

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

VOLUME 61

MAY 2024

NUMBER 5

PRESIDENT'S REPORT

**By
JEMMAYEN MACARAEG**

THANK YOU!!!

We, Branch 2462, would like to express our sincere gratitude to John Beaumont who is the NALC Assistant to the National President Legislative and Political Organizing, for attending our branch meeting. He educated us further about the bills H.R. 7629 and H.R 5995 (please refer to the Vice President report). He explained the importance of why we should donate to the Letter Carrier Political Fund and because of his encouragement, members at the meeting that were not donating signed up and members who are already donating increased their donation. Once again, on behalf of Branch 2462 **THANK YOU** John Beaumont for taking the time to speak to us.

Let's talk about City Delivery updates: 4 updates!

1. Universal Distribution case



In October 2023 and January 2024, the Postal service sent notification detailing its intent to test and use a universal distribution case in select post offices. Testing of the case took place at the Dumfries Post offices in Dumfries, Virginia on Nov 6-17 and now the distribution case is being used at the Pompano Beach Post Office on Pompano Beach FL as of Jan23. USPS explained that the universal distribution case has been designed to address space constraints that might occur in post offices by combining the sortation of letters and flats in the same distribution case.

2. PS Form 1106

In December 2023, NALC received notification from the Postal Service that PS Form 1106, Arrow Key-Daily Accountable Log had been created. USPS says the form will be used when electronic means are not available to memorialize the current process of daily Arrow Key assignment and accountability. Director of City Delivery Christopher Jackson addressed the ongoing use of PS form 1106 for the said purpose. At the time, the PS Form 1106 had been rescinded by the Postal Service; therefore, the practice of using the form should have been discontinued. The recent notification formally introduces the PS Form 1106 and makes it an appropriate option for memorializing daily Arrow key assignment and accountability. However, relying on the form as a secondary option to the current electronic means as directed by USPS is **IMPROPER**.

The recently implemented process of using the Mobile Delivery Device-Technical Refresh (MDD-TR) as an electronic means to memorialize daily Arrow Key assignment and accountability is in conflict with postal handbooks and manuals. The letter carrier's responsibility when handling Arrow Keys as outlined in Sections 261 and 431 of Handbook M-41 has not changed. A carrier should exchange either a key check or signature when transferring Arrow Key accountability between themselves and a clearing clerk or management official. He encourages any member who receives instructions that violate postal handbooks and manuals to inform your local union representative and file a grievance.

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"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
MAIN OFFICE	2	2	1	3							
ENCINO	3	4	4	3							
PANORAMA CITY	2	2	4	4							
SHERMAN OAKS	7	5	7	6							
SUN VALLEY	0	0	0	0							
TARZANA	0	0	0	0							
RETIREE'S	7	5	5	6							
TOTAL	21	18	21	22							

NEXT MEETING TUESDAY

MAY 7th

"2024"

6:30 p.m.

BRANCH OFFICE

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

May 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: !!!!

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 June 22, 2024 (4th Saturday)** So, please mark your calendar....We hope to see you there. Thank You

PRESIDENT REPORT

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3. Informed Facility

In February, USPS sent an official notification that it would be displaying various information on monitors in the work area of post offices through an initiative called Informed Facility (IF). The Postal Service states that it can display real-time carrier data and sorting machine throughput numbers using these monitors. The data updates periodically and the information streams constantly.

Even though the Postal Service sent notification informing NALC of this initiative in February, the membership had already informed Director of City Delivery Christopher Jackson that monitors displaying carrier performances were being installed and used in several facilities across the country months earlier. Since becoming aware, He have held meetings with the Postal Service and expressed his concerns, and the concerns of the membership, with the information being displayed. Ultimately, they could not reach common ground on the initiative and the Postal Service decided to move forward with its implementation.

If management is displaying your work performance information on monitors in your delivery unit, He strongly advise that you request to see your steward and ask that a grievance be filed. A grievance starter has been created to assist representatives in developing cases at the local level. Shop stewards in need of assistance should reach out to their regional office for further guidance and a copy of grievance starter.

4. Canoo model Lifestyle Delivery Vehicle (LDV) 190



Also in February, the Postal Service detailed its plans to test the Canoo model Lifestyle Delivery Vehicle (LDV) 190. The Canoo LDV 190 is a battery electric commercial off-the-shelf vehicle with almost 172 cubic feet of cargo space. USPS states that the purpose of this test is to determine how the vehicle performs on carrier routes currently serviced by Long Life Vehicles (LLV), Flexible Fuel Vehicles (FFV) and Mercedes Metris vehicles.

