



THE VOICE



OF THE GOLDEN GATE LETTER CARRIERS

BRANCH #214

NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF LETTER CARRIERS, AFL-CIO

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Award-winning newspaper

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New route inspection process

How many rows?

By Bill Thornton, Vice President

Currently many carriers are being interviewed about changing their carrier cases to a different configuration. The Pacific Area has rolled out something entitled *F2B AM SOP standardization process*. More alphabet soup later, and it gets worse.

No more contortionist acts?

Postal management is pushing to reduce equipment based on the stated rationale of the drop in cased mail. The rationale is also used that removing 3-piece U-shaped cases reduces twisting and turning and potential injuries. Space considerations are also cited in this change to a 2-case set-up.



Management has clearly indicated its position. According to a June 2, 2004 letter to District Managers/Plant Managers from the Area, "the ideal setup is a maximum of 2 cases and 5 shelves." Pacific Area management has indicated that "local management will consult with each individual carrier and the NALC President prior to making changes to the configurations of any case." If the carrier's opinion is not taken into consideration in making the decision to change the

Each individual carrier and the union have to be consulted on case changes.

number of rows, the grievance procedure may be an appropriate avenue for redressing the problem.

Carriers need to justify why the proposed number of rows won't work for them. Considerations include the physical requirements of casing the route, nature of the route, any disabilities/injuries of the carrier, etc. The carrier needs to state the reasons for his/her position.

Exceptions to the moratorium

The June 2, 2004 letter contains other elements, some
(continued on page 4)

Route inspection and adjustment processes

Can we agree on local methods?

By Tony Gallardo, President

On April 1, 2004, the USPS and the NALC entered into a moratorium on route inspections and adjustments. In conjunction with this moratorium, the letter carriers were allowed to challenge the DOIS volume figures on a daily basis from April 5 through May 28, 2004.

Prior to this moratorium management had been shoving unilateral route inspections and adjustments down the throats of letter carriers nationwide. These adjustments were conducted by management in over-reaction to fears that decreasing mail volume was causing losses in revenue.

Management's heavy-handed attempt to eliminate routes was resulting in devastating erosion of working conditions. Unreasonable and unrealistic additions to routes resulted in increases in overtime, and increases in bitter conflict and confrontation at the very time when management and the union needed to work together to pass vital legislation on postal reform.

Local programs used co-leader process

Locally, the problem was not as severe. This is because in Branch 214, we have been using the co-leader process to inspect and adjust routes. We used a labor and management pair to oversee the route inspection

We need carrier feedback on route adjustment processes.

process, evaluate the data, and adjust the routes. With a joint process in place, our route adjustments were a lot more fair and equitable than the unilateral

(continued on page 3)

Branch 214 notes

John Escobedo of Parcel Post reports on a Labor Day, September 6 party and bus **mural unveiling** at the ILWU Union Hall, 4 Berry Street, San Francisco. This event feature a mural project filling five SamTrans commuter busses on "Our Work Life: 3 Generations of Bay Area Work and Workers." It's a collaboration between artists Oscar Melara and Kate Connell. See more details on www.ourworklife.org or call (415) 564-4010.

Those of you who like **Reno**, Nevada, another **bus trip**, organized by retiree Herb Mitchell, is scheduled for October 10 (the day before Columbus Day) at a price of \$65 single. Call the union office, or see the flyers at the stations for details. Pickups in San Francisco, San Pablo, and Vallejo.

The deadline for the next Voice is November 3, 2004 at the branch meeting.

Spence Burton, former Branch 214 president, and a 28 year resident of Petaluma, is **running for the City Council** in the November election. His basic slogan is "Common sense & no strings attached." A letter carrier since 1968, Burton plans to retire in November. He has served in various capacities in the local and state union, including work as an arbitration advocate. He is also an early expert on the computer and an award winning writer for **The Voice** for his series on computer intricacies and features. His web page, <http://spenceburton.com>, gives further information on this Marina, SFO letter carrier embarking on a new career.

Station note from **Diamond Heights**. **John Zullo** reports that **Bobby Watkins** retired on May 31, 2004 after 40 years of service.

Also at Diamond Heights, monetary awards were given at a ceremony to carriers **Anthony Ow, Chuck Lowery and John Zullo**.

At Parkside station **Kathy Yee** retired in June, and **Phil Gam** in May, 2004.

A reminder to those carriers and PTFs whose day off fell on the **Ronald Reagan day of mourning**. Take your administrative leave within six months. See your shop steward, if you have any problems.

Branch picnic scheduled for **Marine World, Vallejo** on October 17, 2004. Details, prices, will be publicized through the stewards.

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Photo by Ivars Lauersons

Edward Karuna, second from left, winner of both Doherty and Saxsenmeier scholarships, is honored by Regional Administrative Assistant Bryan Almario. On the right are Edward's father, Novato letter carrier Gunananda, sister Edith, and mother Camililiani at the July branch meeting

T.V. 214 Schedule

SAN FRANCISCO, AT&T Cable Channel 29:
Every third Sunday of the month at 7:00 p.m.
September 19, 2004; October 17, 2004;
November 21, 2004

Gallardo (continued from page 1)

inspections and adjustments being imposed elsewhere.

Our process was far from perfect, and we had our share of problems, disputes and disagreements. However, compared to the results being obtained elsewhere, we were doing reasonably well.

A formal district-wide agreement

We also embarked on a second experiment in working together, when NALC Business Agent Dale Hart and USPS San Francisco District Manager Scott Tucker

The national moratorium on route inspections is in response to declining mail volume.

signed a memorandum on August 22, 2003. This agreement allowed us to adjust routes when the regular carrier, management and the union all agreed on the amount of the adjustment. This agreement eliminated the need for a route inspection on routes where consensus had been reached. These local agreements allowed us to avoid or greatly reduce the types of problems that the rest of the country was finding insufferable.

President Bill Young, by negotiating the moratorium on route inspections and adjustments, gave letter carriers nationwide some time to look for solutions to the problems caused by the reduction in mail volume, while avoiding management's cure, which everyone agrees, was far worse than the disease.

