency Fund (retired members) (110 @ .50 x 26 pay periods)	\$ 1,430.00	\$ 1,897.00	\$ 1,900.00
3	Branch Officers Salary	\$ 42,000.00	\$ 42,000.00	\$ 42,000.00
4	The Mail-Call	\$ 10,000.00	\$ 9,050.67	\$ 10,000.00
5	Mail-Permit (includes postage)	\$ 1,700.00	\$ 1,775.00	\$ 2,000.00
6	Postage Expense	\$ 800.00	\$ 330.64	\$ 1,000.00
9	Harry Brenneman Award	\$ 300.00	\$ 314.20	\$ 325.00
10	Office Expense	\$ 4,000.00	\$ 2,737.34	\$ 5,000.00
12	Retiree's Dinner	\$ 5,500.00	\$ 4,587.23	\$ 7,000.00
13	Installation of Officers	\$ 500.00	\$ -	\$ -
14	Branch Telephones	\$ 1,200.00	\$ 1,007.78	\$ 1,200.00
15	Bond for Officer's	\$ 400.00	\$ 392.00	\$ 400.00
16	Office Supplies	\$ 1,600.00	\$ 1,198.26	\$ 1,500.00
17	Labor-Management Meetings	\$ 100.00	\$ -	\$ 100.00
18	Refreshments	\$ 1,500.00	\$ 944.41	\$ 3,500.00
19	Donations	\$ 1,000.00	\$ 800.00	\$ 1,000.00
20	Equipment Repairs	\$ 750.00	\$ 520.81	\$ 1,500.00
21	Equipment Purchase	\$ 3,000.00	\$ 2,086.40	\$ 2,500.00
22	Election Expense	\$ 2,000.00	\$ 129.00	\$ -
23	Miscellaneous Expense	\$ 100.00	\$ 100.00	\$ 100.00
24	Public Relations	\$ 1,500.00	\$ -	\$ 1,000.00
25	Station Expense	\$ 1,600.00	\$ 1,600.00	\$ 1,600.00
26	Educational & Training	\$ 20,000.00	\$ 20,133.65	\$ 25,000.00
27	Publications	\$ 20.00	\$ 20.00	\$ 20.00
28	Local Negotiations	\$ 2,000.00	\$ -	\$ 2,000.00
29	Branch Picnic	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -
30	Assignment Time	\$ 16,000.00	\$ 11,474.48	\$ 20,000.00

ESTIMATE EXPENDITURES		BUDGET 2023	SPENT 2023	BUDGET 2024
31	Insurance cost	\$ 1,200.00	\$ 1,102.00	\$ 1,200.00
32	Office Rental	\$ 33,000.00	\$ 31,216.00	\$ 33,000.00
33	Gas Utility	\$ 400.00	\$ 558.43	\$ 600.00
34	Food Drive	\$ 4,000.00	\$ 910.58	\$ 4,000.00
35	Ray Kreyer Award	\$ 600.00	\$ 632.05	\$ 700.00
36	C.O.A. Mail Call	\$ 125.00	\$ -	\$ 125.00
37	Route Inspection Expense	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 1,000.00
38	Mileage (.67 per mile)	\$ 2,000.00	\$ 2,970.43	\$ 3,000.00
39	Scholarship Expense	\$ 300.00	\$ -	\$ 300.00
40	Electric Utility	\$ 2,000.00	\$ 1,663.07	\$ 2,000.00
41	Dues & Membership Expense	\$ 1,300.00	\$ 1,096.12	\$ 1,300.00
42	Janitorial Expense	\$ 900.00	\$ 900.00	\$ 900.00
43	MDA Expense	\$ 600.00	\$ 550.00	\$ 600.00
45	Bass Calendars	\$ 1,800.00	\$ 1,687.50	\$ 1,800.00
46	Christmas Open House	\$ 8,000.00	\$ 8,495.43	\$ 9,000.00
47	Independent Medical Exam	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -
48	Organizing Expense	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -
49	Cellular Phone	\$ 100.00	\$ -	\$ 100.00
50	Greeting Cards	\$ 25.00	\$ -	\$ 25.00
51	On-Line Service	\$ 1,300.00	\$ 1,175.00	\$ 1,300.00
53	NALC Store Expense	\$ 2,100.00	\$ -	\$ 2,100.00
54	Deaf/Inter-Sign Language	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -
55	General Taxes	\$ 600.00	\$ 341.23	\$ 600.00
56	Cable Expense	\$ 1,400.00	\$ 1,137.04	\$ 1,400.00
57	Retiree Breakfast Expense	\$ 2,000.00	\$ 1,392.03	\$ 2,000.00
58	Cost of LM-3 & 990 Reports	\$ 1,000.00	\$ 368.75	\$ 1,000.00
59	Workers Compensation Insurance	\$ 1,600.00	\$ 530.00	\$ 600.00
60	Konica Minolta C458 Expense	\$ 7,500.00	\$ 3,985.68	\$ -
99	Non-Numbered Items	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -
TOTALS		\$ 309,063.00	\$	\$ 312,497.00