Testing of the vehicle will be conducted April 3 through October at the South Atlanta Sorting and Delivery Center (S&DC) in Atlanta, GA. Driver training for the Canoo LDV 190 is scheduled to begin April 1.

VICE PRESIDENT'S REPORT

by
JANETTE DOLABSON

April was EAP Awareness Month – Manny Peralta PR article in part:

“To read about EAP services, begin by going to nalc.org, hover over “Workplace Issues,” then go to the “Safety and Health” tab. While holding there, you will see three options to the right, click on “Employee Assistance Program” and you will land on our EAP information page.

The first tabbed section explains that the Employee Assistance Program is governed by Article 35 of the National Agreement. EAP is jointly administered by the NALC, the American Postal Workers Union, the National Postal Mail Handlers Union and the USPS. It provides confidential education, referral and counseling to help employees through personal challenges of all types, including alcoholism and drug-abuse. This first section also contains a link (eap4you.com), which will take you to the national service provider of EAP services, currently New Directions Behavioral Health (NDBH). Please see below for information once we land there.

The next section of our web page contains copies of PUB 518 - EAP Supervisor’s Guide, explaining the EAP program for all employees and PUB 519, which addresses counseling as follows: The voluntary and confidential counseling services of the EAP provide an excellent opportunity to help employees address personal and family problems. EAP counseling helps employees with relationship concerns, depression, anxiety, divorce, death of a loved one, financial concerns, stress, substance abuse and other personal issues. Services are available to Postal Service employees and their immediate family members. These publications also emphasize your right to confidentiality as follows: Your privacy is protected by strict federal and state laws and regulations and by counselors’ professional ethical standards. Information you share with the EAP may not be released to anyone without your prior written consent, except in these situations: As required by law (for example, when a person’s emotional condition is a threat to himself, herself or others; or if child or elder abuse is suspected) or when a court order is issued upon a showing of good cause.

Promotion of EAP services to all our employees is the duty and responsibility of the District Advisory Committee (DAC) or the Joint Committee on Employee Assistance Program (JCEAP), whose composition is from the three national postal unions and management. If these advisory committees are not meeting, they are unable to promote EAP services to the employees in that district. The recent restructuring of the USPS has decimated the functionality of these committees and while the national unions work towards getting our committees to properly function, we need your help to share your knowledge of this program with your co-workers.

Once you are familiar with the services available, you can explore connecting your family members with that information, such as by helping your children cope with pressures that we may not understand. We hope you find what you are looking for and that you connect with the resources you need. Be well.”

USPS Employee Assistance Program 1 800-327-4968.

www.EAP4YOU.com

TTY: 1 877-492-7341

Facts regarding Letter Carrier Issues. We urge you all to contact your local Congresspersons and ask that they sign on to these House Resolutions that will help our Letter Carriers both active and retired.

Protect Our Letter Carriers Act (H.R. 7629)

Since the inception of the Postal Service nearly 250 years ago, letter carriers have delivered to every community on every street in the United States rarely being the targets of violence. In recent years, that has changed. Since 2020, there have been more than 2,000 crimes committed against letter carriers on the job. Many of these attacks involve a gun or another weapon. Letter carrier robberies climbed to 643 last year, an increase of nearly 30%, and the number of robberies resulting in injuries doubled, according to the United States Postal Inspection Service (USPIS). Unfortunately, nearly every day we learn of other instances of letter carriers being assaulted, robbed, and even murdered while delivering mail and essentials.

The Protect Our Letter Carriers Act (POLCA) would devalue key infrastructure, deter these crimes through increased prosecution and sentencing guidelines, and keep letter carriers safe on the job. The nation’s over 200,000 city letter carriers deliver medications, checks, ballots, packages and other essential mail that Americans depend on. It is imperative that America’s mail is protected and, most importantly, that the letter carriers who deliver it are, too. Secure and devalue postal infrastructure POLCA would provide \$7 billion in funding for the Postal Service to secure its infrastructure, including the installation of high-security collection boxes as well as the replacement of items carried by letter carriers with more secure electronic versions. The funding would be appropriated over five years, \$1.4 billion annually in fiscal years 2025-2029. A recent audit of USPIS data found that 52 percent of robberies of a letter carrier involved the theft of postal infrastructure items that have become highly sought after on the black market in recent years. Similarly, the Postal Service has reported an increase in high-volume mail theft incidents from mail receptacles, including blue collection boxes. In response, the Postal Service has begun to reinforce its infrastructure, which includes items carried by letter carriers on the job. The bill would provide the necessary funding to implement this updated technology nationwide. When key infrastructure is devalued and more secure, letter carriers will be safer on their routes.