At the national convention just held in Hawaii, we, the delegates, decided to allow President Young to pursue agreement on a method of route adjustments which both management and the union would find to be fair and equitable. The method discussed involves the averaging out of actual hours worked, during randomly selected weeks, in a jointly agreed upon time in the recent past. Using this method, your actual demonstrated work hours would determine the length of your route, and the need to cut the route or add to it.

Method works only with accurate data

For this method to work, we would need to verify that the splits or pivots have been properly recorded. The PS Forms 3996 properly filled out should match the clock rings. For example, if Route 1 gives away a one-hour split to route 2 every day, the carrier on route 2 needs to swipe onto route 1 at the time clock for the duration of the time that he or she actually spent delivering the split. The time that is swiped must match the time that the carrier on route 2 wrote down at the bottom of the PS Form 3996 initiated by the carrier on route 1.

If this split is not properly recorded, then route 1 will appear to be 8 hours long, and Route 2 will appear to be 9 hours long, when the opposite is actually true. If the data is accurate and verifiable I believe that this method, discussed and approved at the National Convention, could be successfully applied.

Another memo, another moratorium

On August 4, 2004, USPS EVP Patrick Donahoe and NALC President Young signed a memorandum. This memo extends the moratorium on route inspections and adjustments through September 30, 2005. A copy of the memo appears elsewhere in **The Voice** on page 15.

In accordance with this memorandum, starting September 1, 2004, the only traditional route inspections that will be conducted are special route inspections initiated by qualifying letter carriers, and those route inspections that are mandated as a result of grievance or arbitration decisions.

For all other route adjustments, the National parties are encouraging us at the local level to arrive at a fair adjustment of routes. Specifically, the memorandum states that **"the local parties may jointly evaluate routes utilizing locally available data and any agreed upon method."**

The memorandum goes on to state that **"local parties not electing the above option will be subject to an evaluation and adjustment process determined by the National Parties."**

Our response to route adjustments

We at Branch 214 have a qualified staff of experienced union Co-leaders and an established history of getting relatively fair and equitable route inspections and adjustments. We are in an excellent position to engage management, using this process to ensure that letter carriers con-

The aim now is to produce a new and fair way to adjust routes.

tinue to get the 8-hour routes that they are entitled to under the National Agreement.

It is our intention to establish these locally agreed upon methods in every city that is represented by Branch 214. We will need to negotiate these methods with each Postmaster. Before we begin this process your branch officers will continue to conduct station visits. During the course of these station visits, we will be asking you for feedback on the methods and need for route adjustments in your station or Associate Office. Additionally, we invite all members to attend our union meetings, and to write directly to this office, with your suggestions on this matter.

Thornton (continued from page 1)

related to the topic of work load/route adjustments: “Critical Hour—There will be a standardized process for delivery management in the office. This process will include the mandatory programs such as DOIS, MSP, and TACS, a management team approach (SPEAR), and the interaction with carriers about today’s volumes and yesterday’s

A bigger problem may be the “critical hour” management approach to mail volume.

performance”. WOW! The Memorandum signed by the National President and National management indicates that “local parties may jointly evaluate routes utilizing locally available data and any agreed upon method”. This implies quite a bit of latitude, but not so quick. Also in the memo is a requirement to forward to the national parties the agreement including “the total impact that their selected method will have on the...delivery unit”. It is certain that the evaluations will emphasize what is termed proven carrier performance, including the use of 6-week clock ring data—something that was part of the traditional 6-Day Route Count Process.

Through September 2005 there will be no management-initiated 6-day route inspections. Only those required by the SRI (Special Route Inspection) process or by Grievance Agreements will be held. It should be made clear that just because the term “evaluated” is used does not mean that processes being considered for route adjustments involve the much-despised Evaluated Route as exemplified by the Rural Carrier method.

The rural carrier system

The rural carrier route system, anathema in these parts, did not become part of the City Carrier process. For those not familiar with this rural carrier “evaluated route” thing, and to oversimplify just a bit, carriers under the rural system take on a route for a specified period, a year or so and essentially contract to perform those duties for a set amount of money. Takes less than 8 hours; get to go

DOIS does not deliver mail. Carriers do.

home early. Takes more; the carrier has to finish with no overtime

But while the accursed Evaluated Route process is not upon us, the new process that has been promulgated may not be the magic bullet that removes the daily hassle over how much time it takes to complete the route.

One thing that the process may at least temporarily alleviate is the annoying pivoting that goes on in many stations.

What to do in the meantime

The union must safeguard the carrier’s right to the procedures in the M-41, etc. regarding 3996s and informing the supervisor when unable to complete duties in allotted time. 131.4 of the M-41 still remains an important part of carrier protection against management abuse involving workload assessment and potential FLSA problems. After using the 3996 in the morning or after being pivoted, carriers are required to notify management if they are unable to finish in allotted time. M-41 131.41,42 and .43,45 are the applicable sections: “It is your responsibility to verbally inform management... Manage-

Carriers have safeguards using the 3996 when workload assessments don’t agree.

ment will instruct you what to do... Do not curtail or eliminate any scheduled delivery... unless authorized by a manager.”

There are carriers who do this mechanically, almost religiously, when they find themselves in situations when they are unable to finish. In certain stations this may be a hard-core group. For some, it is part of the routine of their regular duties. For them, what stress? And they are covering themselves as far as any potential discipline involving unauthorized overtime, etc. The rules have not changed in this regard.

The stress is probably more likely to come about in

If you can’t finish on the street—call!

cases of carriers who do not have these ingrained habits. What to do when you can’t finish? Call in? Hurry up and finish? Skip your lunch? Stressful!

There is a system in place when you can’t finish, and these are important carrier safeguards. But at the same time, one can hope for a better way for everybody and for the future of carrier positions and the Postal Service.

WELCOME NEW MEMBERS

Romulo Cangco	Raoul Palmares
Linda De Los Santos	Carl Pearlman
Phillip Hoang	

The gossip file

Images of the convention

By Lynda Beigel, Retiree

Should I take the one-story or two-story escalator?

Which of the five bus routes goes to my hotel?

Do we really have to distribute **The Voice** at 7:00am on Wednesday?

As the only unionized Marriott, this hotel is not bad, except for **Martha Raup**, whose first-night reservation wasn't available, so she had to bunk in someone else's room. (The other person involved in the reservation confusion was pleased by the result.)