JANUARY 2024 THRU DECEMBER 2024

BALANCE SHEET

INCOME \$ 313,512.00

EXPENDITURES \$ 312,497.00

BALANCE \$ 1,015.00

The above report will be voted on by the members at the regular meeting, on February 6, 2024. Respectfully submitted,

Tia Wilson

Treasurer

Tracy Mullinax

Financial Secretary

Robert Johnson

Trustee

Larry Dolabson

Trustee

Francisco Valenzuela

Trustee

# MailCall Article

By  
**Calvin D. Brookins**

## **Temporary Detail to work in other Installations.**

From time-to-time Postal management will reach out and ask carriers to volunteer to go work in other installations with the promise of paying per diem and putting the carrier up in a hotel for the period.

There is a process that must be followed when a carrier is temporarily detailed to work in another installations. That process is outlined in the Memorandum of Understanding (M-01968) dated 11/1/2021. It states in part;

...The Postal Service will determine the number of carriers, location and duration of detail needed. The Postal Service will solicit volunteers for a defined period. The parties at the Headquarters level will review those that volunteer for a detail and jointly select city letter carriers to be detailed. Emphasis on the word and phrase jointly select city letter carriers to be detailed.

Some management people seem to think they get to seek volunteers and send them out to another installation and then go and jointly select the carriers, that is not the case, the carriers must be jointly selected prior to them going to work in another installation.

If management comes to you and asks if you want to temporarily work in another installation, before you say yes, please notify your shop steward, so they can make sure that the process is being followed. Otherwise, your detail could or may be cut short. This is just information to keep in mind.

## **To all members of Branch 2462. This is a personal note from me.**

With regrets I must inform the membership as I have already informed the Executive Board members and those members that were at the last branch meeting that I have resigned my position as President of the branch, effective at the end of the branch meeting on January 2, 2024.

I have resigned for personal family reasons that require more of my attention at this time. I apologize for not completing my commitment to the branch for the term of the position. I also want to thank all of you for your support during my time as President. I am now asking you all to give your new President Jemmayen Macaraeg the same support and respect that you have given to me. I am confident that she will do a great job in representing the membership and branch 2462.

Happy New Year!

## **In Unionism**

## **PROPOSED BY-LAW CHANGE**

The following By-Law changes were submitted.

### **BY-LAW CHANGE NUMBER 1.**

Current Language:

#### ARTICLE V

Section 5. Any member, not in good standing, or who has not attended at least eighteen (18) Regular Meetings during the twenty-four (24) months prior to their nomination as delegate shall not receive any expenses from the Branch. Any member who has less than two (2) year membership in this Branch who shall have attended at least three-fourths (3/4) of those Regular Meetings, from their acceptance into membership, prior to their nomination as delegate or alternate may receive expenses.

Proposed changes are in Bold & Underlined:

Section 5. Any member, not in good standing, or who has not attended at least eighteen (18) Regular Meetings during the twenty-four (24) months prior to their nomination as delegate shall not receive any expenses from the Branch. **Any member who has at least one (1) year of membership and has attended three-fourths (3/4) of the Regular Meetings since their acceptance into membership, may receive expenses if nominated as a Branch Delegate**

Submitted & Signed by  
Steve Seyfried, Janette Dolabson, Art Bocek

### **BY-LAW CHANGE NUMBER 2.**

Current Language:

#### ARTICLE V

Section 6. It shall be the duty of each member to sign an attendance book at all Regular Meetings, as proof of their attendance. In the event that there should not be a Regular Business Meeting in the month of December any given year, all members attending the previous November Regular Business Meeting shall receive credit toward their attendance for both the November and December Meetings.

Proposed changes are in Bold & Underlined:

Section 6. It shall be the duty of each member to sign an attendance book at all Regular Meetings, as proof of their attendance. In the event that there should not be a Regular Business Meeting in the month of December any given year, all members attending the previous November **or following January Regular Business Meeting shall receive credit toward their attendance for the December Meeting.**

Submitted & Signed by  
Steve Seyfried, Janette Dolabson, Art Bocek

# "THE MAIL CALL" BRANCH 2462, NALC

**Lucy Jacobs, Editor**

**6910 Hayvenhurst Ave., # 104  
Van Nuys, CA 91406**

**Address Service Requested**

NONPROFIT ORG.  
U.S. POSTAGE  
PAID  
VAN NUYS, CA  
PERMIT No. 314

## **Branch Meeting Minutes**

**January 2, 2024**

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 7:05 p.m. The Pledge of Allegiance was led by TRUSTEE LARRY DOLABSON