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VICE PRESIDENT REPORT

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Increase Prosecution Rates

Alarming, while crimes against letter carriers have persisted, arrests and prosecution against the alleged perpetrators have not. Though the number of assaults and robberies against letter carriers has doubled in recent years, the number of arrests and convictions for these crimes has markedly decreased, according to USPIS. Due to workload and other priorities, these cases often sit on district attorneys' desks, are not federally prosecuted, and the alleged assailants are not held accountable. POLCA would require the Attorney General to appoint an assistant U.S. attorney in each judicial district to prioritize any case that involves an assault or crime against a letter carrier. Their principal responsibility in the district would be to coordinate and supervise the investigation and prosecution of these alleged crimes. Harsher sentencing for robbery and assault of a letter carrier. Even though letter carriers who are victims of these crimes are federal employees in uniform on the job, under current law, the sentencing guidelines for those found guilty of these crimes are overly weak and permissive. In 2024, a San Francisco defendant was found guilty of robbing a letter carrier at gunpoint and sentenced to only 30 days imprisonment, while in Mississippi a defendant was sentenced to eight years.

This bill would strengthen sentencing guidelines for these crimes, ensuring that they are treated in the same manner as assaults on federal law enforcement officers. NALC supports the Protect Our Letter Carriers Act, (H.R. 7629) which would devalue key infrastructure, deter these crimes through increased prosecution and sentencing guidelines, and keep letter carriers safe as they deliver essential mail and packages to every community in the country. Sponsored by Reps. Brian Fitzpatrick (R-PA) and Greg Landsman (D-OH)

Federal Retirement Fairness Act (H.R. 5995)

Many federal employees, including Postal Service employees, begin their federal/postal service in non-career positions before transitioning to career status. These employees, including letter carriers who were employed as casuals, transitional employees (TEs) or city carrier assistants (CCAs), do not receive retirement credit for their time spent in these positions. Because years employed as a non-career employee are not creditable under the Federal Employees Retirement System (FERS), employees who started in non-career positions and transition to career status must work longer to reach the required years of employment to receive full retirement benefits. The Federal Retirement Fairness Act would modify what is considered creditable federal civilian service under FERS. It would allow these employees to make catch-up retirement contributions for time spent as non-career employees after Dec. 31, 1988, making such time creditable service under the FERS, and for other purposes. This legislation would allow letter carriers and other affected employees the opportunity to purchase retirement credit for the time they spent in these noncareer positions, providing greater retirement security.

NALC supports the Federal Retirement Fairness Act, which would allow certain federal employees to make catch-up retirement contributions for time spent as non-career employees after Dec. 31, 1988, thus making such time creditable service under FERS. Sponsored by Reps. Derek Kilmer (D-WA), Gerry Connolly (D-VA), David Valadao (R-CA) and Don Bacon (R-NE)

Repeal Social Security's WEP and GPO provisions (H.R. 82/S. 597)

Many retired letter carriers worked both for the Postal Service and for private sector employers over their working years, paying into both the federal pension programs (CSRS or FERS for their federal service) and into Social Security (for their private sector employment). FERS retirees receive full benefits from both their federal pension plan and Social Security for their federal service since they paid into both systems while employed by the Postal Service. Although retired CSRS letter carriers naturally don't expect to receive Social Security benefits for their service for the Postal Service (for which they paid no FICA tax), most are shocked to find out that their Social Security benefits for their private sector work—or for the private sector work of their spouses—are usually reduced by provisions in the Social Security law enacted several decades ago. These provisions—the Windfall Benefit Reduction (WEP) and the Government Pension Offset (GPO)—were adopted by Congress in the late 1970s and early 1980s to address the false perception that federal retirees were somehow “double dipping.” In fact, these provisions are grossly unfair. The Social Security benefits of retired private sector workers are not reduced if such retirees receive benefits from private pension plans. CSRS retirees earned their full Social Security benefits and should receive them. NALC has been working for decades to reform or repeal the WEP and GPO provisions. We are trying to do so once again in the current Congress, though budget rules that require tax increases or other spending cuts to pay for such legislation continue to be obstacles. This fact sheet outlines how the two provisions work and the legislation before Congress to fix their unfairness.

Windfall Elimination Provision (WEP) The WEP (enacted in 1982) reduces the Social Security benefits of retired public employees (federal, state and local) who also worked in Social Security-covered private sector employment—if they receive a government annuity for their non-Social Security covered government employment. This provision hits CSRS retirees directly (but not FERS retirees). In all, nearly two million Americans have been adversely affected by the WEP provision—a number that will grow as more CSRS employees retire. The WEP affects the determination of a new retiree's monthly Social Security benefit (the Primary Insurance Amount)—which involves a three-part calculation applied to a worker's Average Indexed Monthly Earnings (AIME) from Social Security covered employment. A worker's top 35 years of earnings are indexed to wage inflation to express earnings from years ago in today's dollars and then converted into a monthly average—or AIME.

