THE VOICE

OF THE GOLDEN GATE LETTER CARRIERS BRANCH #214

NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF LETTER CARRIERS, AFL-CIO

November/December 2002 Award-winning newspaper Vol. XXXII, No. 6

GRIEVANCE WIN—$589,489!

By Ray Fong, Field Director

Has anyone ever wondered what has the union done for me lately? If you were actively employed as a career letter carrier during the period of December 23, 1995 to January 10, 1998 in the San Francisco Post Office and are currently on the rolls, chances are that you are going to receive a portion of this settlement. A recent pre-arbitration settlement awarded carriers working in the San Francisco Post Office the amount of $589,489. Bob Miller, under the administration of then President Richard Becker, initiated the grievance in 1997. Regional Administrative Assistant Joan Hurst from our National Business Agent's Office negotiated the final settlement.

The grievance was whether management used casuals in place of career employees.

This amount ($589,489) is to be distributed equally to all career employees currently on the rolls who were actively employed during the above time period. As of the writing of this article, it has been determined that 1,153 letter carriers will be receiving part of this settlement. This amounts to approximately $511.26 for each carrier.

The issue in the instant case resulting in the settlement was whether or not management improperly hired and utilized casual employees in the San Francisco Post Office. It was determined, based on the evidence record and on the controlling National Level Arbitration decision by Shyman Das, that casuals were hired and utilized in lieu of career employees.

The following criteria were utilized in determining qualification for the settlement:

- Actively employed as a career letter carrier during period of December 23, 1995 through January 10, 1998 in the San Francisco Post Office.
- Currently still on the rolls in the San Francisco Post Office.
- If you were out on LWOP and receiving compensation from the U.S. Department of Labor for the entire period, you will be excluded from the settlement.
- If you were in a supervisory position or serving as a full-time officer during the entire period, you will also be excluded from the settlement.
- Carriers involved in mutual trades that assumed the seniority of carriers, who qualified, will also be excluded.

President Tony Gallardo made a determination that carriers who were either on light or limited duty during the referenced period will be part of the settlement.

A similar grievance was filed out of the San Leandro Post Office resulting in a $50,000 settlement. Carriers at the San Leandro Post Office received approximately $400 each.

Photo by Martha Raup

Regional Administrative Assistant Joan Hurst, who negotiated the settlement for San Francisco carriers, talking with Ray Fong at the national convention in Philadelphia.

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BRANCH 214 NOTES

Welcome new stewards: Juliette Chen, North Beach; Regina Gillespie, Station J; Roland Menis, Station A; Richard DeLeon, Golden Gate; Ronaldo Caluag and Adolfo Vocal, Daly City.

Welcome alternate stewards: Sandra O'Dwyer, San Rafael Main; Tom O'Doul, San Rafael Civic; Alex Munguia, Stonestown; Mike Hutchins and Robert Sy, AM Collections; Mike Maloney, Golden Gate; Steve McCaffree, Bayview.

New numbers for our office:

(415) 362-0214

Toll-free line - (800) 427-0214

Fax line - (415) 392-NALC.

Branch newspapers exchanging issues with The Voice: Please note our new address beginning December 15, 2002:

Branch 214, NALC
2310 Mason Street, 4th Fl.
San Francisco, CA., 94133

Voice online!

The Voice is now online at our Branch web page *(http://www.nalc214.org)*. Thanks to the efforts of DC Typography, who supply a .pdf file to Spence F. Burton (our Webmaster), beginning with the October issue of **The Voice** we now can be viewed around the world! **The Voice** is available in Adobe Acrobat format, and you can download a copy of the program for free if you don't already have it installed on your computer. The photos will not be as clear online in order to speed up online viewing, but stop by and let us hear from you. You can contact the Webmaster at: *Webmaster@nalc214.org*

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Branch Officers

Tony Gallardo . . . . . **President**
Lili Buencamino . . . . . **Executive Vice-President**
Bill Thornton . . . . . **Vice-President**
John Beaumont . . . . . **Secretary-Treasurer**
Ray Fong . . . . . **Field Director**
Carol Maggio . . . . . **Assistant Secretary–Treasurer**
Herb Mitchell . . . . . **Sergeant-at-Arms**
Franklin Woo . . . . . **NALC Health Benefits**
Juan Dominguez . . . . . **Safety and Health**
Carmen Jimenez . . . . . **Equal Employment Opportunity**
Mike Callahan . . . . . **MBA representative**
Leonard Cruz . . . . . **Director of Organization**
June Buccat . . . . . **Trustee**
Kathleen McConnell . . . . . **Trustee**
Martha Raup . . . . . **Trustee**

Voice Staff

Ivars Lauersons . . . . . **Editor**
Phil Vosburg, Juliette Chen . . . . . **Associate Editors**
Gerry Lee . . . . . **Cartoons and Graphics**

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GOLDEN GATE BRANCH
214 12th St., San Francisco, CA 94103
Phone: (415) 621-0214
WEB page: http://www.nalc214.org
Office hours: 8:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. Monday to Friday

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Photo by Leonard Cruz

From Redwood City at the Stewards' Appreciation Breakfast 2002: Roberta Bojo, and the kids, Noah (Lili Buencamino's) and Kasey (Roberta's, on left).

T.V. 214 Schedule

SAN FRANCISCO, AT&T Cable Channel 29:
Every third Sunday of the month at 7:00 p.m.
Dec. 15, 2002, Jan. 19, 2003, Feb. 16, 2003

Building fund payoff

Branch 214 has a new home

By Tony Gallardo, President

On Tuesday November 11, 2002, North Beach officially got 2 new neighbors to add to its liberal legacy. On this date, a building corporation composed of Golden Gate Branch 214 of the National Association of Letter Carriers, and the United Educators of San Francisco confirmed the final transfer of funds, closing the deal on the purchase of the office building on 2310 Mason Street, San Francisco.

This is the culmination of a lot of hard work by many Branch members. Many thanks to the entire Executive Board, and especially Lili Buencamino, Carol Maggio and John Beaumont for keeping the ball rolling while I was on vacation. Thanks also to Lily Gee Hickman, Treasurer of the United Educators of San Francisco, who has been involved in every aspect of this venture.

Many thanks as well to all the members who have made and continue to make regular voluntary contributions to the Building Fund. We also owe a debt of gratitude to all the active members whose assessment of $ 3.00 per pay period until March of 2005 continues to provide a significant part of the money that has forever changed the Branch from a renter to owner.

Renter to owner

Branch 214 has been in existence since 1891. In all of these 111 years, branch funds have undoubtedly gone to landlords, leaving us nothing to show for this. Many retired members have told me that they were trying to buy a building for the Branch in the 50s.