Bill O'Donnell sitting in the very center of the Branch Delegation, as if to say, "I am here; and if I can sit here the whole day, where are you?" And **Darla O'Donnell**, wearing a lovely floral wreath in her hair at the luau while Bill wore his fishing hat.

Noah Beaumont watching his parents' big moments. **Jordan Beaumont** napping on her Dad's shoulder.

The delegation watching **Carol Maggio**, Chair of the Credentials Committee, at the podium and on the big screen. No, Carol did NOT wear a loud Hawaiian shirt. **Norma Leonardo** stepping up to the plate for "Cousin Jerry" the escort and "Cousin Wally" the driver—who refused to believe we were all brothers and sisters—on our bus to the luau. And if you've never seen Norma in action, you must go on **Herb Mitchell's Second Final Retirement Trip to Reno** over Columbus Day weekend!!! She is something else!! Right, Norma? Right, Cousin Jerry!

President **Tony Gallardo** and wife **Panna** taking the last bus to the luau to make sure everyone was provided for. And Tony going out with the giant sea-going turtles on the tide at Shark's Cove.

Past President **Ron Tyeskey**, Chair of the 1992 San Francisco Convention, sitting with the delegation and giving his suggestions for AFL-CIO delegate choices.

Nine of our delegates attending the Retirement Seminar & Breakfast.

The Voice winning Best Publication for branches with over 1,500 members, and *Ivars and Juliette* missing the event because they stayed home.

Ray Fong hosting the marvelous Todai Restaurant Buffet, and **Dan SooHoo** cadging a ride for his friends in a limousine. As he points out, it always pays to make friends with the professional drivers.

Dave Welsh speaking eloquently for causes that should be national policy, but lose to fear of change. The most divisive aspect of the convention? Whether the branch

should stand firmly on the side of what is ethical and fair, or should yield to expediency when the vote will go against us. In troubled times I see us, myself included, yielding when we should stand firm against retrograde trends.



Photo by Herb Mitchell

Five Branch 214 presidents in Honolulu, 2004. From left, Richard Becker, current president Tony Gallardo, Ron Tyeskey, Spence Burton, Ray Fong.

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My reflections

Convention in paradise, Honolulu, Hawaii

By Herb Mitchell, Retiree

Just returned from Honolulu, Hawaii from attending the NALC national convention at the beautiful Hawaii Convention Center. You could not have had a more beautiful setting for this historical event than the land of gorgeous beaches, sunsets, surfers, hotels, piña colodas and Blue Hawaiians.

Postal reform and route checks

This was the first national convention chaired by our new national president, Bill Young. After a couple of days it was evident that Bill learned well from past president, Vinnie Sombrotto. Bill ran the convention like a well-oiled machine in a very professional manner. It helped that there were few controversial issues or resolutions. The two issues that delegates were most interested in were postal reform and the proposed new method of checking routes that the NALC executive council will be presenting to postal management. Bill reported that postal reform was moving through Congress with the issues that the NALC was most concerned about being favorably considered.

After reporting the executive council's proposal for checking routes, Bill opened up the floor for comments and recommendations. I was a little surprised with the love

Kudos to the Honolulu branch for hosting a great convention.

fest from the convention floor for the new proposal, but it proved that Mr. Young had his ducks in a row and had lobbied to have this proposal meet the delegates' approval.

The Voice wins

As usual, Branch 214 was well represented at the convention with, of course, a couple of controversial resolutions. It was also an outstanding convention for our branch because for the third time our branch newspaper, **The Voice**, was voted the best branch publication for large branches. Congratulations to our Editor, Ivars Lauersons, Associate Editors Juliette Chen and Phil Vosburg, Cartoonist Gerry Lee, and contributing writers. Keep up the good work!

Many of our delegates attended 2-hour workshops during the week to receive education about different topics

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Photo by Martha Raup

The huge convention floor and some of the over 7,000 delegates.



Photo courtesy Kim Tuong

United Farm Workers President Arturo Rodriguez, third from left, a speaker at the 2004 convention, poses with Branch 214 delegates.



Photo by Herb Mitchell

Voice first-place award held up by Tony Gallardo among Branch 214 delegates at convention.

Mitchell (continued from page 6)

such as contract administration, the future of the Postal Service, OWCP, health plans, and my favorite, the retirement breakfast and workshop.

Retirement workshop

I attended the retirement workshop where the key speaker was Dan Spencer, Regional Director, Western District, Social Security Administration. Mr Spencer brought our attention to a bill presently moving through Congress, HR 4391, to make an adjustment to the percentage of the Social Security windfall adjustment for civil service retirees who are eligible to receive Social Security. He also stated that a bill to eliminate the windfall adjustment would probably fail, considering the pre-

Start saving your money now and plan ahead for the next convention in Miami.

sent national budget deficit. Mr Spencer also reported that in the future, Medicare will provide wellcare service starting in 2005 and preventive screening in 2006. Also, The Office of Personnel Management is looking at better dental-vision care for federal employees.

Thank you, Honolulu

I would like to give kudos to the Honolulu branch for hosting a great convention. The committee put on a great Sunday welcome reception at the convention center complete with plenty of food, entertainment and hula dancers. Also kudos to the best-looking set of Sergeant-at-Arms I have ever seen at any convention. They made it a pleasure to go in and out of the convention hall. Great job, Honolulu.

Other reflections

Enough about the work at the convention. Our delegates had a great time in Hawaii. Many of the delegates attended a luau on Wednesday, and the branch dinner at the Todai restaurant on Thursday. Many took advantage of all the great attractions and shopping that Waikiki had to offer. I enjoyed lying on Waikiki Beach and swimming in the warm Pacific water. Our own Bill Thornton turned in his vice-presidential demeanor and became a Waikiki surfer dude. Hang loose!

Planning ahead

Now that the last of the Blue Hawaiian cocktails has finally left my bloodstream, it is time to get back to business. The next national convention is in Miami, Florida. Hawaii was very expensive for our branch and delegates and Miami will be no different. Start saving your money now and plan ahead.

