

Official Publication
Of Branch 111
Home of the
"Wasatch Branch"

Branch 111
Chartered
January 24, 2003

The Pavement Pounder



AUGUST 2004

Bountiful * Lehi * Magna * Midvale * Murray * Salt Lake * Sandy * Taylorsville * Tooele * West Jordan * West Valley

The President's Corner

By: Mike Miller



At our last meeting no one was there to win the progressive drawings. The Progressive Drawing for the Branch has really gotten up there

in value. Zera Hunts name was drawn for the \$300 prize and she was not in attendance so the drawing will be worth \$325 at the August 12th meeting. A person could really buy himself or herself a real nice toy for that kind of money. I encourage all of you to be at the meetings every second Thursday, not only will you be eligible to win the drawing, you will also come away a little more informed on what is going on.

Brookfield's progressive drawing was for \$30 and William Thorup's name was drawn and he wasn't in attendance so at the August 12th meeting this drawing will be worth \$45. The Retirees Progressive Drawing was for \$175 and Alvin Lloyd's name was drawn and he was not in attendance either, so next month the drawing for retirees will be for \$200. We also have a new drawing that will take place at each of the meetings each month, and that will be

from Skaggs Uniforms, they will be giving us a \$50 coupon to use at their uniform store each month. So be at the Aug. 12th meeting.

The Steak Fry is this Saturday July the 31st and it looks like this will be the best Steak Fry ever. We were allowed to have a total of 400 at this years Steak Fry, and it turns out that we sold 428 tickets which Gardener Village will be able to accommodate. This is the first Steak Fry that we have had Stewards calling and asking for additional tickets because so many people wanted to go. We could have sold 500 tickets easily and would have had they been able to accommodate a group that size. I think this will be the best Steak Fry we have had since we stopped going up into the canyons years ago. I know it is going to be the biggest turn out we've had in years.

Welcome New Members

Brad J. Wilder

John Hanni

Kathy Middlebrooks

Robyn

Holsten

Bill Unutoa

Luis Mostacero

Marla Ann West

Maria Beltran

Erik Mirka

Douglas Rupp

Now
for the
real

This is the year everything is going to happen. If something meaningful isn't passed this year then the Postal Service will not be able to continue to operate under its current mandate. Being an activist is easy, they contact you and you respond, so please sign up the minute you get the letter in the mail.

important news. The National Convention went very well, aside from the weather being very hot and humid it was a very good experience for everyone attending. At the last official count there was 7,429 delegates attending the 2004 National Convention. The key issues on the agenda were Postal Reform, COLCPE contributions, Legislative Activism, negotiations for a new method of doing Route evaluations and adjustments, and the 2004 Presidential Elections. There were training sessions beginning at 7:30 am and going until 5 pm each day of the convention with the general session in-between. There was a full agenda for the convention and much to learn for everyone.

Postal Reform and Legislative Activism go hand in hand brothers and sisters, now more than ever we need every letter carrier to pitch in and help with contacting their Senators and Congressman. We need everyone to sign up and become an activist with the NALC. Becoming an Activist makes it easy for everyone to know what is happening on Capital Hill. So far 30% of our branch has signed up to be an activist, but what we need is 100% of you to sign up. We will be sending out a letter to everyone who has not signed up and we are asking that you please sign the form and mail it back to the branch in the self-addressed stamped envelope provided. If you have an email address please put it on the form, this is the easiest and fastest way to contact you and let you know when they need you to contact your legislative representatives.

COLCPE contributions were also an extremely important issue discussed. So far we only have about 3,000 members signed up for automatic deductions, although 98% of our members are eligible to sign up through Postal Ease, all you need is your pin number. Retirees can also sign up for automatic deductions for COLCPE. Brothers and Sisters National needs all of the financial help they can get to lobby Congress. It is not only going to take a little of our time but also a little of our money to help save the Postal Service and our jobs.

