



THE VOICE



OF THE GOLDEN GATE LETTER CARRIERS

BRANCH #214

NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF LETTER CARRIERS, AFL-CIO

September/October 2008

Award-winning newspaper

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EARLY OUT OFFERED

(story on page 3)

A resolution was offered at the national convention in Boston by the Oregon and Washington State Associations to allow kilts to be worn by male carriers. The national agreement resolution number 10 was titled "Male Unbifurcated Garments (MUGs)", and argued that since skirts and culottes were allowed for women carriers, kilts would provide a comfortable counterpart for men. This resolution was disapproved by our national union and their disapproval was upheld by a vote on the convention floor. The photo shows two carriers wearing the proposed kilts outside the convention floor.

The MDA summer camp is filled with activities for kids from crafts to motorcycle rides. Our branch raises funds for MDA, and this is an example of the money at work. See the story inside on page 14 and other photos at camp. This photo shows Clo the Cow and our camper, thirteen year old Allan.



Photo by Ivars Lauersons



Photo by Karen Schuler

ALSO INSIDE:

Views on work—

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Branch 214 notes

Welcome the following new stewards: **James Hall** (Marina), **Anthony Reyes** (San Leandro South) and **Rene Centinaje** (Daly City).

Welcome new alternate stewards: **Mary Coffey** (Marina), **Ka Ming Lau** (EPC South), and **James Li** (San Rafael).

Carriers seeking mutual trades:

San Francisco, Grade 1 regular (11/2000 seniority), seeks mutual transfer to Daly City. Please contact Enrico Hapa at (H) (650) 756-1493 or (C) (415) 596-3223.

* * *

The union office is currently taking “resumes” from **any individuals interested in becoming a future full-time officer**. We use the term “resume” loosely. To indicate your interest, please submit to the Branch Office (c/o Lili Beaumont) your name, contact information, union activist background, grievance-arbitration procedure experience and accomplishments, and an essay about why you would like to become a full-time officer for NALC Branch 214. There is no deadline set yet for this application period. The union office is anticipating a

Branch Officers

Lili Beaumont **President**
 Ray Fong **Executive Vice-President**
 Bill Thornton **Vice-President**
 Karen Schuler **Secretary-Treasurer**
 Karen Eshabarr **Field Director**
 Carol Maggio **Assistant Secretary-Treasurer**
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 Franklin Woo **NALC Health Benefits**
 Leonard Cruz **Safety and Health**
 Cathy Simonson **EEO Officer**
 Mike Callahan **MBA representative**
 Kim Truong **Director of Organization**
 Roberta Bojo **Trustee**
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 Sheila Gardner **Trustee**

Voice Staff

Ivars Lauersons **Editor**
 Edwina Wu **Associate Editor**
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 WEB page:
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vacancy in the full-time officer staff some time in 2009 because Executive Vice President **Ray Fong announced he would be retiring then.**

* * *

NALC and other unions are working together in the “**Labor 2008 campaign**” to elect a President of the United States and Congressional representatives that will support and protect the interests of the middle class and working families. Branch 214 has pledged to help out by gathering volunteers who will **donate one or two week-ends of their time to go to the Reno/Sparks Nevada area to contact** other union members and encourage them to get out and vote in the November elections. The dates for these events will be October 5th (Sunday) and November 2nd. Buses will be chartered to take us to Reno. They will leave for Reno on Saturday afternoon or evening. The Labor 2008 event will take place on Sunday morning and everyone will return to the Bay Area on Sunday afternoon or evening after the event. There will be other similar events in the Roseville/Sparks, and Tracy/Stockton areas to help elect and re-elect Congressional representatives supportive of issues important to working families, and especially important to letter carriers. **If you are interested** in joining us or have any questions, please **contact Karen Schuler at the union office (415) 362-0214.**

* * *

We are currently **accepting resumes** from anybody who has experience in setting up and maintaining computer servers, computer programs, and internet capabilities. Please contact the union office, (415) 362-0214, if you are interested in performing this type of work for Branch 214.

* * *

After one year of service TE’s become eligible for Federal Employees Health Benefits (FEHB). They pay the total cost of the plan. For details, contact your station manager, or see your shop steward, so you can decide if this is an option for you. Some details are available in the National Agreement booklet on page 143, and in a Memo of Understanding regarding a five-day break in service for Transitional Employees, dated August 27, 2008.

* * *

As you can see from the back page, **we have combined** our annual dinner and stewards recognition lunch into one event.

T.V. 214 Schedule

**SAN FRANCISCO, AT&T Cable Channel 29:
 Every third Sunday of the month at 7:00 p.m.
 October 19, 2008; November 16, 2008;
 December 21, 2008**

Think carefully

A personal option to retire

By Lili Beaumont, President

The Postal Service has set February 28, 2009, as the retirement date for city carriers offered a Voluntary Early Retirement under the authorization approved by the Office of Personnel Management. The application process for eligible carriers will begin in October.

USPS officials informed NALC on September 5 of the retirement date, but provided few other details. Information about the Voluntary Early Retirement Authority (VERA) offer is now available on the USPS employee website, www.liteblue.usps.gov. Active letter carriers may access the site by using their employee identification number and password.



Those who are eligible

The offer will apply to letter carriers who are at least 50 years of age with at least 20 years of creditable federal service, or to those at any age with 25 years of service, as of the VERA effective date, February 28, 2009. If you don't meet the criteria by that date, you are not eligible for voluntary early retirement.

NALC President William H. Young said the union is taking no position on whether letter carriers should seek the "early out." Such a decision must be based on each carrier's personal circumstances, he said.