During all this time, the cost of rents continued to rise, disproportionate to the cost of living. The dot.com boom caused rents to spike, encouraging our own landlord to more and more ridiculous demands. Now, with our own building, our future office expenses have been stabilized. Future members and officers of Branch 214 will benefit further, when our mortgage is paid off, reducing our overhead even more, and insuring that more of our resources are spent on representing our members. I am sure that future Branch members will be very grateful for the hard work that we have accomplished in making this purchase.

Moving day: 12/15/02

We are moving on Sunday 12/15/02. It will probably be necessary to close the office for business some or most of that week. We will be sending letters to the Postmasters requesting extensions on grievances due that week. Our new phone numbers appear in the calendar and Branch Notes in this issue. The old numbers will work until December 15. Please call the old number as soon as possible and get the new number from our receptionist.

Unfinished construction

The construction on the building will happen while we are there. We will move temporarily into the third floor at first, and the teachers will move temporarily into the second floor.

We are buying a building at 2310 Mason, near Bay Street.

Construction will begin on the fourth floor in early February and end in April or May. When that work is done, we move on up to our permanent offices on the fourth floor.

Construction will continue on the third floor for the teachers. When that's done, the teachers move up to the third floor, and final construction will begin on the new meeting hall on the second floor. We expect that to be finished somewhere around September of '03.

In the November Branch Meeting, it was decided that, unless there is another low cost or no cost solution, Branch Meetings shall be temporarily changed to the first Monday of the month at the Knights of Columbus Hall at 2800 Taraval. The Branch already rents out the Hall on Mondays for the Retiree Meetings, so this temporary solution will incur no extra expense to the Branch.

As soon as the new meeting hall is completed, meetings will be held on the first Wednesday of the month, at 2310 Mason Street. Again, I want to thank everyone for making this a reality.

Local uniform manufacturer plans to import postal uniforms from foreign sweatshops

The Branch sent me to the Committee of Presidents on October 26 through 28. While I was there, I learned that a local Uniform company, San Francisco Knitting Mills, in San Bruno, is planning to import Postal Uniforms from sweatshops in foreign countries.

I have had talks with the other Presidents in the San Francisco District, as well as several activists from UNITE, the garment workers union. We will be organizing an informational picket to draw media attention to this issue. It is hoped that we will be able to persuade this company to switch its policies, and stop the loss of union jobs in the USA.

We are tentatively looking at doing this in January. If you are interested in joining this picket, please call the Union Hall.

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End of an era

Herb's last trip: Reno bus trips, 1994 to 2002

By Herb Mitchell, VIM Carrier, San Francisco

It was a foggy, cold morning the Sunday before Presidents Day, 1994. My first Reno bus trip group was standing in the parking lot of EPC in San Francisco, when out of the fog came the "Betty's Tours" bus and the era began.

Fond memories of that first trip: Eddie K's ribs were great; we ran out of beer before we reached Sacramento; and the legend of Norma Leonardo was born.

Columbus Day 1995 we switched to "Mr. T's Tour," which had a driver named Richard, that Norma affectionately called "Mr. Dick" for two days.

In l966 we switched to "Lucky Tours," which took care of us for the next seven trips at the legendary Sundowner (rundowner) Hotel.

Photo courtesy Norma Leonardo

My wife, Adrean, on right, and Norma Leonardo on the last bus trip.

Best for last

2002, my last trip as tour coordinator, and the best trip of all, we had a new, bigger bus and switched to the much nicer Sands Regency Hotel and Casino. On the bus were most of the regular participants, a few new faces and, of course, the bus does not leave San Francisco without Norma. Again, Eddie K's ribs were great, Frieda Brown's chicken was spicy, and Adrean's green beans great. Everyone had a great time in Reno and some people left winners.

Photo by Norma Leonardo

Holding the picture board of Polaroid shots taken during the most recent trip.

The return trip was full of surprises. Everyone on my trips always remembers rule number one, take care of Herb, and take care of me they did. The whole bus showed their appreciation for the hard work I have done over nine years by presenting me with a picture board of photos, a message album, and a piggy bank full of money. Everyone expressed their thanks, and I was really moved by the occasion.

Many to thank

As my era comes to a close, I would like to thank some people for the support they have given my efforts over the years. First, my dear wife, Adrean for the help shopping, cooking and being by my side for all the ebbs and flows of preparing for the trips,

And thanks to Norma Leonardo for organizing the Mission Annex carriers, collecting money and making every trip loud, fun, and lively. Thanks to Eduardo Sobalvarro for organizing the 180 Napoleon carriers and collecting money. My thanks also to Eddie K and Classie for the great ribs and teaching me how to do these trips.

And don't let me forget my old Bayview station family for their support: Bennie, Tucker, Eddie K, Valarie, Shelly, Yadira.

Finally, I would like to thank every single person who boarded one of my busses for having a good time. After all the hard work, nothing made me feel better than seeing everyone having a good time. So to all my supporters I say, "Thanks for the memories."

We ran out of beer before we reached Sacramento.

And not to forget the branch presidents who donated, out of their own pockets, the union jackets and shirts to be raffled off. Thank you to them, too.

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Old enough to be

Reminiscing

(Part three of a series)

By Spence F. Burton, Past President Branch 214

In Part 2, I covered my arrival in the San Francisco area, and my reinstatement in the USPS. In this part, I hope to cover the early 1970s in Branch 214 and the NALC.

"The Rank and File Movement!"

After becoming an Alternate Steward at Stonestown Station, and with the guidance of the regular Steward and Health Benefit Plan Representative Lou Preciado, my involvement in Branch 214 began to grow with "leaps and bounds!" We had no Full-Time Officers, but President Don Hackett had a dream and a goal to establish one. The internal politics in our branch was "messy", to choose a nice word. Don was the first African American President of our Branch and his Vice-President (Ron Tyeskey) was also African American. Both were vying to be the Full-Time President, if the Bylaws were amended. In order to get the position established, myself along with a concerned "Rank and File" Committee initially composed of: Harold Vreeland, Jim Cantrell, Bob Yragui, Art Barab, Linda Beigel, Bev Harrington and others; decided to actively support the concept of a Full-Time Officer "without" linking it to either potential candidate. It wasn't easy since internal politics were strong, with both members having large membership support.

There was no real way to communicate with the members back then, as **The Voice** was simply a forum for the established officers to present their views. Articles from members were not encouraged! So together with members of the "Rank and File" Committee, we began to produce a newsletter called the "Open Pouch." We tried to summarize Branch meetings for those who did not attend, and also tried to get information on the Contract and what was happening around our Branch distributed as best we could. We would stand outside of carrier stations in the early morning (before going to work at out own stations) handing out copies.

We met with as many members (out of 900) who would listen to us, promoting the goal of a Full-Time President. Finally the night came, and the members at a Branch Meeting approved the position. Now all we had to do was have an election to find out who the person would be.