As far as the Presidential Elections are concerned, the convention voted almost unanimously to endorse Presidential Candidate John Kerry for President and his running partner John Edwards in the upcoming elections in November. What we need is a President and a Congress that are sensitive to the needs and concerns of Labor and the Working Man, and not just Big Business. I encourage all of you to get involved and vote when the time comes.

Last, but not least we discussed at length negotiating with the Postal Service a new way of evaluating and adjusting routes. They want to try and find a better way, they want to find an easier way, and they want to get away from the one-minute mentality of the six-day inspection and all the animosity it generates when management starts trying to deduct time from the inspections totals. They want to use real hours based on what you used on the average over a certain period of time as

a base for the route. They want to eliminate the confrontation each and every day when the supervisor comes around for your estimate. And everyone at the convention agreed unanimously with the direction the Contract Administration Team wanted to go in and voted unanimously to give them

permission to negotiate in our behalf on this issue. I for one hope they are successful in their efforts, we need to get rid of this out dated dinosaur of a process we have to go through now to get routes evaluated and adjusted, there is a better way.

Vice President Article

Kirk McLaughlin:

I am not going to talk about the Hawaii convention other than to say it was a very productive convention. The energy that you have around you from other union members just recharges your batteries inside to continue fighting the battle.

My big concern right now with what's happening in the Salt Lake district is the excessive amount of discipline being given for just minor safety offenses. Management is trying to tie everything into one category of "Failure to observe safety rules and regulations" so that management does not have to be progressive on different types of



infractions. That's wrong, but it is coming from up above the supervisor. It is coming from district that if they don't issue discipline then the supervisor is threatened with discipline.

What I am trying to say is, take all the time it takes to be safe, according to the way you understand the rule. Don't give management any opportunity to cover their rear ends at your expense and disciplining you. So do it the same way every day "the right way" and then you won't have to worry about always looking over your shoulder.

Solidarity

Always

Kirk McLaughlin

Stabbing Your Steward in the Back?

By: Frank Salazar, NALC Branch 2902 Executive Vice-President

The Steward on our workroom floor is the guardian of the Contract, and is there to ensure that management follows it and treats everyone evenhandedly. The Steward is the one who stands

between you and management, between you and abuse. So, why in heaven's name would you undermine your Shop Steward? When you undermine your Steward, YOU weaken the Union. So,

why would YOU weaken the Union and give management another advantage over you? Are you a masochist? Do you like begging like a dog or dancing like a puppet? I would hope not. However, there are those in our Union who take an adverse pleasure in undermining our Stewards and our Union.

Why? I don't know. I can understand why a scab would undermine a Steward. Scabs by nature are selfish, thoughtless, and cheap. They think only of themselves and justify their actions by trying to exacerbate some fault (real, contrived, or imagined) with the Union or a Steward. But, when you undermine the role of your Steward, YOU make you work life harder for yourself and others.

Yeah, you're right, your Steward might not know everything, but who does? Your Supervisors don't know it all, and neither do your Postmasters. So, what do you gain by undermining your Steward? Nothing! Members who become Stewards should be helped and

encouraged. They took it upon themselves to step forward and attempt to look out for others, not themselves. When a member becomes a Steward, they automatically put a bulls-eye on their back. Management is already aiming at them, and scabs are trying to circumvent them by attempting to cut their own sweetheart deals for their own advantage at the expense of others.

I don't like to hear when some of our own membership criticizes those who have become Stewards. At least **they** are trying to make a difference. How can YOU knock someone who is trying to help make a difference. How can you knock someone who is trying to help YOU?

Yeah, some of our Stewards are more knowledgeable than others, but being a Steward is an ever-evolving learning process that can continue for a life-time. You can't learn the stuff overnight. Therefore, our Stewards get monthly training and support from us full-time officers. We're only a phone call away.

Let us help you buy a home!

Need help buying or refinancing your home?

Union Plus[®] Mortgage is here for you with a program that is exclusively designed for union members and their families. This valuable program features:

- Mortgage assistance if you become unemployed as a result of a layoff, disability, strike or lockout
- Savings on closing costs
- A wide variety of mortgages including loans for those with less-than-perfect credit or other unique circumstances
- Eligibility for your parents and children too



For more information regarding the Union Plus program, call Chase Home Finance today.