Also I discussed with a couple of delegates about form-

ing a convention committee to help prepare for these conventions. I believe that all Branch 214 delegates would like to thank Carol Maggio for all the hard work she did to make this convention a successful trip for all concerned. Maybe the committee can give her a little help planning 2006. Once again, I invite 214 members to get involved in what is happening in your union. Attend meetings, support your stewards and officers, and become convention delegates to be better involved in how your union is run. The good Lord willing and the creek don't rise, I will be in Miami Beach in 2006. Why don't you get involved and be there too?

SOLIDARITY FOREVER & ALOHA!

Remembering a fallen brother

Bill O'Donnell was a letter carrier at the Mill Valley Post office for 23 years and a shop steward there for 12 years. He wrote regularly for **The Voice**, attended the Branch meetings religiously, was a delegate to many State and National Conventions including most recently, the Hawaii National Convention from July 19 through 23.



Bill was also one of the original "netters" who participated in a series of online chat rooms on the web, thoroughly discussing all things postal and especially all things Union.

Bill was a member of the election committee, and was serving as chair of that committee when he first came down with cancer in November of last year.

When I went to see him in the hospital, I was told that he was not expected to survive the month, and that he was going home. Being the stubborn guy that he was, he was determined to get back on his feet and get on with his life.

During the next several months, I began to see Bill casing mail at work and once again in attendance at our monthly Branch meetings. Between the chemotherapy and the cancer, Bill had lost all of his hair and most of his body weight. Nevertheless, his stubborn jaw was set, and his eyes were focused. He continued going to work, increasing his hours from 2 to 4, then 6, and eventually returned to regularly completing 8 hours on his route.

He attended the National Convention in Honolulu, gavel to gavel, and enjoyed himself at the Branch luau with his wife Darla.

Brother Bill passed away on Sunday, August 2, 2004 soon after returning from the NALC Convention.

Everyone who knew him will miss him.

Tony Gallardo, President

Managing safety

Blame the victim

By Mike Williamson, San Rafael Carrier

About fifteen years ago, a probationary carrier in San Rafael was loading her half-ton truck when the window from the roll-up door fell and hit her in the back. These half-tons were getting old and, as our victim found, literally falling apart. The same window had fallen out of the same door and hit another carrier a week earlier, but had been “fixed” by our local Vehicle Maintenance Facility (VMF).

The supervisor took her aside and explained the facts of life to her. After all, according to the supervisor, she had known that another carrier had been injured in the same way. She should have been more aware. She should have known better than to trust the repairs by the VMF. As the supervisor saw it, the carrier was at fault.

Too embarrassing to impose discipline

Fortunately, the possibility of discipline was precluded by the embarrassment factor, but the supervisor still managed to get the carrier to forgo proper rest for an on-the-job injury. The carrier worked through her injury, enduring the pain, paying her own chiropractic bills, until she completed her probation. To this day, this carrier has never fully trusted the Postal Service’s commitment to safety. For some reason, she has always felt that management’s only involvement in safety would be to avoid being blamed for any accidents that happen on their watch.

Obviously, this incident occurred many years ago. Most current postal employees have never even seen the type of vehicle involved in the incident. You might think that this sort of attitude was that of a particular management team. Or, you might think (or at least hope) that the

**Only the carrier on the spot,
not a manual, can judge the
safety of a specific situation.**

USPS has gotten over its tendency to blame the victim. If you believe that, you probably haven’t been around our company very long.

I was reminded of this tendency by recent events in San Rafael. It seems that we failed to meet some number or other, and upper management felt compelled to intervene. The intervention took the form of requiring the San Rafael Post Office to provide additional safety training for the employees. So far, so good.



Mike Williamson, left, at 2004 convention pondering safety issues.

Training by stand-ups

There was, however, an interesting theme within the training. Every stand-up happened to mention (in passing) that every carrier is responsible for his or her own safety. This is, of course, true. No manual or consultant can know what that carrier knows. Only the carrier on the spot can really judge the safety of a specific situation.

**We can’t give up our own
safety just to allow managers
to appear blameless.**

This is the basis of any successful safety program. It is, in the final analysis, up to the individual employee to refuse to perform an unsafe act, and he must always err on the side of caution.

However, in our company, if you decide to refuse to do something for reasons of safety, you’ll get no thanks from management. Even an experienced carrier might be disciplined (for “failure to follow instructions”), but a probationary employee is far more vulnerable. One San Rafael probationary was let go after refusing to deliver in the dark. Management said he was let go for unrelated reasons, but who trusts management when it comes to safety?

Wrong in an accident

On the other hand, if you follow their instructions, and have an accident, their attitude is that you’ve been warned. Unsafe equipment doesn’t matter. Unsafe instructions and “suggestions” don’t matter. If you’re the victim of an on-the-job injury, *you are guilty* (of something), until proven innocent. You take the blame. They are off the hook. A lesson that our window-victim learned years ago.

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Convention note and...

Working toward retirement

By Daniel SooHoo, Part-time Regular, PM Collection

The Federal Employee Retirement System (FERS) and Civil Service Retirement System (CSRS) are two different retirement systems. CSRS is funded by withholding around 7% of the gross pay with almost matching fund by the Postal Service plus the total federal service time. The annuity estimate of the *Postal Record* has estimates for CSRS and FERS employees to figure out roughly what they would be receiving from the Office of Personnel Management (OPM).



FERS

For employees under FERS, the system consists of three parts: Part Civil Service (called FERS Basic Annuity); part Social Security; and the main part is the Thrift Savings Plan (TSP). Postal employees under FERS can invest almost 14% into TSP. The Postal Service invests the first 1% for the employees under

FERS (free money). I was informed that the Postal Service will match the employee contribution of the next 2% to 5% at 50%. In other words, for every two dollars the employee invests, the Postal Service will invest one dollar.

For the TSP, a person is allowed to withdraw at the age of 59.5 years. My advice is not to withdraw until the money is needed for daily expenses. Please be careful when making that decision because one wouldn't want to *short-change* their retirement fund.