Consider you financial condition

"I urge anyone considering the offer to carefully consider your family's financial situation, the effect this

Both FERS and CSRS carriers are covered by the offer.

will have on your monthly retirement, and other factors. Choosing to leave your job is a momentous decision," Young said.

No financial incentives or bonuses are being offered to those who choose early retirement. Young noted that some postal employees may wait to see if the Postal Service offers such incentives in the future, but quickly

added, "We have received no indication whatsoever such bonuses are likely or possible."

Decision date in November

The sample offer letter on the website says the decision by letter carriers on whether or not to accept the offer

The decision to accept the offer is entirely an individual one.

must be made by 8:30 p.m. ET on Friday, November 21, 2008, and can not be changed after that date.

"Since the Postal Service will rely on your decision to retire in developing its complement management plans, your decision to retire will become IRREVOCABLE at 8:30 p.m. ET on Friday, November 21, 2008, the closing date of the VERA window period," the letter says. Individuals who have second thoughts may withdraw their retirement applications before that time on November 21 by submitting a written notification.

Offer made to cut operating costs

The Postal Service is offering early retirement to city carriers and members of other crafts to cut operating costs. Declining mail volume because of the poor economy and electronic diversion, as well as increased automation, are cited as reason for the effort to reduce complement.

There are no cash incentives to accept the offer.

Carriers who are eligible will first receive an annuity estimate letter in early October, then a week later, a letter formally issuing the offer and providing information on how to proceed.

NALC Director of Retired Members Ernie Kirkland said city carriers who believe they are eligible but who do not receive an offer letter by October 20 should contact the office of their National Business Agent.

The information given in this article is drawn from our national union. A primary source, and constantly updated, is the website, www.nalc.org. We have also been in touch with various national and regional officers. Look

Eligible carriers will receive an annuity estimate in early October.

also for bulletins from national that are posted in your swing rooms.

New generation

Time to step up

By Herb Mitchell, retiree

Below we have photos of our branch delegations from 1992 in St. Louis and 2008 in Boston. You can see a lot of the same faces that were branch activists 16 years ago.

My point is that as the years go by, it is time for new faces to step up and take on the task of leading the union during the coming years. Don't get me wrong, the people in the photos have done a wonderful job of represent-

There are steward vacancies in seven stations.

ing Branch 214 over the years, including five former presidents (Spence Burton, Roland Garshol, Ray Fong, Tony Gallardo, and Richard Becker), and some faces that are current and former full time and part time officers. The Boston delegation contained 5 former branch presidents. A lot of these people are retired from the postal

service and are still active in the branch and attending conventions.

Need for new faces

I would love to see more new faces come on board to take over when more of us old folks start to spend more time on our Judge Mathis, Judge Judy, and Judge Joe Brown law degrees. In the last **Voice** Branch 214 notes, there was an announcement of new stewards, (Carl Bryant, Rudy Rimando, and Audrey Davis), who have been long time union activists. Also, there was a notice of steward vacancies in seven stations in the branch. The next item was an announcement of a contract COLA increase of \$1,498 dollars that was negotiated by the NALC. This should be an incentive for more carriers to step up and represent letter carriers.

Support any carrier under attack

With increasing cases of management abuses and violations of the contract, current carriers should be stepping up to fill these vacancies and fight management to stop these abuses and violations. The branch needs stewards in these stations to face management and represent our fellow carriers. Carriers must also stand in support of our stewards in the face of management. I was a steward for over 30 years, so I know it is not an easy job, but with

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Photo courtesy Herb Mitchell

A group of Branch 214 delegates at the 1992 National Convention in St. Louis, Missouri.

Mitchell (continued from page 4)

fellow carrier support, it can be easier. I was a steward at Bayview Station for over 20 years and we had a family atmosphere that was a strong force against management. We had each other's backs and were not afraid to step up to support any carrier under attack.

I hope to see in the next issue of **The Voice** that all these vacancies have been filled. Step up for your future

Carriers must stand in support of our stewards.

and to protect your jobs and dignity. A last comment: the tickets are set for the presidential race, Obama and Biden against McBush, oops, McCain and Palin. Whomever you choose, vote, get out the vote, contribute to COL-CPE, and vote, vote, vote. A last thought: at the start of the Republican convention, Cindy McCain commented about the administration preparing for Hurricane Gustav relief efforts and she said it was time to take off our Republican hats and put on your American hats. Funny, I thought you should always have on your American hats. Food for thought. Solidarity forever.



Photo by Karen Schuler

The rural setting of the MDA summer camp in western Sonoma County (see article, page 14).



Photo courtesy Herb Mitchell

A group of Branch 214 delegates in their easily identifiable yellow vests at the 2008 National Convention in Boston, Massachusetts.

Handling the 3996

I don't negotiate

By Mike Williamson, retired San Rafael carrier

Every morning the supervisor would come around and ask for our 3996s. At each case the supervisor would stop and, after an extended discussion, he would give each carrier instructions and move on. We called this "negotiating" the 3996. This happened at pretty much every case. Except mine. I don't negotiate.

When I said this to my buddies, they thought I was nuts. They assumed that I was taking some sort of hard line stance, which is a sure way to face constant troubles. (Either that or I was BSing them.) Nothing could be further from the truth. I followed a crazier path. After all, I'm a good employee – I do what I'm told, no matter how much it costs the company. So, I put my best estimate on the 3996, and just did what I was told to do.