Union Plus Mortgage Coordinator, Mark S. Altice

5926 S Fashion Pointe Drive, Ste. 110 S. Ogden, UT 84403

S. Ogden Office (800) 449-0380

Salt Lake City Office (800) 732-9446



All rates and services subject to change without notice. Chase Home Finance is a registered trademark of Union Plus. All loans are subject to credit and property appraisal. Program terms and conditions are subject to change without notice. Rate products are subject to change without notice. Other restrictions may apply. This is not a contract. It is only a summary of the program. For more information, contact your local office. This information is not intended to constitute an offer of insurance. For more information, contact your local office. This information is not intended to constitute an offer of insurance. For more information, contact your local office. © 2004 Chase Home Finance. All rights reserved.



House Panel Approves Postal Reform Bill

Lawmakers Reject Work of Presidential Commission

The House Government Reform Committee voted unanimously May 12 to approve the Postal Accountability and Enhancement Act of 2004.

“The House committee resoundingly rejected the anti-worker and anti-consumer recommendations of the President’s Commission on the U.S. Postal Service,” said APWU President William Burrus. “It also took an important step toward granting the Postal Service needed reforms.”

In addition, the committee members voted to prohibit excessive “worksharing” discounts that subsidize the mailing industry; granted the USPS greater flexibility in rate-setting; approved the transfer of military retirement costs of postal veterans to the Treasury Department; approved the release of retirement funds from escrow; and embraced the principle of uniform rates. These were all issues the APWU had identified as crucial to meaningful postal reform.

Noting that the Senate had released a “discussion draft” of a postal reform bill on May 12 as well, Burrus said: “Our fight is far from over, and we must remain vigilant.” He urged union members to continue to monitor the APWU Web site for updates, and to be prepared to contact their elected representatives. (*See below for more information on the Senate draft.*)

Commission Proposals Rejected

Among the recommendations of the President’s Commission that were **excluded** from the Postal Accountability and Enhancement Act (H.R. 4341) were:

- Granting the newly-established Postal Regulatory Board the power to cut wages and benefits in order to make the “comparable” to workers in the private sector;
- Making health care and retirement benefits – now guaranteed by law – “negotiable;”
- Instructing the Postal Service to outsource mail processing, retail, maintenance, and transportation jobs – everything but mail collection and delivery – to the lowest private-sector bidder;
- Eliminating the union’s no-layoff clause and making new hires

subject to federal reduction-in-force (RIF) procedures;

- Creating a Postal Network Optimization Commission that would have the power to close plants with virtually no input from workers, citizens, and elected officials;
- Removing the statutory barrier against closing small post offices for economic reasons;
- Undermining collective bargaining rights by changing the ground rules for contract negotiations;
- Giving a Postal Regulatory Board the authority to reduce the scope of universal service and end the USPS monopoly on letter mail;
- Continuing below-cost postage discounts for the mailing industry that are already in place, draining badly needed revenue from the Postal Service; and
- Giving the President and Secretary of the Treasury political control over the USPS by allowing them to appoint the USPS Board of Governors without Senate confirmation or any requirement that both political parties are represented on the panel.

“I want to publicly thank Committee Chairman Tom Davis (R-VA), and Representatives Henry Waxman (D-CA), John McHugh (R-NY), and Danny Davis (D-IL), who led a bipartisan effort to draft the bill,” Burrus said. **“These legislators and their staffs engaged in lengthy negotiations with interested parties to formulate a bill that all the groups felt they could support. This was no small task.”**

Senate Governmental Affairs Committee Release ‘Discussion Draft’ of Reform Bill
The Senate Governmental Affairs Committee released a “discussion draft”

of its postal reform bill on May 12, and while it is similar to H.R. 4341 in many respects, there are some significant differences. “The union is withholding judgment on the Senate bill until we have analyzed it further,” APWU President William Burrus said, “but we have serious concerns about several provisions.