As for the Social Security part, if one retires early at age 62, that person would receive reduced benefits. Full benefits start between 65 and 67, depending on the employee's date of birth. Please refer to the NALC publi-

Under FERS, for every two dollars the employee invests, the Postal Service will invest one dollar.

cation, *Questions and Answers on FERS: The Federal Employees' Retirement System*. Among the answers I have to look for in the publication is the total percentage for FERS employees. I also have a question about the retirement eligibility of a FERS employee aged 55 with 30 years of service. Because Civil Service minimum age and time service are 55 and 30 respectively, the question

is: "Can an employee retire and start to draw from that part of the retirement system?"

I will continue with CSRS on the next issue of **The Voice**.

Convention notes

First, I want to thank Tony Gallardo, Branch 214 President, and Carol Maggio, Branch 214 Assistant Secretary-Treasurer, for their help and support for me attending the national convention. I also want to thank Kim Truong (West Portal) and Simon Dang (Sunset PCA) for their generosity and all the other delegates (you know who you are) for the knowledge (open forums) a convention gives to a member of Branch 214.

Second, thanks to host Branch 860 for all the time and hard work in hosting the NALC National convention, especially Rudy Salazar, chair Sergeant-at-Arm, with the distribution of **The Voice**. We distributed 4,000 copies of the May/June/July **The Voice** to the delegates, continuing another convention tradition.

Third, the long-lost brother Arnold Jones (Corte Madera): "Do we have stories to tell?" 'Til the next article...!

Williamson (continued from page 8)

The result is that, when it comes to safety, postal employees are left in a no-win situation. The most common reaction among carriers is to take their chances with unsafe situations, and avoid reporting accidents. This, of

The post office has not gotten over the tendency to blame the accident victim.

course, increases the number of accidents, which is fine with most managers as long as *they* don't get blamed.

In any bureaucracy, there is a tendency to try to avoid blame. The Postal Service's approach to safety is just an extreme example. That throws it back on us. We can't give up our own safety just to allow managers to appear blameless. We have to resign ourselves to doing management's job.

Each carrier has to demand sufficient time to do the job safely. Each carrier has to write up unsafe vehicles and equipment. Each carrier has to report hazardous situations on forms 1767. Each carrier has to *refuse* to do the job in an unsafe manner.

In short, each carrier must ensure their own safe working conditions. Because, clearly, management's objective isn't to ensure our safety, but instead, to ensure plausible deniability.

Like Orwell's 1984

The last election

By Ivars Lauersons, Editor

If the Republican presidential ticket wins this November, there may not be another election in 2008.

This administration is running for office in such a totalitarian style, that a victory may end up as a civilian led coup d'etat, and the political landscape we recognize in American politics may change for quite a while.

Comparable instances in history where elections, or near elections, changed the political landscape, occurred in Czechoslovakia in 1948 (after the 1946 election) when the Communists took over. An election for 1992 was cancelled in Algeria when it was feared that the favored fundamentalist party (FIS), if it won, would cancel any future election in the nascent Algerian pluralistic political system.



One vote margin

This administration came into power by a one vote margin on the U.S Supreme Court, while losing the popular vote by half a million votes. Instead of recognizing this as a narrow win, it acted as if it had been granted a landslide and a popular mandate to implement a huge tax cut, renounce environmental concerns, such as the Kyoto Treaty, and reconsider the role of nuclear weapons in war.

September 11

The attack on the U.S. on September 11, 2001 forced the administration to a more outward look. The administration first called the persons who had attacked New York and Washington, D.C. as evil. This is a moral judg-

A close vote was treated like a landslide

ment, rather than a political one, and among the first words used by President George Bush were to declare a "crusade" against this evil. This word was changed, and a war on terror was declared instead. But this is a war against an extreme political method, terrorism, which has no fixed geographic boundaries, no identifiable state, no armies, and with the exception of some named leaders, like Osama bin Laden, no face.

Afghanistan

Domestically, the administration declared that it could do virtually anything to protect the country during this war on terror. Civil liberties inside the country could be curtailed so that we could better identify enemies. Even now, the Patriot Act, which granted such broad powers, can be used to check what you read from the library.

The war in Afghanistan received wide support, being seen as a retaliation against those who were directly responsible for the 9/11 attacks. We also saw the use of the term "enemy combatant," referring to those captured in the fighting in Afghanistan, and sent to Guantanamo, Cuba for an indefinite period, with no charges, no lawyers and no time limits on the detention. This was new in the modern era.

The principle of calling someone an enemy combatant could also be applied to any U.S. citizen, you or me

Vote in the upcoming election.

included, and we could also be imprisoned with no rights. This arrogance towards the Constitution is also a handy way to stifle criticism. The right of free speech in opposition to government policy is now labeled unpatriotic. You must toe the administration line because we are at war.

Supreme Court limits powers

Recently the Supreme Court held that U.S. citizens must be granted their rights, and that even the foreign nationals held in Cuba have some rights. "A state of war is not a blank check when it comes to the rights of the nation's citizens," wrote Justice Sandra Day O'Connor.

More arrogance toward the Constitution occurred when it was suggested that the upcoming Presidential election might have to be postponed because of some future terrorist act. Which administration would remain in power if there were no election?

Secrecy is another hallmark of a totalitarian outlook. We did not know that there were any warnings prior to the 9/11 attack, until it was revealed that a daily presidential intelligence briefing, described originally as historical in nature, was actually entitled, "Bin Laden Determined to Strike in the U.S." This briefing was given in August 2001.

Another election

So here we are coming to another election. In Florida, the President's bother and governor fights all efforts to find out if the new touch screen voting machines can be checked for fraud. Supposed felons are again left on or off the list of eligible voters at seeming whim, and some

(continued on page 11)

Lauersons (continued from page 10)

voters appear to be getting intimidating visits from federal agents.

Is Florida the state that's being held in reserve in case there is a close election, to be delivered to the administration? We have heard serious consideration of bringing foreign observers to monitor whether these are fair elections.

Civil liberties inside the country could be curtailed.

And Florida is where these foreign observers would go.

"1984"

For those of us who have read George Orwell's book, "1984," the danger of a Big Brother government seems to have arrived in 2004. As in the book, we have a vague enemy, terrorism. We have to fight a war and make sacrifices. And we can't know when we will have won this war, and can go back to normal. We hear of a war of decades.