Our Committee decided not to back either of the candidates for President, and I became a candidate for Recording Secretary. My opponent was one of the nicer officers of our Branch, John Susleck. He had recently retired, and the main thrust of my campaign was that I was an Active Carrier. Well I soon found out about how well John was liked, I was soundly defeated! But, back then we had officer elections held at each station, with Stewards handling the Ballot Boxes and the votes. Vice-President Tyeskey challenged the vote and the voting procedures, and the appeal led to a new "mailed ballot" election. Nominations were held again (I got smart and didn't run against John this time) and I ran for Vice-President as an independent candidate. My opponents were Oscar Francis and Curtis Adams. I was out campaigning daily at the stations, and after all the ballots were counted Ron Tyeskey became President and I was elected Vice-President. I served the members in that capacity for almost 9-1/2 years.

The "Rank and File" movement was spreading across the entire NALC. Vince Sombrotto from New York City would become a frequent visitor in California and our Branch. During various contract negotiations rallies were held in Union Square and in front of the old Main Post Office in San Francisco. Hundreds of "Rank and File" carriers participated! I attended my first National Convention in Seattle, where we marched through the streets

(continued on page 14)

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You're on your own

We're saving the post office

By Ivars Lauersons, Editor

This year's national convention in Philadelphia left me with a feeling that our national officers are not in tune with, or maybe not aware of, the daily problems of the letter carriers and how serious we consider them to be. At the Contract Administration Unit Workshop at the convention the response to questions about specific problems was that grievance decisions reached at the national level gave us enough tools to resist any attacks and that there would be no more intervention at the national level.

Yet on the workroom floor we feel harassed beyond the usual. Since all carriers are feeling management pressure to work harder and faster, the question is what can the union do right now to help the carriers exercise their rights? Has national done all it can, and it is now up to each local to respond? Or can we expect some additional help from national because the situation is so bad? Let's look at two examples of current harassment, MSP scans and DOIS.

Scan and scan

Use of new technology to monitor carrier street times with MSP scans throughout the route, ostensibly to ensure reliable delivery times to the customer, is annoying but reasonable. But how many scan points are reasonable? At which point does continual scanning interfere with the job of delivering mail? We asked our union, through the grievance procedure, to resolve this issue.

The result, cited in the Contract Administration Unit Workshop booklet (containing numerous settlements for the past two years,) is a step four decision that management could use as many scanning points as they wanted. It said, in part, "…management will determine the number of scans on a city delivery route." Step four decision, 3/13/02 (Q 98N-4Q-C 01045840.) Other parts of the decision protect carrier rights, such as the note that scan times are not to be used as timecard data. Also, during route count, scanning will be incorporated into street time, most likely adding to total street time.

Our national leadership seems not in tune with the severity of local problems.

At the workshop in Philadelphia, when questioned about this, the panel suggested that this decision was adequate for carrier protection. Are any carriers with 12 scan points on their route feeling any safer from harassment because of this decision? Maybe not. In San Francisco we are just beginning the process, so we wait for full management reaction besides the already-attempted letters of warning for missing scans.

The computer says

Another topic that came up was DOIS. As we know, this is one of the most hated innovations the post office has come up with. Again, we were told that safeguards exist in a pre-arbitration decision to resist all DOIS-related pressure.The pre-arb states that "daily piece counts (PCRS) recorded with the above-referenced systems (POST or DOIS) will not constitute the sole basis for discipline." Other existing safeguards, such as there being no street standard for walking, and failure to meet office standards as a basis for discipline, are cited as still being relevant under current conditions. (Pre-arbitration, Q 94N-4Q-C 99022154, Q 98N-4Q-C 00032161, 7/30/2001.)

Telling us to fight our battles locally is not good advice.

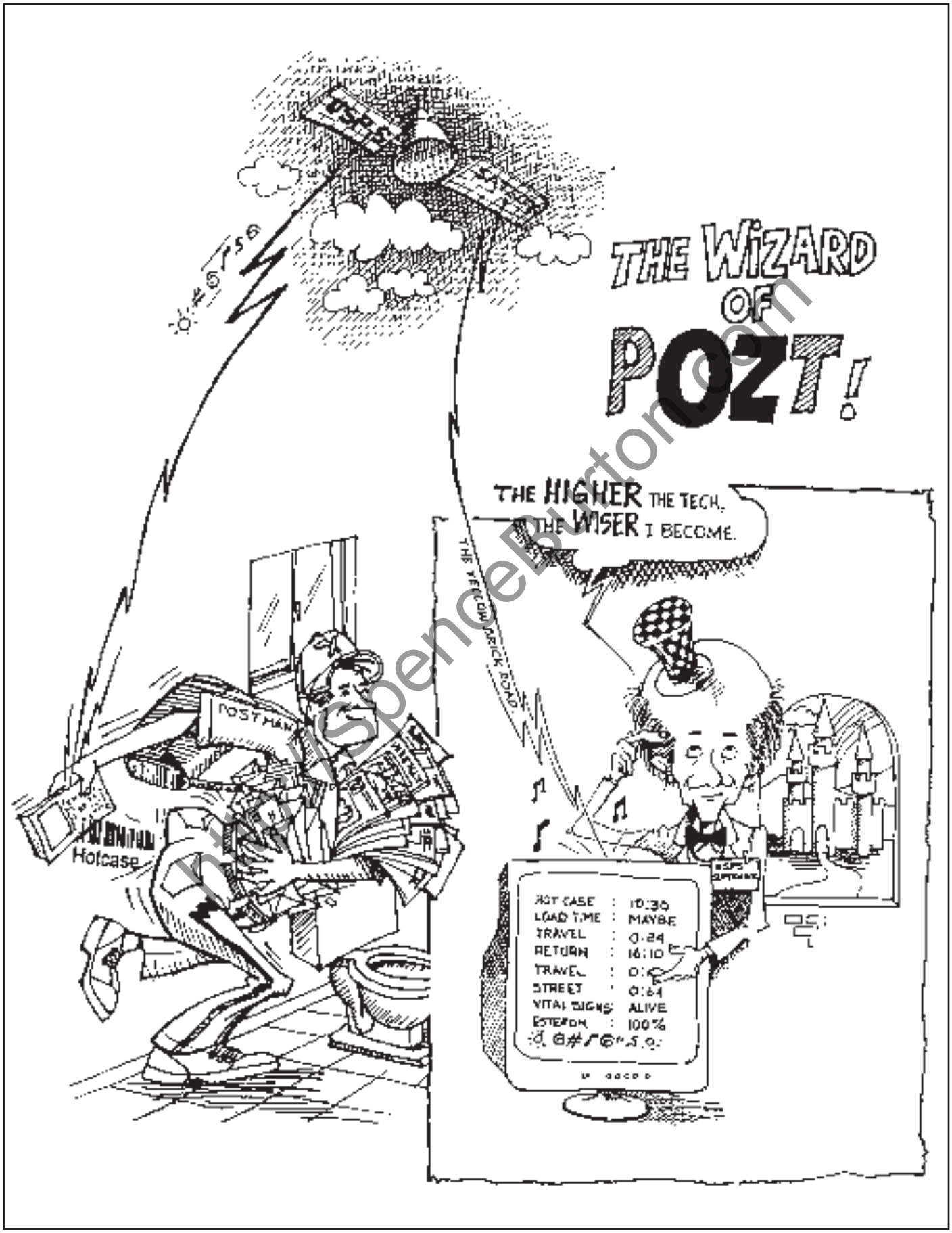
National can cooperate with postal management while not ignoring local harassment.