We are especially troubled by proposals that would reduce the rights and benefits of injured postal workers,” he said. “Postal workers have been on the front lines of the war on terrorism, and it is totally unacceptable to change the law to deny these employees appropriate compensation when they suffer job-related injuries.

If adopted, the new rules would apply only to postal workers – not to other federal workers, and certainly not to the members of Congress or their staffs. In fact, the Senate proposal would amend Title 5 of the U.S. Code by striking the words ‘an employee’ and inserting ‘an employee other than the Postal Service employee,’ Burrus noted.

“I thought we were past the days of excluding specific groups from the protection of federal law,” he said.

The APWU is also concerned about excessive postage discounts for corporate mailers, as well as by the authority that would be granted to a new Postal Regulatory Board. “Needless to say, the mailing industry is fighting to keep the discounts that make their businesses so lucrative.

We are discussing these issues with key senators on the Governmental Affairs Committee, and hope to improve the bill before it is officially introduced. APWU members must be prepared to contact their elected officials and express their views on these important subjects.”

APWU Decries ‘Cost-Driven’ Changes Proposed for Improving OWCP

Protesting the potential for adding insult to injury, APWU testimony before

the House Workforce Protections Subcommittee cautioned that studies of the injury compensation system should focus more on workers than on costs.

“Any analysis which is based on the assumption that federal employees are somehow better off because they have become partially or totally disable due to a workplace injury or illness is, at best, misguided,” said APWU Human Relations Director Sue Carney.

“Any analysis that focuses on the reduction of benefits runs counter to the spirit of the Federal Employees Compensation Act, and risk the creating of fundamental inequities for the injured worker.”

The May 13 hearing was the first in a series of oversight hearings to examine the efficiency of the FECA program. The key issue is the program’s effectiveness in claims processing and assisting employees in returning to work. (The subcommittee’s work is unrelated to proposals to reduce the benefits of injured postal workers that are being considered by the Senate Governmental Affairs Committee as part of postal reform legislation.)

Testimony was given by claimants’ representatives, medical providers, and Labor Department officials. It focused in large part on what Rep. Charlie Norwood (R-GA), chairman of the House panel, called “the difficulty in communicating with the Office of Workers’ Compensation Programs, which administers FECA.”

“While I know that the agency receives and processes a vast amount of mail, medical bills and phone calls each year,” Norwood said, “the program must continue to improve its performance in these areas to benefit workers who need these critical services.” Norwood noted that processing delays “can impact the entire system by significantly increasing the amount of time that workers remain off the job.”

Despite this, Carney noted, time lost to Postal

Service injury has declined steadily since fiscal year 2000, and continues to decline in fiscal year 2004. Postal workers are doing their part, Carney testified, “yet their federal injury compensation costs continue to rise.”

“One major cost driver is the continuing increase in total amounts billed for medical services,” the APWU Human Relations director said. “In any efforts to cut costs, it is imperative to control the escalating prices of this powerful industry rather than reduce benefits to injured employees.”

“Despite our progress to date,” said Shelby Hallmark, the director of OWCP, “there are structural features in the FECA which create, in themselves and in their interplay with civil service retirement law, incentives for workers to enter and remain on the long-term disability rolls long after they could be expected to return to work.”

But Carney called FECA “a law based in equity,” saying that, “unilaterally reducing benefits to the injured worker simply in an effort to lighten the financial liability of the employer is not an equitable response to the increasing injury compensation costs.

Injured workers already suffer losses, both financial and emotional, for which they can never be compensated. A reduction in benefits that were fairly established would unjustly increase the already substantial burden of their injuries and illnesses, and literally add insult to injury ... Subjecting injured workers to additional financial hardship and possible re-injury should not be a substitute for the cures that modern medicine has to offer.”

The 88-year old FECA program covers three million workers and provides a variety of benefits for employees injured in the performance of their duties, including payments for medical care and wage-loss compensation for total or partial disability.

THE PAVEMENT POUNDER POLICY AND NOTICES

Union meetings are held at the Union Labor Center on the second Thursday of each month.