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

### **ROLL CALL OF OFFICERS**

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

**ABSENT--**JOHNSON, BURTON

### **MINUTES ACCEPTED AS PRINTED IN MAIL**

**APPLICATION FOR MEMBERSHIP--**TYLER CECENA, CRISTIAN LIPPS, JONATHAN HERNANDEZ, RAUL GARCIA, LAKHUIR SINGH, VILMA FLORES, ERIC FREGOSO, DANIEL PEREZ, JERMEL FRANKLIN, ASHLEY TORRES-LOPEZ, RITU SHARMA, JASON CRUZ, CHRISTOPHER MENDEZ, DANIEL VENTURA, CHARITO MAGANA, LAMAR CURTIS JR., RONNY MARTINEZ, ANDREW KATZ, MICHAEL MERE, HALVAH JONES,

### **COMMUNICATIONS READ**

**BILLS READ--NONE**

### **COMMITTEE REPORTS**

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

**SAFETY & HEALTH--**JACOBS Spoke on working in winter conditions. Dangers of cold, rain and hypothermia.

**RETIREES** 7 Retiree's present tonight. !!

**MDA FUND--** \$ 1,803.00 in the fund

**HBR--**J. DOLABSON Look for my MailCall article.

**MDA--**BURTON No Report

**MBA--**BURTON No Report.

**POLITICAL--**BURTON No Report.

**EDITOR--**JACOBS MailCall was mailed out last week, and there is sufficient money in the account.

**ELECTION COMMITTEE** No Report

**FINANCE REPORT--**MULLINAX Stations that have not already done so need to turn in their receipts for their Christmas party. ASAP

**TREASURERS REPORT--**WILSON Financial Reports were read.

**MOTION TO ACCEPT REPORTS AS READ** M/S/C

**VICE-PRESIDENT** MACARAEG 2024 Arbitration Advocacy Training will be held March 17-23, 2024. We received the State & COP minutes. CSALC & Region 1 training will be held in Las Vegas on April 12-17, 2024.

**PRESIDENT** BROOKINS Spoke on MOU 1968 & the implications & requirements that must be met before a Carrier is detailed out to another area for work. Labor Management meeting was held last month. Items covered were Safety, Handling of oversized or heavy parcels on the street. Also the procedures and requirements of scheduling and calling in of OTDL Carriers.

### **OLD BUSINESS--NONE**

### **NEW BUSINESS**

There were 2 By-law changes submitted. They will be printed in the February MailCall and voted on at the March Regular Meeting.

**MOTION--**Move that the Branch pay the Treasurer. \$ 250 to prepare and file the 990 Report and Workers Compensation audit. M/S/C

**MOTION--**Move that the Branch renew the mailing permit for the MailCall at the USPS M/S/C

**MOTION--**Move that the Branch renew the CD, which matured on December 31, 2023, in a new 8-month CD at Priority One Credit Union. M/S/C

**UNDERLINED INDICATES UNANIMOUS VOTE**

### **GOOD OF THE ASSOCIATION**

**Congratulations to ALEXANDERA KEYES, KIRAL PREDTETCHENSKY, AND GERARDO MARQUEZ on being converted to Regular Carrier. Congratulations to PEDRO MORALES on his graduation from Branch 2462's Shop Steward Training Class. PRESIDENT CALVIN BROOKINS ANNOUNCED THAT HE IS RESIGNING AS PRESIDENT OF THE BRANCH, due to family reasons. We wish him well and Thank him for his Dedicated Service**

### **MDA DRAWING**

\$ 4 FRANCISCO VALENZUELA--PANORAMA CITY--DONATED  
\$ 4 OSCAR CORTEZ--MAIN OFFICE--DONATED  
\$ 5 FRANCISCO VALENZUELA--PANORAMA CITY--DONATED

**Meeting Adjourned 8:46 PM**

## **WINTER WEATHER SAFETY by LUCY JACOBS**

**Hypothermia:** when the body loses heat faster than it can produce heat

**Signs:** shivering, exhaustion, confusion, fumbling hands, memory loss, slurred speech, or drowsiness. A body temperature of 95°F or less is an emergency!

**Frostbite:** when the body tissues die because of poor circulation

**Signs:** numbness, white or grayish-yellow skin, firm or waxy skin. Loss of feeling in extremities: fingers, toes, ears, and nose. Prevent these by dressing in layers. Wear wind and waterproof clothing and footwear. Stay dry. Wear a hat. Hydrate. Remember to factor in windchill to the temperature.

If you feel like you are succumbing to these conditions, seek shelter. Go inside a building or car and turn on the heat. Soak in warm water or wrap your body in warm blankets. Warm the center of the body first where the vital organs are stored.

**Driving safety:** Slow down. Turn carefully. Don't stop suddenly. Be cautious of black ice and hydroplaning. Don't panic.