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VICE PRESIDENT REPORT

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In 2023, the first \$1,115 of a worker's AIME is multiplied by 90%, an AIME between \$1,115 and \$6,721 is multiplied by 32% and then any AIME more than \$6,721 is multiplied by 15%. This formula insures that lower-income workers get a higher relative benefit. That's how the calculation works for private sector workers and/or FERS workers (whose federal service is covered by Social Security). But for CSRS retirees, the first bracket of the calculation is different. The Social Security Administration multiplies the first \$1,115 of their AIME (from private sector jobs) by 40% instead of 90%—reducing the benefit by \$558 per month (\$6,696 annually). This is grossly unfair—private workers with private pensions face no similar reduction in Social Security benefits. The impact of the WEP can be reduced if CSRS workers have at least 21 years of substantial earnings from Social Security covered employment (in private sector jobs before and after their CSRS employment—or through second jobs during their federal service). The 40% multiplier is increased to 45% for a worker with 21 years of substantial Social Security earnings—and by 5% for each additional year of such earnings—until it reaches the normal 90% multiplier for those with 30 years of such earnings. (See www.ssa.gov/pubs/EN-05-10045.pdf for a full explanation of the WEP from the Social Security Administration.)

Government Pension Offset Normally, survivors and spouses of Social Security benefits qualify for spousal and survivor benefits based on the earnings and benefits of their spouses—unless they qualify for greater benefits based on their own Social Security earnings history. For CSRS letter carriers with little or no private sector work experience, such spousal and survivor benefits from Social Security could be significant—since their own Social Security benefits would be minimal.

Unfortunately, the GPO (adopted in 1977) typically eliminates most, if not all, of the otherwise payable spousal and survivor benefits for retirees who receive a government annuity for non Social Security work. That's because the GPO reduces Social Security spousal and survivor benefits by two dollars for every three dollars paid in CSRS annuity benefits to affected retirees. For example, if a CSRS retiree's spouse receives \$2,000 in Social Security retirement benefits, the 50% spousal benefit would normally be \$1,000 per month. But if the annuitant receives \$3,000 in CSRS benefits, his spousal benefit would be totally eliminated. The same grossly unfair impact is seen with Social Security survivor benefits. Again, Social Security recipients who receive private pensions see no reduction in the Social Security's spousal or survivor benefits.

The Social Security Fairness Act of 2023 (H.R. 82) would eliminate the GPO & the WEP titles of the Social Security Act for benefits payable for months after December 2023. By repealing the GPO and the WEP, the bill would change the current law that reduces Social Security benefits for individuals who receive other benefits. NALC fully supports H.R. 82 and urges Congress to pass this legislation. NALC supports H.R. 82/S. 597, which would eliminate the GPO and the WEP titles of the Social Security Act for benefits payable for months after December 2023. Sponsored by Reps. Garrett Graves (R-LA),

Abigail Spanberger (D-VA) and Sens. Sherrod Brown (D-OH) and Susan Collins (R-ME).

Here are a few of the Congressional District areas near the Van Nuys, Santa Clarita, Simi Valley and Antelope Valley areas. If you live outside of those areas, find out what district you reside in and contact your Local representative's office.

CA-27 Mike Garcia,
1043 West Avenue M4 Palmdale, CA 93551
Phone (661) 839-0532

CA-29 Tony Cardenas
9612 Van Nuys Boulevard # 201 Panorama City, CA 91402
Phone (818) 221-3718

CA-32 Brad Sherman
5000 Van Nuys Boulevard # 420 Sherman Oaks, CA 91403
Phone (818) 501-9200





M D A BOWL-A-THON

APRIL 27, 2024

SANTA CLARITA LANES
21615 Soledad Canyon Rd, Saugus, CA 91350

Donation of minimum \$ 50.00
Includes: Bowling, Shoes, Food, Soft Drinks

PRIZES

Don't miss out on a night of fun
For further information Contact the Branch Office
of ask your Shop Steward.

Sign-up Sheets will be posted at all Stations

"THE MAIL CALL" BRANCH 2462, NALC

Lucy Jacobs, Editor

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

Address Service Requested



Branch Meeting Minutes

April 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 MACARAEG at 6:52 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 2024.