It is not farfetched to think, given the record so far, that if the election is won by the current administration ticket, they will consider it as another landslide, and then manipulate the political process so that only they can win again. This was already done in Texas, where a mid-census

"A state of war is not a blank check when it comes to the rights of the nation's citizens," wrote Justice Sandra Day O'Connor.

redistricting added a number of safe Republican House seats.

If we have an honest election, we can accept the results. *Vox populi, vox dei*, roughly, the voice of the people is the voice of god.

I long for the old-fashioned American politics, not one of ideology, but one of shifting alliances depending on the issues. If you lost an election, you would simply regroup for the next one, and not have to worry if there will even be a next election.

Meanwhile, we can vote. Make sure that we're registered. In a close election every vote does count. And we all should know the importance of this election.

And I hope that in four years I can still write this kind of article, and not be thrown in jail.

(The deadline for this issue is mid-August, and opinions are based on events to date.—Ed.)

Relevant history

1944: State of the Union message proposals by F. D. Roosevelt

By Bob Yragui, Retiree

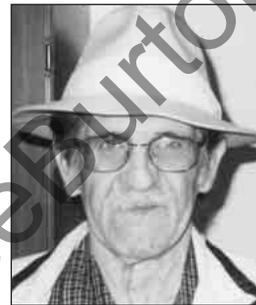
Reaching back to the time so long ago of World War II, with its vast destruction of that world, is like recalling the Crusades or the Roman wars. But in 1944 Franklin Delano Roosevelt had to give the State of the Union message. He was somewhat ill with a cold, so he stayed in the White House and gave his speech. Despite his cold, FDR was feeling hopeful and upbeat: the war was drawing to a close, and the young giant that was America stood in the sun looking forward to our bright future. Roosevelt envisioned a time when freedom from fear conjoined with

freedom from want like a mighty river. He even envisioned a Second Bill of Rights.

He envisioned a nation of peace and freedom never seen before, and attained in our time! That the young of America can bring forth a great future for us and the newly awakened world!

Now in sad reflection of that time, let us take up FDR's **Second Bill of Rights** as a beacon of America's future place in this world:

1. The right to a remunerative job in the industries, shops, mines, and farms of the nation.
2. The right to earn enough to provide adequate food, clothing, and recreation...
3. The right of every farmer to raise and sell his produce at a return that will give him and his family a decent living.



President Roosevelt's goals in 1944 are just as relevant today.

4. The right of every business person to trade in an atmosphere of freedom from unfair competition and domination by monopolies at home and abroad.
5. The right of every family to a decent home.
6. The right to adequate medical care, a chance to achieve and enjoy good health.
7. The right to adequate protection from the economic fears of old age, sickness, accidents and unemployment.
8. The right to a good education.



Carol Maggio, our Assistant Secretary-Treasurer, and Credentials Chair at the 64th biennial convention, speaking at the podium.

Photo by Martha Raup

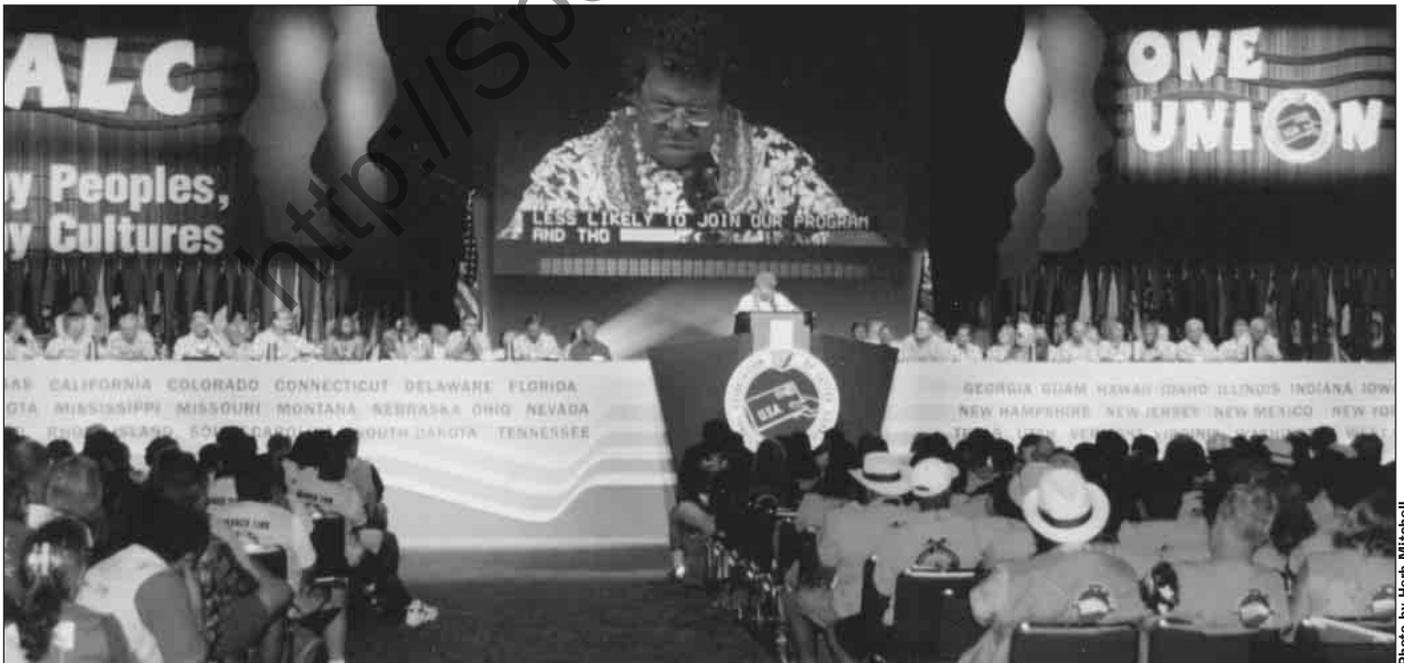
Honolulu National Convention

Compensable Delegates

Amort	Wendy	Maggio	Carol
Anduja	Mitchell	McConnell	Kathy
Beaumont	John	Mindrup	Mark
Buencamino		Mitchell	Herb
Beaumont	Lili	O'Donnell	Bill
Becker	Richard	Palattao	Val
Beigel	Lynda	Pooler	Eldridge
Bryant	Carl	Raup	Martha
Buccat	June	Reyna	Eddie
Chune	Leland	Rodriguez	Rafael
Dang	Simon	Romero	Luis
Fong	Ray	Sawicki	Vicky
Gallardo	Tony	Schuler	Karen
Gardner	Sheila	Simonson	Cathy
Gerigk	Larry	Sobalvarro	Eduardo
Gonzalez	Carmen	Taylor	Andrew
Gonzalez	Charles	Tercero	Jerome
Griggs	Don	Thornton	Bill
Jones	Arnold	Truong	Kim
Leonardo	Norma	Ubungen	Art
Mabalatan	David	Urtiaga	Dennis
Macedo	Martin	Welsh	Dave
MacGlaun	Major	Woo	Franklin
Mackler	Dennis	Yu	Ker-Mei

