

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

VOLUME 61

AUGUST 2024

NUMBER 8

PRESIDENT'S REPORT

**By
JEMMAYEN MACARAEG**

Collective bargaining update

As NALC continues to finalize preparation and work out details for interest arbitration with USPS and the mutually selected chair of the interest arbitration panel, Arbitrator Dennis R. Nolan, the parties continue to negotiate in an effort to reach a tentative agreement.

For many years, NALC and USPS bargaining representatives have “locked down” in a hotel to engage in intensive, around-the-clock talks, including in the current round of collective bargaining. To build on recent progress in negotiations, NALC and USPS representatives have agreed to spend an additional week in early July in a hotel to work toward reaching agreement on the few economic and non-economic issues that remain unresolved.

NALC President Brian L. Renfroe said:

“We are pleased with the recent progress and potential opportunity to reach a fair agreement that rewards all letter carriers and compensates us for our value and the critical role we play in the Postal Service’s success.

Our goals in collective bargaining remain steadfast. While our interest arbitration case is strong and we will not hesitate to utilize that process fully if necessary to achieve our goals, we remain committed to exhausting every possibility to achieve a tentative agreement that meets our goals for our members to consider for ratification.

As we continue the negotiations process, I appreciate the hard work and diligence of NALC’s officers, staff, branch leadership, and the rank-and-file members of our union for their activism, input, and support that shapes NALC’s bargaining priorities.

From resolutions that start at the branch level and become our official bargaining positions to the thousands of

letter carriers that communicate current issues and their priorities, this activism is the foundation of what we have historically achieved in this process and will achieve in this round of collective bargaining.”

Assault victims deserve the best care available

In the last few years, letter carriers have been victims of more than 2,000 robberies or assaults, often at gunpoint. The NALC began the “Enough is enough” movement to bring the public’s attention to the growing danger you face every day throughout the country, and to demand several policy changes to protect letter carriers.

The NALC’s March 13 website posting announced that the Protect Our Letter Carriers Act (H.R. 7629) had been introduced in the House by Reps. Brian Fitzpatrick (R-PA) and Greg Landsman (D-OH). At an outdoor event on Capitol Hill to announce the measure’s introduction, a letter carrier who had been the victim of an assault shared what he went through and explained the need for the law.

Manny Peralta had the opportunity to speak with this carrier following the press conference and learned that the only help that he connected with was with an Employee Assistance Program (EAP) counselor. Manny Peralta have since spoken with others, leading him to the topic of this month’s column.

When any letter carrier suffers an injury, including a post-traumatic stress injury, and initiates an OWCP claim, responsibilities fall on the shoulders of management, which is obligated to assist the employee and to advise the employee of their rights, including but not limited to the following (from the Employee and Labor Relations Manual [ELM]):

543.3 Medical Care - FECA guarantees the employee the right to an initial choice of physician. The employee is entitled to receive all medical services, appliances, or supplies that a qualified physician prescribes and OWCP determines necessary to treat the injury.

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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 | 5 | 5 | 3 | - | | | |
| ENCINO | 3 | 4 | 4 | 3 | 5 | 3 | 4 | - | | | |
| PANORAMA CITY | 2 | 2 | 4 | 4 | 2 | 3 | 3 | - | | | |
| SHERMAN OAKS | 7 | 5 | 7 | 6 | 7 | 8 | 8 | - | | | |
| SUN VALLEY | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | - | | | |
| TARZANA | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | - | | | |
| RETIREE'S | 7 | 5 | 5 | 6 | 7 | 5 | 5 | - | | | |
| TOTAL | 21 | 18 | 21 | 22 | 26 | 24 | 23 | - | | | |

NEXT MEETING TUESDAY SEPTEMBER 3rd "2024" 6:30 p.m. BRANCH OFFICE

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

Sept 9, 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 had our final Breakfast of the year and wish to thank the Branch for sponsoring this event. We look forward to continuing this gathering in the future. Thanks to all the Retiree's who came out and supported each other.

THANKS

PRESIDENT'S REPORT

(Continued from Page 1)

Management also has the following obligation once an OWCP claim is filed (ELM Section 544.111):

General - When a notice of traumatic injury or occupational disease is filed, the immediate supervisor is responsible for doing the following:

- a. **Immediately** ensuring that **appropriate medical care** is provided.
- b. **Providing the employee** a Form CA-1 or a Form CA-2.
- c. Completing the receipt attached to Form CA-1 or CA-2 and giving the receipt to the employee or the employee's representative.
- d. **Investigating all reported job-related** injuries and/or illnesses.
- e. **Immediately notifying the control office** or control point of an injury, disease, or illness.
- f. Prompt completion and forwarding of Form CA-1 or CA-2 to the control office or control point on the same day it is received from the employee.