Do carriers feel they are being treated any better because of this decision? Ask carriers in San Leandro in our Branch 214, for example.

At the convention itself our national leadership proudly announced that they had entered into an agreement with postal management to participate in any changes recommended for carrier work. They stressed how important the future of the post office was so that we could have jobs. But while at the upper levels we are helping to save the post office, carriers are being harassed within existing safeguards. Surely it is not too much for the national leadership to tell the postmaster to lay off now. If this tradition of super harassment is unchallenged now, except for the piecemeal local grievance, then it will most likely continue through any new reformed post office plan.

The message from a carrier: Help!

http://SpenceBurton.com



Ed Cuadra, Branch 214, San Francisco, CA

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2003

Color Code Legend: BR = Brown; O = Orange; R = Red; G = Green; BL = Blue; Y = Yellow

San Anselmo Color Code Legend: O = BL; R = O; G = R; BL= Purple; Y = BLK; BR = BR

San Leandro Color Code Legend: BL = A ; Y = B ; BR = C ; O = D ; R = E ; G = F

Redwood City Color Code Legend: O = BLK; R = BL; G = R; BL = G; Y = BR; BR = O

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Legend: U = Union Meetings RET = Retiree Meetings

$ = Pay Day H = Holidays

January

S	M	T	W	T	F	S
			1 – H R	2 G	3 – $ BL	4 BL
5	6 – U Y	7 BR	8 O	9 R	10 G	11 G
12	13 BL	14 Y	15 BR	16 O	17 – $ R	18 R
19	20 - H G	21 BL	22 Y	23 BR	24 O	25 O
26	27 R	28 G	29 BL	30 Y	31 – $ BR	

February

S	M	T	W	T	F	S
						1 BR
2	3 – U RET O	4 R	5 G	6 BL	7 Y	8 Y
9	10 BR	11 O	12 R	13 G	14 – $ BL	15 BL
16	17 – H Y	18 BR	19 O	20 R	21 G	22 G
23	24 BL	25 Y	26 BR	27 O	28 – $ R	

March

S	M	T	W	T	F	S
						1 R
2	3 – U G	4 BL	5 Y	6 BR	7 O	8 O
9	10 R	11 G	12 BL	13 Y	14 – $ BR	15 BR
16	17 O	18 R	19 G	20 BL	21 Y	22 Y
23	24 BR	25 O	26 R	27 G	28 – $ BL	29 BL
30	31 Y					

April

S	M	T	W	T	F	S
		1 BR	2 O	3 R	4 G	5 G
6	7 – U RET BL	8 Y	9 BR	10 O	11 – $ R	12 R
13	14 G	15 BL	16 Y	17 BR	18 O	19 O
20	21 R	22 G	23 BL	24 Y	25 – $ BR	26 BR
27	28 O	29 R	30 G			

May

S	M	T	W	T	F	S
				1 BL	2 Y	3 Y
4	5 – U BR	6 O	7 R	8 G	9 – $ BL	10 BL
11	12 Y	13 BR	14 O	15 R	16 G	17 G
18	19 BL	20 Y	21 BR	22 O	23 – $ R	24 R
25	26 – H G	27 BL	28 Y	29 BR	30 O	31 O

June

S	M	T	W	T	F	S
1	2 – U RET R	3 G	4 BL	5 Y	6 – $ BR	7 BR
8	9 O	10 R	11 G	12 BL	13 Y	14 Y
15	16 BR	17 O	18 R	19 G	20 – $ BL	21 BL
22	23 Y	24 BR	25 O	26 R	27 G	28 G
29	30 BL					

July

S	M	T	W	T	F	S
		1 Y	2 BR	3 – $ O	4 – H R	5 R
6	7 – U G	8 BL	9 Y	10 BR	11 O	12 O
13	14 R	15 G	16 BL	17 Y	18 – $ BR	19 BR
20	21 O	22 R	23 G	24 BL	25 Y	26 Y
27	28 BR	29 O	30 R	31 G		

August

S	M	T	W	T	F	S
					1 – $ BL	2 BL
3	4 – U RET Y	5 BR	6 O	7 R	8 G	9 G
10	11 BL	12 Y	13 BR	14 O	15 – $ R	16 R
17	18 G	19 BL	20 Y	21 BR	22 O	23 O
24/31	25 R	26 G	27 BL	28 Y	29 – $ BR	30 BR

September

S	M	T	W	T	F	S
	1 - H O	2 R	3 G	4 BL	5 Y	6 Y
7	8 – U BR	9 O	10 R	11 G	12 – $ BL	13 BL
14	15 Y	16 BR	17 O	18 R	19 G	20 G
21	22 BL	23 Y	24 BR	25 O	26 – $ R	27 R
28	29 G	30 BL				

*Check for Date and Location of Union Meeting this Month

October

S	M	T	W	T	F	S
			1 Y	2 BR	3 O	4 O
5	6 – RET R	7 G	8 BL	9 Y	10 – $ BR	11 BR
12	13 - H O	14 R	15 G	16 BL	17 Y	18 Y
19	20 BR	21 O	22 R	23 G	24 – $ BL	25 BL
26	27 Y	28 BR	29 O	30 R	31 G	

November

S	M	T	W	T	F	S
						1 G
2	3 BL	4 Y	5 – U BR	6 O	7 – $ R	8 R
9	10 G	11 – H	12 Y	13 BR	14 O	15 O
16	17 R	18 G	19 BL	20 Y	21 – $ BR	22 BR
23/30	24 O	25 R	26 G	27 - H BL	28 Y	29 Y

December

S	M	T	W	T	F	S
	1 – RET BR	2 O	3 – U R	4 G	5 – $ BL	6 BL
7	8 Y	9 BR	10 O	11 R	12 G	13 G
14	15 BL	16 Y	17 BR	18 O	19 – $ R	20 R
21	22 G	23 BL	24 - H Y	25 BR	26 O	27 O
28	29 R	30 G	31 BL			

NOTE: All dates and times are subject to change. Please call the Union Office or check the latest bulletin for any changes or modifications. Calendar produced by Carol Maggio.