I didn't argue

Notice that I didn't say that I did what the supervisor *wanted*. I did what I was *told* to do. I didn't argue. I certainly didn't negotiate. The 3996 is an *estimate* not a contract. There was no need to negotiate. I asked for clear instructions, and did whatever I was told to do, in a safe professional manner. I avoided getting drawn into their game.

I'm a good employee – I do what I'm told, no matter how much it costs the company.

This drove the supervisors nuts. When they first experienced this, they would get in my face and try every sort of intimidation tactic. They wanted me to work through my break or my lunch, but they couldn't *say* that. They *needed* me to negotiate so they could trick me into unpaid overtime.

The trick to surviving

They would show me all sorts of numbers. They would compare me with other carriers. They would threaten to follow me. They would threaten to fool with the amount of overtime I was getting. They would threaten to not let me go when I had something to do after work. They tried everything. But I knew the trick to surviving. The trick is to not care about their threats, and to do your job in a safe professional manner.

First of all, if a supervisor threatens you, inform your shop steward as soon as possible. The shop steward probably can't do anything about it in the short run, but the steward will need the information if the threat is part of a pattern or if the supervisor tries to follow through on his threat later. Second, make a personal note. Record the date, time, and the wording as close as you can remember it. But beyond that, you need to figure out, in advance, how you'll respond to any threat or intimidation tactic.

Inform your shop steward

If they give you extra overtime that you don't want, or

They wanted me to work through my break or my lunch.

if they deny you overtime when you should be getting it, inform your shop steward. If your supervisor does *anything* that violates your rights, inform your shop steward. And always do as instructed, in a safe professional manner.

If they tell you your T-6 (or some other carrier) can deliver the same route or section in less time, suggest that the other carrier must be truly superior, and deserves an award. (We'll just assume the other carrier is delivering in a safe professional manner.) Not enough carriers get awards.

You'll just bore them to death

If they threaten you with closer observation or with following you on the street, then let them. After all, if you are doing your job in a safe professional manner, then you'll just bore them to death.

The job takes as long as it takes

If they try to shower you with numbers that (supposedly) indicate that you can do the job in half the time, inform your supervisor (politely) that you don't understand the numbers they are presenting, but clearly the numbers don't cover everything since you've been working hard all day (under supervision), in a safe professional manner. If you have put a good estimate on your 3996, then you have given your supervisor your best professional

The other "good" carrier must be truly superior and deserves an award from management.

effort. No amount of discussion or negotiation is going to change the facts. In the final analysis, the job takes as long as it takes. I used to ask, "That's my estimate – what do you want me to do?" But be fair. If the supervisor can tell you how to do the work in less time (safely and

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Williamson (continued from page 6)

professionally), modify your estimate to incorporate his suggestion.

A hassle to “call in “

Usually, the last tactic they’ll try is to tell you to “call in.” Your supervisor is aware of how much hassle this is,

He can’t spend the rest of his career following one person.

and is hoping that you will buckle under rather than go through that hassle. Don’t argue. If you do your job in a safe professional manner, then either you get paid for the hassle, or the supervisor ends up with it. Follow a few simple rules:

1. You are not required to use up your cell phone plan-minutes for the benefit of the Postal Service.
2. If you use a pay phone, you are entitled to repayment for the call. Ask your supervisor for the appropriate form.
3. If you don’t have sufficient change to call in, tell the supervisor up front, so that he can provide you with some.
4. Be honest with your supervisor – tell him approximately how long it will take to deviate from your route to call.
5. If he doesn’t have any change, call collect.
6. As a last resort, if you need to call in, and can’t, return to the office for instructions, unless your instructions are otherwise.
7. Throughout, do your job in a safe professional manner.

Regardless of the intimidation tactics your supervisor tries to use, follow instructions and do your job in a safe professional manner. Remember, your supervisor has to

If you’re not doing anything wrong, it’s difficult to get into trouble.

supervise other carriers. He has those computer reports to do. He can’t spend the rest of his career following one person. Eventually he will figure out that the estimates on your 3996 are good ballpark figures, plan accordingly, and go do the rest of his job.

One final word of caution. Supervisors don’t like this tactic. They may try to sneak up on you on the street, or catch you taking an extra break. Always, always, *always* deliver your route in a safe professional manner. Besides providing the service that the customers expect and deserve, if you’re not doing anything wrong, it’s really difficult to get into trouble.

Pivot

One and one equals too much work!

By Ruth Mattes, Station P Shop Steward

Station P had been instigating a “new” work system called “pivoting” for a long time, but on and off throughout past years. However, recently, this pivoting seems to be a daily practice and permanent work policy. Essentially, to me, “PIVOT” means: PRISONER’S INVOLUNTARY OVERWORKED TRAUMA system.

Carriers who are on the Overtime Desired List (ODL) are given extra two-hour assignments (however, these two-hour assignments had been lengthened to usually two and one-half assignments in past years.) Now, under



this pivoting system, the ODL carrier does not get paid for the extra two hours work, but just one hour. The other “hour” is considered a pivot, but actually the pivot is more than one hour. Therefore, this new “one and one” policy no longer means a carrier is given one hour on his/her route, and one hour overtime on another route.

Those carriers who still remain on the ODL list are forced to co-operate, run themselves ragged, and let themselves be subjected to this unfair slave labor prac-

Carriers are running themselves ragged.

tice. These carriers may balk a little at the overload; they do not complain, and wind up doing the work. Management would let these “go-fers” go over the allotted one hour in order to get the mail out.

Transitional employees caught also

Even the new transitional employees are very unhappy and complain about all these unfair assignments, but they have no recourse but to do as they are instructed. Therefore, the management cannot blame the carriers for having bad attitudes when they are the ones who have long established this hostile, rude, and punishing slave labor practice. In addition to being cruel and relentless, the management does not have a shred of conscience, humanity, or remorse at their unprofessional behavior or actions.