NALC Branch 111 Office:
2261 S Redwood Rd #14
Salt Lake City UT 84119-1330

Business Hours:

Mon, Wed, Fri 7:30 AM – 6:00 PM
Tues, Thursday 9:00 AM – 6:00 PM

Please call before visiting the Branch office to ensure someone is there.

Change of address: Please send your new address to the branch office if you have moved recently or are planning to move in the near future.

Statement of Policy

The Pavement Pounder newsletter is published twelve times a year. The Pavement Pounder is a publication of Branch 111. The articles printed in the newsletter are submitted by the senior union officers, members and Auxiliary of the branch to inform the members of events, news, educational matters and other material deemed for the good of the association. The appropriateness of articles published is determined by the

editor. The Editor reserves the right to edit or reject articles submitted. The opinions expressed in the newsletter are

not necessarily the opinions of the NALC or of Branch 111 or of its officers or editor.

SKAGGS™

 **POSTAL UNIFORMS**

3828 S. Main Street ~ Salt Lake City ~ Utah 84115

801-892-2666

Toll Free 888-4-SKAGGS (1-888-475-2447) ~ Fax 800-883-2626 or 801-892-2618

Everything you want in a store and more!

10 % off
Internet
Orders!

- **Great Low Prices!**

10% Off Full Allotment orders.

- **Union Preferred!**

We are listed on the Union's "Do Buy" list.

- **Superior Customer Service!**

If you ever have a problem, we will make it right.

- **Huge Selection of in-stock items!**

Stop by and try your items on. Alterations while you wait.

Skaggs has all your Postal needs!



Shop online 24/7 @ WWW.SKAGGSP postal.COM

Order by Phone Monday-Friday 7am-6pm; Saturday 10am-3pm

Mail, Fax or Stop by our Retail Store to try on your postal items

Retail Store hours Monday-Friday 8am-6pm; Saturday 10am-2pm

Branch 111
ANNUAL
RETIREES
DINNER

[Injury Compensation](#)

Thursday, Sept 16th, 2004
5:00 PM

Place: Home Town Buffet
5682 S. Redwood Rd

Cost: **Retiree & Spouse (or Guest) - *Free***
Active Carriers *must* pay

RSVP: Joe Zabriskie by September 6th
968-4208 or 973-6705

Need a ride? Call Joe by September 8th.

By Jim Kerekes

Ron Watson, our National Workman's Compensation Specialist, gave a good class at the National Convention. He went over fundamentals. The example he used in the class had some good questions that even some of the experienced reps. couldn't answer. I came away from the class having a good feeling of confidence. I hope that I can use some of what I've learned to help all that come to see me concerning their claims.

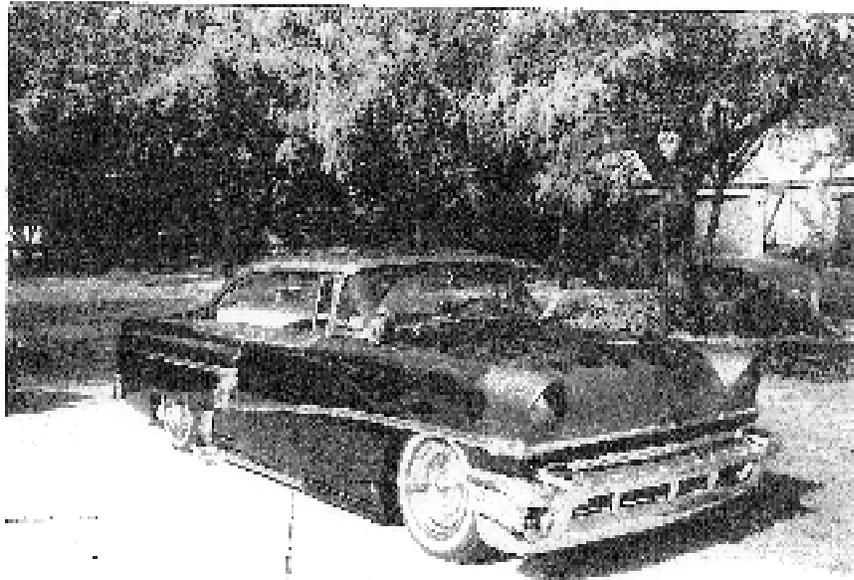
Some of the fundamentals that he talked about were the type of claims we fill out, the traumatic and the occupational types. He also stressed as we always do, and that is to watch the time limits on filling claims. He said that we need to watch for errors made by us, management and sometimes by the Labor Department. Something he brought up that I'm not used to yet is the filling of a grievance. The stewards and even us compensation reps. may have to file a grievance because a supervisor didn't give out the proper paper work or refused to give out paper work. He stressed the importance of asking for a remedy of the grievance that fits the