ELM Section 544.112 instructs that "In case of a traumatic injury, the supervisor must advise the employee of the following":

- a. The right to select a physician of choice.

When an employee suffers an injury on duty, such as the one referenced above, and then decides to initiate an OWCP claim, management does not fulfill its obligation by referring the employee to an EAP counselor. This may be an initial helpful step; however, the EAP counselor will not be providing you with documentation that meets the standard required by OWCP. If you file a traumatic injury claim, you will have the right to select your physician, so explore who is available by reaching out to your doctor and discuss your needs.

"When any letter carrier suffers an injury, including a post-traumatic stress injury, and initiates an OWCP claim, responsibilities fall on the shoulders of management."

Article 35 of the National Agreement provides for EAP counseling services at no cost to the employee. These services are identified as "short term," which is recognized as up to 12 counseling sessions. It is possible that the above-identified traumatic injury would take more than the limit of 12 sessions. The EAP counselors cannot take you on as a client. Their services are paid for by their employer, which is under contract to the USPS through EAP. This would be an ethics conflict of interest.

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PRESIDENT'S REPORT

(Continued from Page 2)

Series of seven columns (Postal Record -September, October, November, December 2023, and January, March, and April of this year) written by Regional Workers' Compensation Assistant Coby Jones on the subject of medical evidence required to support claims before OWCP. His column from November 2023 is directly on point, quote from that column as follows:

Letter carriers who sustain emotional conditions as a result of assaults, in particular, have had a difficult time finding physicians to diagnose and treat these conditions. It often has taken months or even the greater part of a year before they can receive treatment for conditions that demand immediate attention. This is because OWCP's procedures have required that any causal explanation for acceptance of an emotional injury case must come from a psychiatrist or licensed clinical psychologist with a PhD. FECA Transmittal No. 23-04 changed this by revising FECA Procedure Manual Part 2, Chapter 805, regarding the requirements for a medical specialist needed to establish an emotional condition.

With the revision, only extended occupational disease claims for emotional conditions require a medical report from a psychiatrist or clinical psychologist in order to support the explanation of causal relationship required for the claim to be accepted. The revision allows physicians with other specialties or even family physicians to submit medical reports to establish initial claims and provide treatment. This will be a huge boon for letter carriers who have been emotionally traumatized by assault and are ill-equipped to deal with jumping through bureaucratic hoops. Not only will their claims be accepted more quickly, but they also will receive more promptly the benefits they are entitled to under the FECA such as counseling and wage-loss compensation if they are incapacitated from working due to their condition.

According to the transmittal, the revision is intended to apply to "typically traumatic injuries where the event or events are very specific, unambiguous and are generally clearer to physicians outside the psychiatric specialty as incidents that may naturally result in an extreme emotional reaction." The revision does not apply to emotional conditions in CA-2 occupational disease claims—cases that often involve stress or abuse in the workplace (often with management). These cases will still require a causal explanation from a psychiatrist or clinical psychologist for the claim to be accepted. Keep an eye on each other and protect your co-workers.

Resource: Director of Safety and Health Manny Peralta

Department of Labor announces proposed rule to protect workers in extreme heat.

Today, the U.S. Department of Labor (DOL) released a [proposed rule](#) with the goal of protecting millions of workers from the significant health risks of extreme heat. The rule would require employers to establish a Heat Injury and Illness Prevention Plan (HIIPP) that includes specific elements outlined in the proposed rule necessary to protect workers from the dangers of excessive heat.

The proposed rule will be published in the Federal Register and will call for public comments. The DOL also anticipates a public hearing after the close of the written comment period.

"The health and safety of letter carriers always comes first," NALC President Brian L. Renfroe said. "NALC has fought for more than a decade in several avenues to achieve protections for our members from the dangers we face working outdoors in excessive heat. While progress has been made, a national rule that requires employers to provide comprehensive prevention is the ultimate solution. We appreciate Acting Secretary Julie Su for her engagement with our union and for prioritizing this important issue. NALC fully supports implementation of this proposed rule."

AVOIDING HEAT RELATED PROBLEMS

BY

LUCY JACOBS

Branch Health & Safety Rep

Heat stroke is a severe form of heat illness that occurs when the body's temperature regulation system fails, leading to dangerously high body temperatures, usually above 104°F. Understanding the signs of heat stroke and taking preventive measures is crucial.