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Mattes (continued from page 7)

Even on Mondays

Pivoting is not exempt on Mondays and Tuesdays, when we have so much work: heavy DPS letters, parcels, and house-to-house flyers and marriage mail. Don't even

Pivoting is not exempt on Mondays and Tuesdays.

bother to complain or explain why you cannot pivot on these days. The supervisors see nothing, hear nothing, and do nothing but harass you.

Attempts at cooperation

Forget all the recent efforts the union has been trying: to establish some mode of communication, co-operation, and civility (THE THREE C's), between the management and the employees. All the discussions at the Labor-Management meetings fall on deaf ears and are completely wasted on dumb people. No one can penetrate the management's "Wall of Ignorance." And speaking of ignorance—our new supervisor at Station P displays this quality most admirably. He has never carried mail, hasn't the foggiest knowledge of the routes or what his job is as a supervisor. So, happy days! We have another abusive, hostile, and incompetent supervisor in our midst. He was trained by our previous abusive, hostile, and incompetent supervisor, so what does one expect? The only nice thing she did for Station P was by leaving! However, this new supervisor's demeanor is different: He is soft-spoken, but he does have a smart-mouth, and he does smile/smirk when he wants to dictate an unreasonable, unfair, and impossible day's workload for you. Just do not be fooled by his "pleasant" demeanor. You know what people say, "It is the quiet dogs that bite!"

Branch 214 Meetings

Branch meetings, 7:00 P.M.

November 5, 2008	ILWU Hall, 400 North Point, SF
December 3, 2008	ILWU Hall, 400 North Point, SF
January 7, 2009	ILWU Hall, 400 North Point, SF

Steward meetings, 4:30 P.M.

November 5, 2008	Union Office, 2310 Mason St., SF
December 3, 2008	Union Office, 2310 Mason St., SF
January 7, 2009	Union Office, 2310 Mason St., SF

Retiree social meeting, 12:30 P.M.

December 7, 2008	See Back Page
February 2, 2009	740 Del Monte Ave., South SF
April 6, 2009	740 Del Monte Ave., South SF

Where things go wrong

Questions from the floor

By Karen Eshabarr, Field Director

Recently, Marina Station carriers requested a meeting with the union officers to seek advice, help and to have their concerns addressed.

On August 13, 2008 the carriers of Marina Station met with Executive Vice-President Ray Fong and Field Director (and bid Marina carrier) Karen Eshabarr at an after work meeting at Round Table Pizza. There were about 25 carriers at the meeting. These included the combo drivers, our PTF's and Transitional Employees (TE's). Since the carriers at the station requested this meeting, it was open to all with the exception of the one scab carrier. The branch provided pizza and soft drinks, so the carriers where fed while we discussed the issue's they were facing



Over the years, when carriers from a station request a meeting with the officers, it usually means that the carriers have had enough with management and need to vent their frustrations. Ultimately they are seeking help and solutions to their problems at the station. Some of these meetings have resulted in the union officers setting up labor-management meetings. Normally, the management team of the affected station will meet with the officers and the stewards. These meetings can sometimes resolve many of the problems the carriers are having.

While the goal of these meetings is to lay out all the gripes the members have, and bring attention to the contractual violations that are occurring, the outcome is dependant on what type of manager is at the table. Reasonably intelligent managers can actually negotiate resolutions to the problems. The outcome of those meetings really depends on who the players (management) are, and if he or she is a person of their word.

Most often the complaint is concerning one supervisor at the individual office. Like every other human being, we carriers just want to go to work, do our job well, and expect to be treated with dignity and respect. The problem is that some supervisors feed on bullying many of our members. This type of behavior is not acceptable and the union will definitely not back down on this stance.

Here are some of the Marina carriers' concerns and questions:

When will TE's get their uniform allowance?

Transitional employees are eligible for quarterly uni-

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Eshabarr (continued from page 8)

form allowance installments on the following schedule:

Day 91 of service: Quarters 1 and 2 allowance installment of \$149

Day 181 of service: Quarter 3 allowance installment of \$74.50

Day 271 of service: Quarter 4 allowance installment of \$74.50

The manager at the individual station should give the TE a voucher on each of the service days mentioned above. Ideally, they are to take this voucher to one of the uniform vendors and be able to purchase their uniforms.

The officers realize that our TE's are having a difficult time getting someone to accept these vouchers. The problem is the managers at the stations are not completing their portion of the deal. Station managers are to give the TE's a voucher, go to the vendor, then bring the manager an invoice of their proposed uniforms to be purchased. The local manager should pay the invoice using his/her "Smart Pay Card". If they do not have a smart card they should follow procedures using Form 8230. The vendors need a credit card to charge the purchase to. If you are still having problems with getting your uniforms, see your steward. They can easily take care of the hang-up for you by explaining to the manager what they are expected to do.

Why do some TE's get assigned to a route as soon as it becomes vacant, and other TE's have to do a different route everyday?

Under the contract TE's cannot opt on assignments. Management can assign a TE to hold down a route for an indefinite amount of time. If it seems that one TE is getting preferential treatment over another, speak to your steward to see if a contract violation (disparate treatment) is occurring.

Are equipment supplies (gloves, toilet paper, and paper towels) now carrier responsibilities?

Of course not. Management is still responsible for providing the carriers the necessary equipment to do our job properly and for providing all sanitary supplies needed. If management is not providing necessary supplies fill out PS Form 1767, the safety form. They need to complete this form and return it to you by the end of your tour.