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2004

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January

S	M	T	W	T	F	S
				1 – **H** Y	2 – **$** BR	3 BR
4	5 O	6 R	7 – **U** G	8 BL	9 Y	10 Y
11	12 BR	13 O	14 R	15 G	16 – **$** BL	17 BL
18	19 - **H** Y	20 BR	21 O	22 R	23 G	24 G
25	26 BL	27 Y	28 BR	29 O	30 – **$** R	31 R

February

S	M	T	W	T	F	S
1	2 – **RET** G	3 BL	4 – **U** Y	5 BR	6 O	7 O
8	9 R	10 G	11 BL	12 Y	13 – **$** BR	14 BR
15	16 – **H** O	17 R	18 G	19 BL	20 Y	21 Y
22	23 BR	24 O	25 R	26 G	27 – **$** BL	28 BL
29						

March

S	M	T	W	T	F	S
	1 Y	2 BR	3 – **U** O	4 R	5 G	6 G
7	8 BL	9 Y	10 BR	11 O	12 – **$** R	13 R
14	15 G	16 BL	17 Y	18 BR	19 O	20 O
21	22 R	23 G	24 BL	25 Y	26 – **$** BR	27 BR
28	29 O	30 R	31 G			

April

S	M	T	W	T	F	S
				1 BL	2 Y	3 Y
4	5 – **RET** BR	6 O	7 – **U** R	8 G	9 – **$** BL	10 BL
11	12 Y	13 BR	14 O	15 R	16 G	17 G
18	19 BL	20 Y	21 BR	22 O	23 – **$** R	24 R
25	26 G	27 BL	28 Y	29 BR	30 O	

May

S	M	T	W	T	F	S
						1 O
2	3 R	4 G	5 – **U** BL	6 Y	7 – **$** BR	8 BR
9	10 O	11 R	12 G	13 BL	14 Y	15 Y
16	17 BR	18 O	19 R	20 G	21 – **$** BL	22 BL
23	24 Y	25 BR	26 O	27 R	28 G	29 G
30	31-**H**-BL					

June

S	M	T	W	T	F	S
		1 Y	2 – **U** BR	3 O	4 – **$** R	5 R
6	7 – **RET** G	8 BL	9 Y	10 BR	11 O	12 O
13	14 R	15 G	16 BL	17 Y	18 – **$** BR	19 BR
20	21 O	22 R	23 G	24 BL	25 Y	26 Y
27	28 BR	29 O	30 R			

July

S	M	T	W	T	F	S
				1 G	2 – **$** BL	3 BL
4	5 – **H** Y	6 BR	7 – **U** O	8 R	9 G	10 G
11	12 BL	13 Y	14 BR	15 O	16 – **$** R	17 R
18	19 G	20 BL	21 Y	22 BR	23 O	24 O
25	26 R	27 G	29 BL	29 Y	30 – **$** BR	31 BR

August

S	M	T	W	T	F	S
1	2 – **RET** O	3 R	4 – **U** G	5 BL	6 Y	7 Y
8	9 BR	10 O	11 R	12 G	13 – **$** BL	14 BL
15	16 Y	17 BR	18 O	19 R	20 G	21 G
22	23 BL	24 Y	25 BR	26 O	27 – **$** R	28 R
29	30 G	31 BL				

September

S	M	T	W	T	F	S
			1 – **U** Y	2 BR	3 O	4 O
5	6 – **H** R	7 G	8 BL	9 Y	10 – **$** BR	11 BR
12	13 O	14 R	15 G	16 BL	17 Y	18 Y
19	20 BR	21 O	22 R	23 G	24 – **$** BL	25 BL
26	27 Y	28 BR	29 O	30 R		

October

S	M	T	W	T	F	S
					1 G	2 G
3	4 – **RET** BL	5 Y	6 – **B** BR	7 O	8 – **$** R	9 R
10	11 – **H** G	12 BL	13 Y	14 BR	15 O	16 O
17	18 R	19 G	20 BL	21 Y	22 – **$** BR	23 BR
24	25 O	26 R	27 G	28 BL	29 Y	30 Y
31						

November

S	M	T	W	T	F	S
	1 BR	2 O	3 – **U** R	4 G	5 – **$** BL	6 BL
7	8 Y	9 BR	10 O	11 – **H** R	12 G	13 G
14	15 BL	16 Y	17 BR	18 O	19 – **$** R	20 R
21	22 G	23 BL	24 Y	25 – **H** BR	26 O	27 O
28	29 R	30 G				

December

S	M	T	W	T	F	S
			1 – **U** BL	2 Y	3 – **$** BR	4 BR
5	6 O	7 R	8 G	9 BL	10 Y	11 Y
12	13 BR	14 O	15 R	16 G	17 – **$** BL	18 BL
19	20 Y	21 BR	22 O	23 R	24 G	25 – **H** G
26	27 BL	28 Y	29 BR	30 O	31 – **$** R	

NOTE: All dates and times are subject to change. Please call the Union Office or check the latest bulletin for any changes or modifications. Calendar produced by Carol Maggio.

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Acting my age

Incoming midlife crisis

By Juliette Chen, Associate Editor

When I turned 40, I was at a loss. Was I supposed to "act" my age? Have a crisis of some kind? Where I come from, it is understood that middle age is synonymous with ossification—your way of life, thinking, values and habits are all set. Mentally, you are turning into a fossil even as you lose bone density. For me, there is a sense of urgency in middle age—I want to find a way of salvaging some ideals of youth and reconciling them with the realities of a new maturity. It's a tall order. For one thing, you have fewer excuses in middle age. I can no longer plead innocence; at my age innocence is called stupidity. By now, I know right from wrong, but I also know that doing the right thing often requires more courage and energy than I am capable of mustering on a daily basis.

The Island of Dr. Moreau redux

When I first came to my current station, the silence of the carriers spooked me. I like my peace and quiet, but this was quiet of a different order. Have you ever been in a forest where no birds sing, no wind blows and nothing rustles the undergrowth? A silent forest is a sick forest; ditto for carrier stations. Most of the carriers at my station, especially the PTFs, had a lean and hungry look to them. I chose to ignore these signs, even when I saw supervisors dropping mail and casing routes. Like most carriers, I just wanted to be left alone to do my job. Soon, one of the three 204Bs told me that carriers at this station are not given overtime for marriage mail. From other carriers, I heard that PTFs new to the station were informed that they were not entitled to lunch breaks. There were long periods of time when there was no union presence at the station. Many carriers dropped out of the union. Our overtime numbers looked great because we never went into penalty time. As far as management was concerned, we were a model station because we were completely cowed.