Signs of Heat Stroke

1. Hot, Dry Skin: While some may experience profuse sweating, the skin is usually hot and dry to the touch.
2. Nausea and Vomiting
3. Flushed Skin: The skin may appear red as the body temperature increases.
4. Rapid Heart Rate: The heart rate may increase significantly as the body tries to cool down.
5. Rapid Breathing: Breathing may become fast and shallow.

Prevention of Heat Stroke

Hydration:

1. Stay Hydrated: Drink plenty of fluids, especially water. Avoid alcoholic and caffeinated beverages, which can lead to dehydration.
2. Electrolytes: Consume drinks with electrolytes to replenish lost salts during sweating.

Clothing and Environment:

1. Wear Appropriate Clothing: Light-colored, loose-fitting clothing helps keep the body cool. A wide-brimmed hat can provide shade and reduce heat exposure.
2. Use Sunscreen: Protect your skin from sunburn, which can hinder the body's ability to cool down.

"THE MAIL CALL" BRANCH 2462, NALC

Lucy Jacobs, Editor

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Branch Meeting Minutes

JULY 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 6:50 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, JACOBS

ABSENT--JOHNSON

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 on July 17, 2024, at the Branch Office.

SAFETY & HEALTH--JACOBS HEAT, HEAT, HEAT. Look for my article in MailCall.

RETIREEES--SEYFRIED 5 Retiree's present tonight. On behalf of the Branch Retirees, Thank you to the Branch for funding the Retiree Breakfasts this year. They are very much a part of keeping Retirees up to date and provide a great opportunity to gather and stay connected.

MDA FUND--GODDARD \$ 3,375.21 in the fund

HBR--BURTON Biden administration through the Department of Labor has proposed new rules regarding health plans. We will keep you posted on what is implemented when it happens. If you have any questions regarding the HB plan, contact me at the Branch office.

MDA--BURTON Jamba Juice cards are again available. MDA Camp will be on July 8th.

MBA--BURTON Still waiting for last training class to be held. Looking forward to classes that will be held at the National Convention in August, in Boston.

POLITICAL--BURTON Nothing new has changed. Do not expect to hear of any movement on bills till after the election in November. Do not Forget To VOTE

EDITOR--JACOBS All accounts are up to date. Thanks to all who helped get the MailCall ready for mailing when I was on vacation.

FINANCE REPORT--MULLINAX All membership pins have been received and will be passed out at the individual stations. Retiree pins will be given at the annual Retiree Luncheon in October. Those retired members who do not attend will receive them in the mail.

TREASURERS REPORT--WILSON Financial Reports were read.

MOTION TO ACCEPT REPORTS AS READ M/S/C
VICE-PRESIDENT DOLABSON Spoke on the danger signs of Heart disease and the warning signs of Heart Attack.

PRESIDENT MACARAEG Spoke on new route inspection rules in regard to 271G's (Special route inspections requested by Carrier). Also gave an update on the current contract negotiations and announced that management and Union have agreed

to a lock down session, which we hope will bring us a new contract. Safety and Health meeting with management was held. Management's main concern was DOG BITES, while the union brought up other concerns, especially working in the excessive heat and what can be done to mitigate the problems associated with the problem.

OLD BUSINESS

NEW BUSINESS

MOTION--Move to suspend the August 2024

Regular Meeting due to the National convention in Boston

M/S/C

MOTION--Move that any Member who attends either the July or September Regular Meeting be credited for the suspended August meeting

M/S/C

MOTION--Move that the Branch empower the Executive Board to conduct any and all business of the Branch from July 3, 2024 through September 2, 2024.

M/S/C

MOTION--Move that the Branch pay TIA WILSON \$ 130.00, to renew the Web Domain and the Web Hosting service for 12 months, June 27, 2024 thru June 27, 2025.

M/S/C

MOTION--Move that the Branch donate \$ 200.00 to JESUS CRUZ for expenses at the MDA CAMP. Money to be taken from the MDA Fund.

M/S/C

MOTION--Move that the Branch order 350 Bass Letter Carrier calendars. Cost not to exceed \$ 1,665.00

M/S/C

UNDERLINED INDICATES UNANIMOUS VOTE

MDA DRAWING

\$ 3 TIA WILSON--RETIREE--SUN VALLEY
\$ 5 RAFAEL PEREZ--PANORAMA CITY--DONATED
\$ 8 OSCAR CORTEZ--MAIN OFFICE--DONATED

Meeting Adjourned 8:18 PM

SPECIAL NOTICE
AUGUST 2024
REGULAR MEETING
HAS BEEN CANCELED
DUE TO THE N A L C
NATIONAL CONVENTION