Non-Compensable Delegates

Bernstein	Celass	Tyeskey	Ron
Burton	Spence	Williamson	Mike
Soofoo	Daniel		



NALC President Bill Young, at mike and on big screen, addresses 7,369 delegates at 2004 biennial convention.

Photo by Herb Mitchell



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— John J. Sweeney,
President AFL-CIO

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Senior Loan Officer
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Approved Budget— April 1, 2004 – September 30, 2004

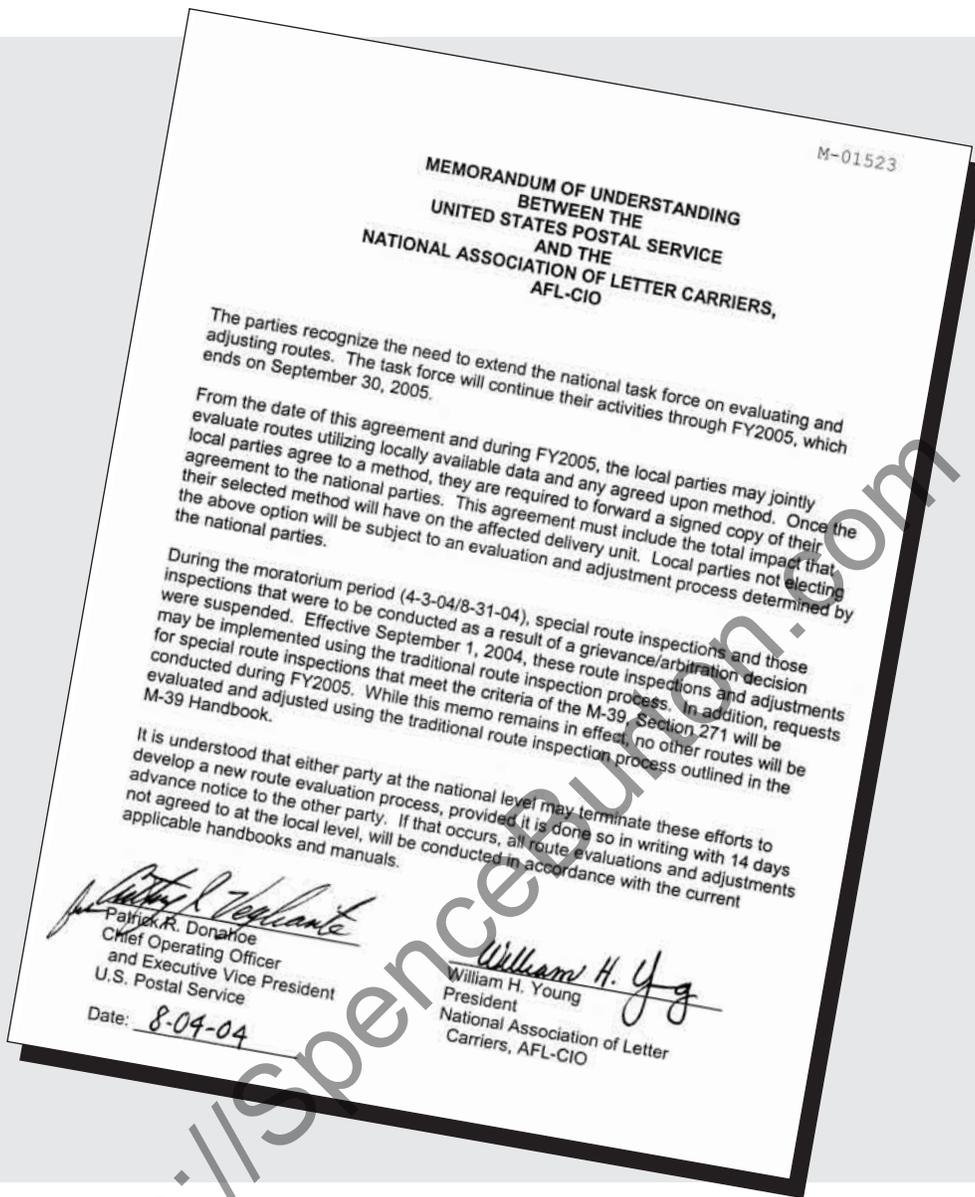
Expense	Spent 10/1/03 - 03/31/04	Projected 04/1/04 - 09/30/04
1. SALARIES, LOST TIME		
President's Salary (CSRS)	26,305.00	26,470.00
Executive Vice President's Salary (FERS)	6,344.00	25,955.00
Vice President's Salary (CSRS)	26,841.00	27,005.00
Secretary-Treasurer's Salary (CSRS)	25,396.00	27,005.00
Field Director Salary (CSRS)	26,841.00	27,005.00
Asst. Secretary-Treasurer's Salary (CSRS)	12,123.00	12,280.00
Health Benefits Representative Salary	1,041.00	1,045.00
Lost Time and Services (excl. Voice, Ed)	10,763.00	13,000.00
Leave Reimbursement	228.00	500.00
Officer's Leave Fund (30% of potential liability)	14,500.00	—
Secretary Salary/Benefits	22,819.00	—
Total	150,382.00	160,265.00
2. PT OFFICERS & STEWARD SALARY; EXPENSES		
Shop Steward Salary	29,268.00	30,000.00
Sgt/Arms, MBA, EEO, S&H, Trustees, Dir of Org	4,573.00	4,685.00
President's Expenses	1,187.00	1,320.00
Executive Vice President's Expenses	648.00	1,320.00
Vice President's Expenses	1,194.00	1,320.00
Secretary-Treasurer's Expenses	1,0843.00	1,320.00
Field Director	979.00	1,320.00
Asst. S/T Expenses	600.00	660.00
Misc. Expenses (Other Officer & Stewards)	471.00	500.00
Total	39,963.00	42,445.00
3. TAXES & OFFICER'S BENEFITS		
Officer's Benefits	38,515.00	35,000.00
Payroll Taxes/City Taxes	18,257.00	18,500.00
Property Taxes	4,711.00	4,800.00
Total	61,483.00	58,300.00
4. BUILDING / OFFICE EXPENSE		
Architect - Tenant Improvements	7,623.00	5,000.00
Building Maintenance & Repair	1,425.00	4,890.00
Hall Rental/RWC Office	1,950.00	1,950.00
Janitorial Service Office	2,200.00	4,450.00
Secretary-Treasurer's Office Expense Acct.	8,400.00	8,400.00
Office Utilities (Phone)	4,241.00	4,200.00
Printing	1,921.00	2,500.00
Insurance (OWCP/Bus. Liability/Bonding)	9,933.00	1,200.00
Insurance (Representational Liability)	—	8,000.00
Maintenance (Security/Service Contracts/ Serv-Maint)	3,788.00	5,000.00
Computer Expenses	2,147.00	6,000.00
Office Supplies/Equipment/Office Expense	5,640.00	2,500.00
Payroll Services	1,937.00	2,000.00
Moving Expenses	—	—
Total	43,582.00	56,090.00
5. BUILDING CORPORATION		
BC Architect - Base Building	3,197.00	1,850.00
BC Pre-Construction Costs	—	2,000.00
BC Elevator	473.00	570.00
BC Garbage	245.00	215.00
BC Insurance	3,976.00	—
BC Janitorial	1,373.00	1,200.00
BC Office Expense	85.00	100.00
BC Professional Fees	311.00	1,500.00