Disarming manners

It's stressful, but also straightforward, to deal with an antagonistic, abrasive supervisor. As a steward, it's much more difficult for me to deal with a polite, reasonable supervisor who also breaks rules. My station has the best supervisor that I have yet come across. He has his detractors at the station, and he's not above bending the rules or playing political games, but from the very start, even before I was a steward, he has always been unfailingly polite with me and reasonable whenever I request time. As a carrier, what more could I ask for from a supervisor? Politeness neutralizes me. When carriers brought me tales of this supervisor's misdeeds, I chose to ignore them. I wanted to protect him. But by doing so, I was compromising my integrity as a steward, and that was making me very edgy.

There were many other allegations of supervisory shenanigans—time-shaving and other illegal tinkerings with the clock rings, unequal distribution of overtime, hiding of the mail. When you are a new steward, all eyes are upon you. Trod-upon carriers are thinking, "Will she empower us?" Other carriers are thinking, "Will she spoil our arrangements?" Management thinks, "Will she compromise or not?" Doing the right thing would entail alienating a lot of carriers as well as management. I felt overwhelmed. All of a sudden, I was den mother, shrink, Gary Cooper in *High Noon* without even his shadow as backup.

Doing the right thing would alienate a lot of carriers as well as management.

The problem with compromise

As the daughter of a historian, I associate Neville Chamberlain—the British PM who tried to appease Hitler—with the word "compromise". I have a sneaky sympathy for Chamberlain, but I also know appeasement as a policy never works when you are dealing with bullies and tyrants. Being a good steward would entail going against my nature as a shy person, and against my self-interest as a carrier. If I take the long, objective view, I'd have to admit that a postal service in which both management and union observe the rules of the contract makes the best economic sense. And economic sense is what we sorely need at a time when the PO is bleeding money, costly grievances are piling up, and mistrust between management and union is at an all-time high. Increasingly, management is abdicating its responsibility to abide by the contract; leaving the union with the onerous burden of contractual and law enforcement, but without the authority to back it up. Perhaps the union should be integrated with the postal police because management is now the major law-breaker, not the rank and file. From a two-parent family, the PO is becoming a single-parent household: deadbeat Dad is walking out on the wife and kids, and Mom must soldier on by herself.

When the rule of law breaks down, stations form their little fiefdoms, ruled over by little warlords. A station then reverts to a feudal system in which some carriers become the elite, and others become the underclass, or

(continued on page 11)

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Chen *(continued from page 10)*

untouchables. Management tell carriers that they are violating the contract for the good of the carriers. Whenever the spotlight is on them, management give a stand-up talk in which they announce that they are cracking down on hitherto tolerated practices such as the casing of marriage mail and DPS, and imply that this is what the union wants. When carriers break rules, it is management's job (not the union's) to remedy the situation. As your steward, I don't care if you case your marriage mail or DPS. I just want you to know that you do so at your own risk because management can pick on you any time they need a scapegoat.

No excuse

Most people in management are middle-aged, as I am. As I said earlier, by our age, we should know right from wrong—unless we are criminally insane, in which case, we will not be held responsible for our actions in a court of law. Assuming most people in management are not criminally insane, what then is their excuse for their irresponsible actions, and their astounding lack of accountability to their superiors as well as to the rank and file? In spite of my whining, I have no excuse not to be the best steward I can be. What is management's excuse for not doing a better job? As a supervisor or manager, you can tell me that you only have the best interests of carriers at heart, but regardless of your motives or of how I feel about you, if you violate the contract, I'll have to come after you.

Branch 214 Meetings

Branch meetings, 7:00 P.M.

December 4, 2002	Union Hall, 214 12th St., S.F.
January 6, 2003	Knights of Columbus Hall
February 3, 2003	38th & Taraval, S.F.

Steward meetings, 5:30 P.M.

December 4, 2002	Union Hall, 242 12th St., S.F.

January, February meetings to be announced

Retiree social meeting, 12:30 P.M.

February 3, 2003	Knights of Columbus Hall
April 7, 2003	38th and Taraval, S.F.
June 2, 2003	

WELCOME NEW MEMBERS

Norman Wong

See you, Irving

I know a lot of you letter carriers remember this big, bearded guy who came to your station to do safety inspections. His name was Irving Hacker, and he was a member of the APWU and their Safety and Health Officer.

I remember him as a gentleman and a gentle man, who was very patient with postal management, and that he was a very good teacher of postal policy and procedures on safety.

Irving passed away in mid-October. I was saddened when I heard that he had passed. I will always remember him as a fighter for workers' rights and safety for all postal workers.

The one thing I remember most was that Irving was very patient with postal management's practice of not following the safety policies, and very aggressive in making sure the postal service safety policies were followed.

As a memorial to Irving, in the near future I plan to rebroadcast the "Letter Carriers Today" TV 214 show featuring him. This will appear on Channel 29 community access television here in San Francisco.

I'll miss you, Irving.

Carl Bryant, Steiner Station, San Francisco.

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SHOP STEWARDS' BREAKFAST

September marked the first ever Branch 214 shop stewards' breakfast. It will be an annual event, and hopefully a new tradition, put on to celebrate all the shop stewards of our branch.

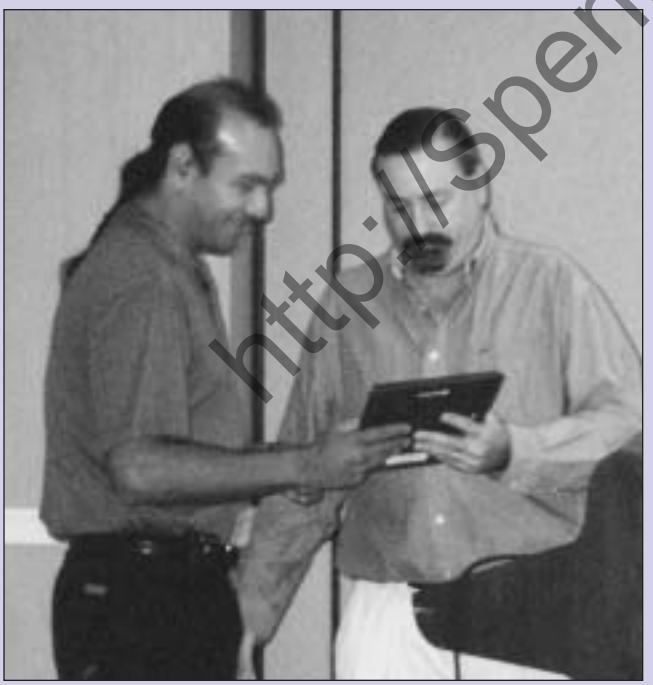
Shop stewards are the most vital part of our union. They are the liaisons between the members and the management of their stations and/or between the members, the management and the union office. Shop stewards ensure the contract is enforced. Their job is a tough one. Hence, the stewards' breakfast is Branch 214's way of showing appreciation and thanks to our shop stewards for all their hard work and efforts.