Can pivoting be refused?

No. As carriers, we must follow the supervisor's instructions. If you cannot finish the assignment within the 8 hours, you must call for further instructions. Management can only tell you one of two things. Complete the assignment (which is saying this authorizes overtime), or leave the mail/bring it back.

If you are not on the overtime desired list and you are instructed to complete the assignment, please follow the instruction. The next morning, request five minutes with

your steward, give them the details of the assignment and how much time you went over 8 hours and they will file a grievance for you. The contract says before a non ODL carrier can work overtime on an assignment other than their own, management must work all the ODL carriers to twelve hours. If they comply with this aspect of the contract, you can only be mandated by juniority.

If you are on the overtime desired list and your pivot results in overtime, you must still call for authorization, and call if the assignment cannot be performed in 8 hours.

Basically, this applies to our TE's and PTF's as well. While neither can refuse overtime, they both need to call for authorization of overtime unless it has been preapproved in the morning. Make sure upon returning to the station that you fill out a 3996 to cover the overtime that you were authorized when calling in.

Can management pivot on Mondays and Tuesdays and what is the volume count they use for justifying pivoting?

They can instruct you to pivot on any given day. You should work professionally and safely and do your best to complete your assignments. BUT if you cannot finish, then you cannot finish. CALL for authorization of overtime or instructions on what to do. Do not take unauthorized overtime. All time over 8 hours must be authorized. If you cannot reach your supervisor do not take it upon yourself to finish. You must call.

How does management determine how we are always undertime?

We have not agreed with management on how they determine what volume would constitute so-called undertime. They use the DOIS system and undertime is based on the DOIS system. Management is also responsible for inputting the figures in DOIS. So there you have it.

What you need to do is calculate your own volume, and be as descriptive and accurate on how much time you feel you will need to get the job done. Calculate based on parcels, vacation holds, endorsements, callers, and every

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IN MEMORIAM

Lili Genteroy

WELCOME NEW MEMBERS

Tony Barreto (TE-San Leandro)
Kafung Cheung (TE-San Leandro)
Rommel Coronel (TE-Novato)
Wendell Esmane (PTR-Collections)
Jo Anne Gallow (TE-PCA)
Thupten Lama (TE-PCA)

Election 2008

Avoiding the temptation to vote for McCain/Palin

By Bill Thornton, Vice President

It is a mistake to think that these are not formidable candidates that will not have some appeal to carriers/working people.

Admittedly, McCain has a somewhat deserved reputation as a maverick and one of taking principled stands, including Bush tax cuts for the rich, campaign finance and ethics reform and immigration. But most recently he has become more of a Bush clone.

What's important to carriers

Carriers are also citizens and have wide ranges of opinions on many issues including abortion/gun rights, gay rights, etc. Some of these issues take on overwhelming moral importance for some people. Many union people will be tempted to vote for McCain based on foreign policy concerns, and for them that criteria takes on a great deal of validity. Our geographic position in the San Francisco Bay Area sometimes gives us a distorted picture of political reality. You don't have to leave California to get into red-conservative territory. I-5 can be seen as that line of demarcation.



Certainly, as Obama has said repeatedly, nobody is questioning John McCain's patriotism/heroism. But it should be noted that McCain opposed increases in vet-

In considering your vote, consider your economic interests.

eran's educational benefits as proposed by Jim Webb of Virginia and signed into law in June.

Voting your economic interest

But on issues that affect us as union members, a vote for McCain is against our own interests. The issue may hit us in our paychecks, in our cost of living increases, and even in our pensions/retirement benefits if a labor unfriendly administration continues. Consider some of the record as expounded by the AFL-CIO.

McCain will not protect our rights

Sen. John McCain is clearly not a fan of workers' freedom to form unions and bargain for better wages and ben-

efits. He has spoken out against unions and consistently voted against collective bargaining rights for workers. Union members know the right to bargain is essential to preserving good jobs with good wages and benefits.

McCain opposes our freedom to form unions

McCain voted against the Employee Free Choice Act, which would level the playing field for workers trying to form unions. He voted for a national "right to work"

Some of McCain's record is unfriendly to union issues.

(for less) law that would attempt to eliminate unions altogether...

McCain crossed a Writers Guild picket line

McCain crossed the picket line of the Writers Guild of America to appear on "The Tonight Show with Jay Leno."

McCain voted to allow employers to hire permanent replacements during a strike. McCain voted against ending debate on a bill that would bar employers from hiring permanent replacements for striking workers.

Against giving firefighters and police a voice on the job

Firefighters and police risk their lives every day to protect the public, yet McCain voted to deny them the right to discuss workplace issues with their employer in 2001 and skipped a vote on the issue in 2008. McCain also voted against a measure to grant Transportation Security Administration (TSA) airport screeners limited collective bargaining rights.

McCain has a 17 percent lifetime AFL-CIO rating.

(AFL-CIO McCain Congressional Scorecard)

In 2007 McCain's AFL-CIO rating was 0 and Obama's was 100. These ratings indicate the percentage of time that politician votes in favor or against key legislation relating to labor/worker interests. The higher number the better.

A McCain election would also lead to more pro-business decisions by the National Labor Relations Board. Letter Carrier interests are tied in with the general health of the labor movement.

He has spoken of government workers as being crippled by union contracts.

The point is to balance your interests within the framework of a slumping economy and loss of Postal Service revenue and questions about the continuing survival of the Postal Service. Other issues aside, the rational conclusion would be to vote your economic interests.