BC Serv Maintenance	1,840.00	2,500.00
BC Utilities (PG&E/Water/Elevator Phone)	3,532.00	3,500.00
Total	15,032.00	11,435.00

6. FEES & DUES		
Professional Fees	657.00	10,000.00
Affiliate Dues	4,325.00	5,285.00
Total	4,982.00	15,285.00
7. CONVENTION & CONFERENCES		
Convention Fund	23,790.00	17,000.00
Seminars & Conferences (HBR/DC Lobby Trip)	1,592.00	1,000.00
Committee of President's Meeting/ National Rap Session	912.00	750.00
Total	26,294.00	18,750.00
8. EDUCATION		
Training, Seminars, Stewards Breakfast	7,655.00	13,500.00
Other: Books, Materials, NALC Supplies	660.00	500.00
Total	8,315.00	14,000.00
9. COMMUNICATIONS		
Voice: Lost Time	2,476.00	2,500.00
Expenses	11,372.00	12,000.00
TV 214	1,577.00	1,200.00
Total	15,425.00	15,700.00
10. ENTERTAINMENT & SPORTS		
Good of the Order/Other Refreshments	2,362.00	2,500.00
Annual Dinner	491.00	3,000.00
Recreation/Picnic	—	2,000.00
Holiday Party	—	1,200.00
Total	2,853.00	8,700.00
11. REPRESENTATIONAL EXPENSES		
Representational Expenses	6,360.00	500.00
Contract / Picket Action	—	500.00
Total	6,360.00	1,000.00
12. OTHER		
Retirement and Other Gifts	1,773.00	5,000.00
New Member Services	437.00	1,000.00
Elections	7,045.00	—
Food Drive	200.00	1,000.00
100% Union Celebration (3.00 per person)	105.00	500.00
Miscellaneous	467.00	500.00
Total	10,027.00	8,000.00
Totals	384,698.00	409,970.00

Projected Income

	# of Members	Per Member	Projected Income
Active Members			
(13 pay periods @ 15.26)	2,046	\$198.38	\$405,885
Retired Members	350	\$ 2.25	\$ 788
Interest Income			\$ 300
Miscellaneous Income			\$ 3,000
Projected Income Total			\$409,973
TOTAL PROJECTED INCOME:			\$409,973
Total Projected Expenses			\$(409,970)
Projected Surplus			\$ 3



IN MEMORIAM

William O'Donnell (active carrier)

Greg Walker (active carrier)

Branch 214 Meetings

Branch meetings, 7:00 P.M.

October 6, 2004	ILWU Hall, 400 North Point, SF
November 3, 2004	ILWU Hall, 400 North Point, SF
December 1, 2004	ILWU Hall, 400 North Point, SF

Steward meetings, 6:00 P.M.

October 6, 2004	ILWU Hall, 400 North Point, SF
November 3, 2004	ILWU Hall, 400 North Point, SF
December 1, 2004	ILWU Hall, 400 North Point, SF

Retiree social meeting, 12:30 P.M.

October 4, 2004	2310 Mason St. 4th Floor, SF
December 6, 2004	2310 Mason St. 4th Floor, SF
February 7, 2005	2310 Mason St. 4th Floor, SF

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Branch 214 delegation, Hawaii, 2004



Photo by Herb Mitchell

A list of the delegates appears on page 12.

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– *Page 8*
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– *Page 9*
- **Last Election**
– *Page 10*
- **Union Home Loan Opportunity**
– *Page 13*

VOICE wins top award

The Voice won first place for general excellence among large branches (1,500+ members) at the NALC 64th biennial convention in Honolulu for the 2002–2004 period.

We thank the fine writers, cartoonists and photographers who contribute to our branch newspaper.

Contributing mightily to the final look are our professional wizards at DC Typography, San Francisco, especially Frank Brayton.

This is the third time our paper has won a top award in the NALC competition, since 1990.

Lynda Beigel, a regular contributor, accepted the award for Branch 214 at the Publications Workshop on Monday, July 19, 2004. Branch president Tony Gallardo appeared on the stage on July 20, 2004, with other winners to receive recognition from national president Bill Young.