This event also posed as an opportunity to acknowledge two shop stewards for the outstanding efforts they make to promote unionism, to represent the carriers in their stations, and to assist the branch in any way.

Cathy Simonson was awarded "unionist of the year" and Eduardo Sobalvarro was given the "lifetime achievement" award.

Lili Buencamino, Executive Vice President

Cathy Simonson (left) receives her plaque for "Unionist of the Year" from Executive Vice-President Lili Buencamino at the first annual Branch 214 Steward Appreciation Breakfast on September 15, 2002.



Eduardo Sobalvarro, left, receives an award for lifetime achievement from Secretary-Treasurer John Beaumont at the Branch 214 Steward Appreciation Breakfast.

Corte Madera Steward Arnold Jones and his son Ray, at the 2002 Steward Appreciation Breakfast.

Photos by Leonard Cruz

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2002 HBP 'Open Season'

Enrollees rated NALC HBP #1 again!

By Franklin H. Woo, NALC HBR

Upon receiving and opening up my copy of the 2003 "Guide to Federal Employees Health Benefits Plans for USPS employees," I was very pleased with a major finding. For several consecutive years, the NALC Health Benefit Plan has been rated *above average* in the six listed categories:

1) Overall plan satisfaction
2) Getting needed care
3) Getting care quickly
4) How well doctors communicate
5) Customer service
6) Claims processing

For your information, the following were taken from the above guide *(section, FEHB and You).*

Quality is how well health plans keep their members healthy or treat them when they are sick. Good *quality* health care means doing the right thing at the right time, in the right way, for the right person — and getting the best possible results. Health plan *quality* can be measured from the enrollees' viewpoint (member surveys) and by the independent evaluations (accreditation) in this Guide.

Member survey results in this Guide were collected, scored, and reported by an independent organization — not by the health plans. Here are the survey categories:

Overall Plan Satisfaction. How would you rate your overall experience with your health plan?

Getting Needed Care. Were you satisfied with the choices your health plan gave you to select a personal doctor? Were you satisfied with the time it takes to get a referral to a specialist?

Getting Care Quickly. Did you get the advice or help you needed when you called your doctor during regular office hours? Could you get an appointment for regular or routine care when you wanted?

How Well Doctors Communicate. Did your doctor listen carefully to you and explain things in a way you could understand? Did your doctor spend enough time with you?

Customer Service. Was your plan helpful when you called its customer service department? Did you have paperwork problems? Were the plan's written materials understandable?

Claims Processing. Did your plan pay your claims correctly and in a reasonable time?

Again, the NALC Health Benefit Plan was the *only* Nationwide Fee-for-Service Plan open to all that was rated *above average* in all of the above categories. I would think that all NALC members would be proud and honored by this. Don't forget now, the NALC HBP is solely owned and operated by our union! And, the plan has been protecting its members and their family members since the 50's.

Freedom to choose own providers

All members of the plan have the choice of selecting their own doctors, hospitals, etc. for medical treatment for themselves and their family members. And, you do not need any prior permission from any doctors in doing so.

The NALC HBP is very pleased to be able to provide letter carriers with another year of affordable and highly competitive rates for Year 2003. And, at a time when the average FEHB-wide plan increases are over 11 percent, NALC Plan rates will, again for the 4th year in a row, be held to less than a 10% increase.

'Open season' for 2002

Open Season will be held November 11 through December 9, 2002. This time period will give any NALC members the opportunity to join the NALC Health Benefit Plan for Year 2003. All interested Letter Carriers should ask their postal management for a *Standard Form (SF) 2809.*

Any interested annuitants should call the toll free OPM Open Season Express number, 1-800-332-9798. This number is dedicated to processing CSRS and FERS Open Season transactions and is *only* available during Open Season for annuitants & survivors.

All NALC HBP 2003 brochures and other information would be sent to all letter carriers in advance of the November 11 through December 9, 2002 Open Season period. All letter carriers are invited to contact the Plan (1-888-636-6252 ET) during Open Season to better understand how the NALC Health Benefit Plan can serve as their health insurance for Year 2003. When calling the Plan, ask to speak with a Customer Service Representative.

2003 Premiums are:

Active Postal	(Self Only)	$28.71 (Biweekly)
Active Postal	(Self & Family)	$42.37 (Biweekly)
Annuitants	(Self Only)	$104.95 (Monthly)
Annuitants	(Self & Family)	$189.48 (Monthly)

Please review the 2003 NALC Health Benefit Plan brochure for complete details concerning benefits and other information. Thank you for your anticipated support during the upcoming Open Season!

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What is right

Labor and corporate responsibility

By Bob Yragui, Retiree

What is the current outlook of labor in dealing with corporate responsibility? What does John Sweeney, AFL-CIO president, plan for labor for the short term; the long term? We should plan enfranchisement of workers in corporate organization and enforcement of worker rights in the workplace.

Sweeney and labor want stronger measures. For example, move bankruptcy to legal proceedings for Enron and now World.com. Reform retirement plans. "Head of the line" services for employees of bankrupt companies. Demand fundamental reforms of government and corporate corruption. Bring lawsuits.

We must mount a new initiative that promotes and pushes worker rights in the workplace. In this vein, unions must affirm the active protection of union and workplace rights as also advancing and affirming democratic principles, not just dealing with profit, deregulation or destroying unions. It is crucial for unions to show the close relationship of union workfloor principles with democratic principles while contrasting it to the greedy, self-centered, destructive nature of corporate libertarianism or corporate capitalism. This simply espouses "free" market, "free" trade that only frees global corporations to plan or organize world economic affairs to benefit corporate bottom lines, without any regard to public consequences.

Our country must enfranchise worker rights as extensions by right of their labor, and just claim on the results of their labor. Corporations must grant their workers a place and space in their corporations with equal standing with management and stockholders, subject to and provided with obligations, perks and incentives given to the other parts of the corporation.

We should enfranchise workers in corporate organizations.

Current practical concerns

With the onset on the West Coast of the ILWU lockout and the melding of departments, federal agencies into Homeland Security, greater pressures will be applied to workers in government service. Labor must fully expect a strong attack from "Dubya" and his cohorts.

The bulk of union activity must be centered on maintaining worker rights in the workplace and close scrutiny in observances of work rules.

Under Homeland Security, greater pressures will be applied to labor.

Finally, to take a page from Ralph Nader's book, we should mount a major drive against the Taft-Hartley Act, since it has been in force for over 40 years and is responsible for the erosion of unions in several industries. Its use is deadly and it is no longer needed. This could be labor's next immediate battle.