Election 2008

McCain for President

By Mike McAdoo, Parkside carrier

I am a union member for almost a third of a century. I joined the NALC because, as many others and I believe, that the union would be a faithful representative. For the most part over the past 30 plus years, as far as contractual interests have been concerned, the union has fulfilled that obligation. I have the firm conviction that the union representatives do all that is humanly and legally possible to protect the interest of the members. However, with respect to politics, I believe that sometimes the union does not pursue what is in the best interests of the union members and the nation at large. Election 2008 is one of those times.



A choice

I believe that Senator John McCain is the candidate who is best suited to occupy the office of the Presidency in the upcoming general election. I will use the balance of this opus to explain why.

Critical situation

Senators McCain has a grasp of the critical situation which confronts this nation in terms of terrorism in the dawn of the 21st century. I believe that the invasion of Iraq was justified, and insuring the stability of the govern-

In contractual matters the union has fulfilled its obligations.

ment within that nation is a must in terms of the stability of the Middle East. United Nations resolutions were violated consistently during the 1990's, and Saddam Hussein knew it. Yes, not of finding caches of weapons of mass destruction was embarrassing, but the dictator would, given his past behavior, have pursued the development of these lethal devices had he remained in power. I believe and stand by this axiom.

Expenditure of time and resources

Time and resources, human as well as material, have been expended so as to develop tactics and strategy. In the U.S. Civil War, the Union command had to learn that it was not the occupation of territory that would defeat the Confederacy. President Lincoln had to go through several generals before he found the one general, U.S.

Grant, who instinctively understood that the destruction of the Confederate Army was the key to suppressing the rebellion.

In World War II, in both the European and Pacific theaters, hard fought and costly campaigns such as North Africa, the U-Boat wars in the north Atlantic, and Tarawa in the Pacific yielded lessons which resulted in victory over the Axis Powers. The Cold War, which every Presi-

In politics the union does not always pursue the best interest of its members.

dent from Truman to Bush 41 had to deal with, required many lessons to be learned to vanquish what was arguably the greatest evil of the 20th century, i.e. Communism.

Lessons learned

The surge in Iraq, which has been successful, is the result of hard learned lessons, with more to be forthcoming in the future if this nation is to protect itself. John McCain understands this and is resolute. Barack Obama, while a master of rhetoric, lacks the capacity, which can only be derived from the wisdom of experience, to understand and appreciate these fine points.

Exploration and development

Secondly, I believe, as does a growing consensus of the populace, that areas such as the shale fields in the Continental Divide should be open to exploration and development. Expansion of development of off-shore coastal areas should also be allowed. In the Caribbean, as well as the Pacific, reservoirs of oil can be safely, and with technology developed over the past quarter of a century, efficiently recovered. The Arctic National Wildlife Animal Reserve, a.k.a. ANWAR, would benefit the Native Nations within Alaska, as well as the rest of the United States, if exploration were permitted. To his credit, Senator McCain is flexible on this issue. He realizes that this nation's dependency on imported oil is a viable threat to the safety and wellbeing of this nation. Senator Obama and House Speaker Nancy Pelosi are both captives to the radicals who took control of the environmental move-

I'll explain why Senator McCain is the best choice.

ment, and thus cannot fathom the necessity of flexibility on the domestic oil field exploration and development.

Historically union jobs

With respect to this last issue, oil exploration and development, I would add that many, if not most, of the

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McAdoo (continued from page 11)

jobs involved in these activities historically have been, and in the future most likely be, unionized jobs, from oil rigs to refineries. It does not require a rocket scientist to know that McCain's policies would be of great benefit to unionists and their allies.

Other issues

In a variety of other issues, such as border security, the protection of violent gangs of illegal aliens (as exemplified by two very notable examples in San Francisco), the protection of employment for citizens and legal

Oil exploration jobs historically have been union.

immigrants, the nomination of candidates to the Supreme Court, and the plethora of Appellate and District Courts, the heart and conscience of this unionist favors Senator McCain.

Finally, I am cognizant of the reaction of some elements to my endorsement of John McCain over Barack Obama. I do not present Senator McCain as the panacea to all challenges that face our nation and our allies, However, I believe that John McCain is not only the best choice among Presidential candidates in 2008, he is also a wise, sound and mature man of character in an era in which these traits of character will be essential to the well being of this nation. As a matter of conscience, I endorse and recommend John McCain for the Presidency of the United States of America.

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other duty you perform on a daily basis.

We are the ones who truly know our routes. We carry it everyday. We know how much longer it takes to deliver marriage mail and Chronicle, especially since we are putting each piece into every mail receptacle. If management does not agree with you and still insists that you pivot, let them know in the morning prior to your leaving that you most likely will not be able to complete your pivot. This way in the afternoon it will not come as a surprise to them when calling in for overtime.

Drivers are being forced to carry mail even if they have an average amount of parcels.

We would need to be aware of all the particulars. If you are completing all of your parcel deliveries and carrying mail in overtime status there is no violation (providing you are on the overtime list). However, is you are curtailing your parcels to carry mail (which is not included in your bid assignment), see your steward. This is a blatant violation of Article 41. You have the right to complete all

A delegate reports

Democratic National Convention, aka The Denver Spin

By John Beaumont,
President California State Association of Letter Carriers

Last month I had the privilege to be one of nine NALC members to get elected as a delegate to the Democratic National Convention in Denver. Unlike any previous conventions I have watched on television, or attended in person, this gathering of delegates was the most unified I have ever seen. This surprised many of the press and political pundits who wanted desperately to make this convention a story about Clinton vs. Obama. From the first night until the Senator Obama's historic acceptance speech at Mile High stadium most reporters from every news station tried their best to spin the convention as one in which would divide the Democratic Party going into the Fall Presidential Election. But no matter how much the media tried to fabricate a story line they hit a road block at every turn.