ROLL CALL OF OFFICERS

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

ABSENT---JOHNSON, JACOBS

MEETING SUSPENDED FOR GUEST SPEAKER JOHN BEAUMONT, SPECIAL ASSISTANT TO NATIONAL PRESIDENT & FORMER STATE ASSOCIATION PRESIDENT.

Brother Beaumont spoke on the various Bills that his office is working to be passed in the Congress of the U.S. MINUTES ACCEPTED AS PRINTED IN MAIL

APPLICATION FOR MEMBERSHIP---NONE

COMMUNICATIONS READ

BILLS READ---MOTION TO PAY

M/S/C

COMMITTEE REPORTS

AUDIT & BUDGET---TRUSTEES Audit will be in July, date to be announced.

SAFETY & HEALTH---JACOBS No Report

RETIREES 6 Retiree's present tonight.

MDA FUND--GODDARD \$ 2,357 in the fund

HBR---BURTON Watch for my Article

MDA---BURTON Bowl-a-Thon will be on Saturday April 27th at Santa Clarita Lanes in Saugus CA. Sign-up sheets at your stations. Any questions, contact your Shop Steward. Retiree's can call Union Office to sign-up.

MBA---BURTON Finished the classes being given online. National has an automatic \$ 5000.00 policy on every member.

POLITICAL---BURTON Thanks to Brother Beaumont for explaining all the various Letter Carrier bills now pending. Important that you contact your local representative and ask for their support.

EDITOR---JACOBS No Report

ELECTION COMMITTEE No Report

FINANCE REPORT---MULLINAX Branch Taxes have been taken care of. KEVIN DONOHUE'S Family sent Thank You to the Branch for our donation. There will be a celebration of Life for KEVIN on April 14, 2024. Contact the office for information.

TREASURERS REPORT---WILSON Financial Reports were read.

MOTION TO ACCEPT REPORTS AS READ M/S/C

VICE-PRESIDENT DOLABSON Spoke on EAP, and encouraged everyone to read her article in the upcoming May issue of the MailCall.

PRESIDENT MACARAEG Spoke on the importance and need to support the NALC DISASTER RELIEF FOUNDATION with your donations. This organization provides money and aid to NALC Members who have suffered a disaster in their area. Most recently they

were immediately on the ground in Maui, during the horrific wildfire that destroyed a large part of the downtown area and many homes. All donations go to NALC members and their families. Management continues to violate the National Contract. They have attempted to initiate an illegal Flow chart in the Burbank facility and trying to force Carriers to adhere to a 1 hour office time. We consider this to be a direct violation and we are working with our Carriers and the Burbank Branch to fight this practice. This 1-hour office time idea has also been tried in our Sherman Oaks office. If any supervisor or manager comes around and tells you what your office time should be, make sure that you have accounted for all the work you have done or need to do and make them aware of your estimate as to the time needed. Any attempt to implement these conditions should be reported to your Shop Steward as we intend to grieve these mandates. Attended the District Labor-Management meeting with Vice President DOLABSON last week. As usual Management took up most of the time informing us of what their concerns were. We were given almost no time to put forward what we wished to discuss, and what we were able to put on the table was met with the usual "we will discuss that at a later time." Going forward we will refer to these meetings as Management-Labor meetings so as not to confuse membership as to what is going on.

OLD BUSINESS

The two By-law changes that were submitted at the January Regular Business have been submitted to National and we await their approval.

NEW BUSINESS

MOTION---Move that the Branch pay the L A County uninsured property tax for 2024-2025. Cost to the Branch \$ 186.50

M/S/C

MOTION---Move that the Branch renew the Fire Insurance policy through State Farm for 2024-2025 Cost to the Branch \$ 1772.00

M/S/C

MOTION---Move that the Branch renew the CD at Chase Bank, which matured on March 27, 2024, for 9 months at the current rate.

M/S/C

MOTION---Move that the Branch transfer the Spectrum account over to AutoPay, to avoid the monthly service charge.

M/S/C

MOTION---Move that the Branch send 1 Shop Steward, to be chosen by the President, to the National Training classes in Boston, MA. August 5---9, 2024. Cost to the Branch \$ 2,350.00

M/S/C

UNDERLINED INDICATES UNANIMOUS VOTE

GOOD OF THE ASSOCIATION

Vice President DOLABSON welcomed new member ERICK NAVA to the Branch and administered the oath of initiation.

MDA DRAWING

\$ 3 ERICK NAVA---PANORAMA CITY

\$ 5 JANETTE DOLABSON---RETIREE---DONATED

\$ 5 OSCAR CORTEZ---MAIN OFFICE---DONATED

Meeting Adjourned 8:53 PM