Photo by Leonard Cruz

Steward Appreciation Breakfast round table with, from left, Richard Becker, Martin Macedo, Audrey Davis, Kim Truong, and Valencia Baugh.

Burton *(continued from page 5)*

accompanied by Letter Carrier Bands. Members like Arnold Evje helped craft Local Contract Language to protect our Part-Time Regular Carriers in Collections. The times they truly were changing! Soon letter carriers all across the country would vote for their National Officers by "mailed ballots" rather that being elected by only those attending the National Conventions. "One man one vote!" became the battle cry from coast to coast. At the close of the 1970's, the upstart "Rank and Filer" from New York City, Vincent Sombrotto was installed as National President on January 20, 1979.

On December 13, 2002, Vince will be handing over the reins to the NALC to a new group of officers! Job well done! In my next article I'll talk more about the "Vince" years! Stay tuned!

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Approved Budget—
October 1, 2002–March 31, 2003

Expense

	Spent Apr. '02 Sept. '02	Projected Oct. '02 Mar. '03
1. Salaries, Lost Time:		
President's Salary (CSRS)	26,576.00	26,890.00
Executive Vice President's Salary (FERS)	24,881.00	25,170.00
Vice President's Salary (CSRS)	25,892.00	26,190.00
Secretary-Treasurer's Salary (CSRS)	23,571.08	26.190.00
Field Director Salary (CSRS)	25,892.00	26,190.00
Asst. Secretary-Treasurer's Salary (CSRS)	11,691.00	11,795.00
Health Benefits Representative Salary	985.00	985.00
Lost Time and Services (excl. Voice, Education)	11,764.00	12,000.00
Leave Reimbursement	235.00	500.00
Office Secretary Salary & Benefits	23,001.00	25,000.00
Officer's Leave Fund (30% of potential liability)	5,665.00	—
TOTAL	**180,153.08**	**180,910.00**
2. Part Time Officers & Stewards Salary/Expenses		
Shop Steward Salary	26,347.00	27,865.00
Sgt/Arms, MBA, EEO, Safety/Health, Trustees, Dir of Organization	4,420.00	4,545.00
President's Expenses	1,084.00	1,200.00
Executive Vice President's Expenses	876.00	1,200.00
Vice President's Expenses	1,134.00	1,200.00
Secretary-Treasurer's Expenses	1,015.00	1,200.00
Field Director	935.00	1,200.00
Asst. S/T Expenses	600.00	600.00
Misc. Expenses (Other Officer & Stewards)	435.00	500.00
TOTAL	**36,846.00**	**39,510.00**
3. Taxes & Officer's Benefits		
Officer's Benefits	24,367.00	17,200.00
Payroll Taxes/City Taxes	18,984.00	19,500.00
TOTAL	**43,351.00**	**36,700.00**
4. Office Expense		
Office Rent (214 -12th & RWC Office)	17,190.00	18,945.00
Hall Rental & Storage	1,535.00	450.00
Janitorial Service/Garbage	1,815.00	1,850.00
Secretary-Treasurer's Office Expense Acct.	8,400.00	8,400.00
Office Utilities	9,948.00	12,000.00
Printing	2,391.00	4,000.00
Insurance (OWCP/Business Liability/Bonding)	336.00	8,500.00
Insurance (Representational Liability)	6,012.00	—
Maintenance (Service Contracts/Repair)	945.00	5,000.00
Computer Expenses	2,345.00	2,500.00
Office Supplies & Equipment	1,439.00	2,000.00
Payroll Services	2,316.00	2,400.00
Moving Expenses	5,000.00	5,000.00
TOTAL	**59,672.00**	**71,045.00**
5. Fee & Dues		
Professional Fees	1,050.00	300.00
Affiliate Dues	3,920.00	3,920.00
TOTAL	**4,970.00**	**4,220.00**
6. Convention & Conferences		
Convention Fund	12,600.00	12,600.00
Seminars & Conferences (Not Education)(including DC Lobby Trip)	660.00	3,500.00
Committee of President's Meeting	1,537.00	1,600.00
TOTAL	**14,797.00**	**17,700.00**
7. Education		
Training, Seminars	9,982.00	10,000.00
Other: Books, Materials, NALC Supplies	648.00	1,000.00
TOTAL	**10,630.00**	**11,00.00**
8. Communications		
Voice: Lost Time	2,645.00	2,700.00
Expenses	11,382.00	11,500.00
TV214	1,200.00	1,200.00
TOTAL	**15,227.00**	**15,400.00**
9. Entertainment & Sports		
Good of the Order/Other Refreshments	2,287.00	2,300.00
Annual Dinner	1,687.00	250.00
Recreation/Picnic	—	—
Holiday Party	—	—
TOTAL	**3.974.00**	**2,550.00**
10. Representational Expenses		
Representational Expenses	278.00	300.00
Contract Action	—	—
TOTAL	**278.00**	**300.00**
11. Other		
Retirement and Other Gifts	1,450.00	1,500.00
New Member Services	450.00	400.00
Elections	—	—
Food Drive	882.00	—
100% Union Celebration ($3.00 per person)	—	300.00
Miscellaneous	347.00	500.00
TOTAL	**3,129.00**	**2,700.00**
TOTALS	**373,027.08**	**382,035.00**

Projected Income

	# of Members	Per Member	Projected Income
Active Members (10 pay periods @ 13.23)	2,131	$132.00	$281,931
Active Members (3 pay periods @ 14.54)	2,131	$44.00	$93,764
Retired Members	351	2.25	790
Interest Income			2,550
Miscellaneous			3,000
Projected Income Total			382,035
TOTAL PROJECTED INCOME:			$382,035
Total Projected Expenses			$(382,035)
Projected Surplus			$ —

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Branch meeting schedule to change

A motion passed at the November meeting to change our monthly meeting from Wednesdays to Mondays from January through September 2003. The meeting hall at our new building on 2310 Mason Street is being refurbished and is not immediately available for use.

Our existing lease arrangements with the Knights of Columbus gives us use of the hall the first Monday of the month. The address is 38th Avenue and Taraval, in San Francisco. The first meeting there is scheduled for January 6, 2003.

At press time the day and location of the monthly steward meetings had not been decided.

Attention, Attention

We are moving December 15, 2002.

Our new address is
2310 Mason Street
San Francisco, CA 94133

Season's Greetings from the Voice staff

http://SpenceBurton.com

SHOP STEWARDS' BREAKFAST

Photo by Leonard Cruz

The first annual Branch 214 Steward Appreciation Breakfast was held Sunday, September 15, 2002 at the Holiday Inn at Fishermen's Wharf. Seen at the buffet line are, from left, Wendy Amort, Carol Maggio and her husband Stew, and other Branch 214 stewards and guests.

See also page 12