Not only did both President Bill Clinton and Senator Hillary Clinton give their all out support and backing for Senator Barack Obama for President during their speeches,

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the duties of your bid assignment.

Remember, the same procedure for undertime and pivoting applies to the drivers. If you know you cannot complete your own assignment of delivering parcels/relays and are instructed to carry mail within your 8 hour day, you must call for authorization and/or instructions. Make sure if you are working overtime that you are on the correct overtime desired list. Management must honor

A TE cannot opt.

Article 8 of our contract. Non ODL carriers cannot be mandated to perform work off of their assignment unless all the ODL carriers are working 12 hours.

Management is not following the route summary.

The carriers at Marina Station complained they were walked during the summer months. Being that the mail was at an all time low, they completed their routes, in some cases an hour, earlier than the route street base time.

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Beaumont (continued from page 12)

but Hillary also called a special meeting for just her delegates (which made up about 45% of the convention attendees) and asked them to join with her in supporting Senator Obama and to work hard to get him elected.

Same policies

What many in the press, and those who do not believe in working to change the direction of our country, failed to realize is that despite their differences in campaign style both Hillary and Barack are pushing almost the exact same agenda, an agenda that that will restore America's working class. Over the entire convention every single speaker addressed issues such as: the shrinking middle class, outsourcing our jobs to other countries, escalating fuel costs, and how to turn our dependence on foreign oil around, allowing employees the right to have a free choice to join a union, building a health care system that would benefit everyone, and not just a select few, returning the billions of tax payer dollars that are being used each month to fund a war in the Middle East back to the United States for investment here where it is needed, addressing the housing and foreclosure crisis, and many other issues that the American public is crying out for attention and change.

McCain votes with Bush

Every single speaker also spoke out in admiration of Senator McCain's service in the military for our country 35 years ago, but also pointed out that no matter how much Senator McCain has remarked about being an agent of change, his voting record on working family and middle

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They felt that management was trying to hold them to the unrealistic 3 hour street time versus the 5 hour route street base information.

Management cannot just change the route base information. This means that you need to be diligent in analyzing your own volume and honestly accessing it on a day to day basis. As we know, the volume on our routes can change on a daily basis. Don't let management tell you your route will take 3 hours on the street when the difference of volume for the day is 9 feet more than the day of your street observation. Again, if they are insistent, follow orders, then see your steward.

The after work meeting lasted approximately 2 hours. Hopefully, the carriers walked away with a strong sense of solidarity and knowing that the union always fights for their rights. One great result of the meeting was that six carriers signed up to become alternate stewards. Two have already gone through training, four to go.

YEAH Marina Carriers!

class issues over the past 8 years illustrates a completely different story. Factually, Senator McCain has voted with President Bush 95% of the time last year and 100% so far this year. **Is this really an agent of change?**

Republican Convention

On the flip side was the Republican Convention which introduced a new person to politics from Alaska. It is now apparent that John McCain must no longer view experience as the most important reason why he should be President when he picks a running mate with about as much experience as a member of the Los Angeles City Council. During the convention Senator McCain tried to remain cordial delivering his speech while most of the conventions previous speakers took turns attacking their respective opponents. Vicious attacks from their VP candidate Sarah Palin, like derogating community service have no place in a country which prides itself on things like the inscription written on the statue of liberty that says "Give me your tired, your poor, Your huddled masses yearning to breathe free."

The sad thing is that among the meaningful things that were not covered in depth during the Republican convention were topics such as how they are really going to change our growing unemployment, shrinking middle class, health care and housing crisis, and really when are we really going to bring our brave servicemen and women home from Iraq. Remember brothers and sisters, McCain stated himself in his acceptance speech, "I will cut government spending. He will increase it." You do all remember who we work for, right? It's not private enterprise. **Contracting our routes is considered cutting government spending.**

Real issues at stake

While a lot of the media did not get the Denver spin they were looking for they are now dead set on twisting the focus of his upcoming election to one of showmanship over substance. Let's show them there is more to running our country than sound bites and clever commercials. Vote for the future of your jobs, your benefits, your retirement, and the ultimate survival of the Postal Service itself. **On November 4th vote for real change that we can believe in, vote for Barack Obama, the NALC's endorsed candidate, for President of the United States.**

Support to become delegate

I would like to close this article by thanking all of our branches across the state that helped assist the California NALC delegates. I also would like to thank my brothers and sisters from Branch 214 who came out to the delegate caucus to vote, especially Kim Truong, his family, and Matthew Ressio. I also wish to thank nalcbayarea.com, for assisting in both running the information on the caucus and enlisting support for my race on their website.

Happy payoff

MDA summer camp

By Karen Schuler, Secretary-Treasurer

Just recently I had the fortunate experience to go to MDA summer camp at Westminster Woods with my fellow officer Karen Eshabarr. For those of you who don't know where Westminster Woods is, it's in west Sonoma County past the city of Occidental. It is a very beautiful camp located in a redwood grove. Upon our arrival, we checked in and we received a card with our camper's name and we had to go find Allan. He is a 13 year old boy from San Jose. We wandered around and asked a few other campers where they thought Allan might be? One of the camp hosts looked his name up and told us he was

There are dedicated hard-working kids who volunteer their time.

in the Caboose cabin, and off we went in search of Allan and the Caboose Cabin. To our luck we found Allan and his counselor Hans.