situation to help resolve the issue. Don't ask for a cease and desist because most likely it will just happen again. So one needs to choose a remedy that will solve the problem. Maybe if there is training that needs to be given to the supervisor, then they should be trained by their Injury Comp Office.

I would like to have a training session some evening at the union hall where anyone could come. I'd like to talk about those fundamentals that I learned at the National Convention and Schedule Awards. I thought I would choose AUG. 19 or the 26th. Preferably AUG. 26. I'll have to let you know which day I can get the training room. The time of the training would be from 5 to 7 pm. If you are someone who would like to attend please RSVP at the West Valley Office at 955-8584 or 963-8048 and ask for me, or leave a message at 254-2860. If I can get enough people interested in attending and learning about your FECA rights we will schedule the training session.

I would suggest that the day of your injury or a day or two thereafter, call me so we can make sure your claim is being processed properly.





**COME ONE COME ALL
TO THE 4th ANNUAL
LABOR DAY PICNIC & CAR SHOW!**

**WHEN: Labor Day, Monday,
September 6, 2004**

**At Magna Park from Noon till 5 p.m.
Located at 2550 South 8850 West**

Games and Contest for All Ages - Tug of War, a Belching and Watermelon Eating contest, Clowns, Sack Races, Door Prizes, Kids Games, Frying Pan Throw, Horseshoes, Huge Car Show

We're celebrating **ALL** Working people, so along with your Picnic bring your neighbors, families & friends.

**COME ENJOY THE DAY...
IT IS YOUR DAY**

**National Association of Letter Carriers
Profit**

Non-

2261 South Redwood Road, Suite 14
Postage Paid
Salt Lake City, Utah 84119
No. 1981

U.S.
Permit

Calendar of Events

AUGUST 2004		
5 th pm	Exec. Board meeting	6:00
12 th pm	Branch Meeting	6:00
18 th meeting	Stewards	6:00 pm

SEPTEMBER 2004		
2 nd	Exec. Board meeting	
6:00 pm		
9 th	Branch meeting	
6:00 pm		
15 th	Stewards meeting	
6:00 pm		

OFFICERS BRANCH 111

PRESIDENT
Mike Miller (801) 598-0778
VICE-PRESIDENT
Kirk McLaughlin
TREASURER
Mike Madsen
SECRETARY
Sharla Groves
SGT-AT-ARMS
Michael Wahlquist
MBA & COMPENSATION
Jimmy Kerekes (254-2860)
TRUSTEES
Barrie Frankland
Joan Larsen
John Groves
SAFETY & HEALTH
Arlynn Venema
LEGISLATIVE
Phillip Rodriquez
HEALTH BENEFITS
Brigham Young (969-9343)
DIRECTOR OF RETIREES
Joe Zabriskie (801) 968-4208)
Branch Office (801) 973-6705
Fax (801) 973-6723

PAVEMENT POUNDER EDITOR
Gean Ryans (801) 541-2716
thepavementpounder@comcast.net

Branch 111 Website
Branch111.com

National Association
Of
Letter Carriers
Branch 111

Branch 111 Vision Statement
Branch 111 will achieve
solidarity through strength. Our
strength will be the result of
empowering our leaders and
members through education,

training, and involvement. We recognize our obligations as we embrace the principles of integrity, open communication, and unity.