Dedicated volunteers

I just want to thank all the hard working dedicated young kids who volunteer their time (a week) to make it a special time for the kids with MDA. Hans told us it was his third year at the camp; he had just graduated from high school in San Francisco. He told us he loved coming to the camp, and so did we. It is truly a very special place. Allan and Hans gave us a tour of the camp and we gave



Photo by Karen Schuler

The sidecar adventure of the campers.

Allan 100 Jerry Bucks so he could buy things in the store. Everything the kids make at camp they get to keep. They have different activities and Allan's favorite was the Lego center where he could build stuff with Legos. There were vendors that set up booths and the kids got to go make things. Allan and another camper, Anna May, enjoyed painting decorative gourds. They had a face painting booth. The CDF firefighters had brought a water truck and the kids got to spray the water out of the hose. That was great; it was a very hot day! The Sonoma County Sheriff's Department had a booth and gave out badges, Chap Stick, pencils, pens and all kinds of other goodies. Another vendor had pens and the campers got to take fake flowers and wrap them around the pens. They had an ice cream vendor and Clo the Cow was there.

Motorcycle rides for the kids

The Hayward and Livermore Harleys Owner Group came over on their motorcycles so the kids could look at them and two of the guys brought motorcycles with side cars. Those guys picked up the kids out of their wheel chairs, put them in the side cars and gave them a ride around the field. I don't think I have ever seen brighter smiles. It was great! I look forward to next year and hope we can sponsor a booth for the kids, possibly with something to do with the Post Office.

Labor Day Telethon

I would personally like to thank all the officers that showed up to do the Labor Day Telethon it was great and very easy; I look forward to next year's Telethon. The year to date MDA Auction and soda sales are \$840. Thank you for your generous donations. This does not include the money we were raising to bail us out of Lock Up on September 25, keep those MDA dollars coming. We're doing great, Branch 214!



Photo by Karen Schuler

The man, Allan, with Branch 214 officers Karen Schuler (left), and Karen Eshabarr.

Best plan around

Let's walk the talk for unionism

By Franklin H. Woo, NALC Health Benefit Plan Rep.

The NALC Health Benefit Plan began to provide health coverage to its NALC union members and their family members in the 1950's. Today, Branch 214 still has members belonging to the Plan since 1960, if not earlier. You may ask the question, "Why so long?"

These carriers knew that the NALC HBP was Union Owned and Union Operated. In other words, each NALC member owned a piece of the HBP. And, they knew that the HBP was not there to make a profit ... any profit made in a given year was to be put back into the "pot" to have improved or new benefits and/or to bring down the premiums for the Plan members in the upcoming years. The carriers back in the 50's probably realized that the NALC HBP was there for them and their family members. The Plan was designed for the letter carriers in mind!



Member owned plan

Earlier NALC members perhaps felt that it was only right to support their union and to show solidarity by belonging to the NALC Health Benefit Plan. Hey, don't forget, all NALC members owned a piece of the Plan! The Plan does a very good job in providing health coverage for its members and family members!

Today you may ask, any big difference since the 1950's? I would say yes and no. The NALC HBP is still Union Owned and Union Operated by you and me. The Plan is still non-profit. Today, the Plan offers more and better/improved benefits for their members and family

All NALC members own a piece of the Plan.

members. The Plan is still being designed with the letter carriers in mind.

Today, we attend union conventions, union meetings and other union functions, but we do not belong to the NALC Health Benefit Plan! What is wrong with this picture? To show our union colors, unionism, and solidarity, why don't all of our Branch 214 full-time and part-time officers, including all of our shop stewards, belong to the NALC HBP? It seems that we're talking about unionism

a lot, but not walking the talk!

If the NALC and President William Young are able to be successful in 5 years time, there may be just one health plan for all Letter Carriers. If this is possible, it was said that the NALC would be saving a whole lot of money annually. Not a bad idea at all. Of course, that one health plan has to be the NALC HBP! We will see!

Anyway, this year's Open Season will be from Nov. 10 - Dec. 8, 2008 (tentative dates). This period will allow you to make any health plan changes or to be enrolled into one. Whatever or whichever the case may be, please give the NALC Health Benefit Plan a try for 2009!

Soon, all of you should be receiving your 2009 NALC Health Benefit Plan packet in the mail, provided your

Today the Plan offers more and better/improved benefits.

mailing address is current with the USPS! Please review the information carefully. Then decide if the Plan is for you or not.

For any assistance, please leave me a voice message at 415-362-0214 (ext. 43) at any time or for immediate answers or assistance during business hours (8:00 A.M.-3:30 P.M. EST), you may call the NALC Health Benefit Plan (home office) at toll-free 1-888-636-6252 and ask to speak with a CSR (Customer Service Rep).

Thank you for considering protecting yourselves and family members by joining the NALC HBP for 2009!



Sean, one of the campers, with his own music.

Photo by Karen Schuler

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Tickets \$20 for members and guests –
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* Branch members who retired between September 2007 and December 2008 and guest receive complimentary tickets. *

✂-----
Ticket Order – Mail to ANNUAL DINNER, Attn: Carol Maggio, NALC 214, 2310 Mason St., 4th Flr., San Francisco, CA 94133

Member's Name _____ Phone # _____

Address / City / Zip _____

Reserve _____ tickets @ \$20 each. Tickets will be at the door. Enclosed is my check or money order for \$ _____

Guests name(s) _____

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Choice of entrée (indicate number) Roast Chicken _____ Breaded Veal Cutlet _____ Eggplant Parmesan _____