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The Pavement Pounder



JANUARY 2005

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

The President's Corner

By: Mike Miller



Well, here we are into 2005 already, how time flies when you're having fun. We have accomplished a lot over this past year, and this Administration plans on making this New Year just as productive as 2004 was, if not more so. One of the accomplishments this Administration achieved last year that was not mentioned in our last newsletter was the fact that by the end of 2004 we were able to put a computer and printer in each of the Stations within our Branch for our Stewards to work with as they represent you as members of the NALC. We made a goal at the beginning of our term to ensure that our Stewards would have all of the tools necessary for them to do their work at their station by the end of our term, we just accomplished it a year sooner than expected. Your Stewards do a great job and they need your support thanks for all of the hard work they do, being a Steward can sometimes feel like a thankless job, unless you make the effort to say “Thank You.”

We finally finished our meetings having to do with the Accident Repeater List in December. Our goal was to negotiate a fair way of determining whether or not a person name was to be placed on the list and observed on a weekly basis. In the past we have had problems with

people being put on the list for having been stung by a bee, for having filed an occupational injury claim for something that took years to show up as an injury, and my favorite, having their vehicle hit while it was legally parked and the carrier not in the vehicle, among others. And I do agree and so did management, that there are some things that should not be considered a criteria for putting a carrier on the Repeater List.

The results of my meeting with management and our Safety Specialist, Arlynn Venema, were very positive and productive. From now on, once a month, just after the Safety and Health meeting, Liz Pace and Arlynn Venema will meet and discuss those who have been placed on the Accident Repeater List to see if there are any incidences in their record that do not meet the criteria as being an accident for the Accident Repeater List. Once they have discussed the issue and made their determination concerning the incident, they will write up a recommendation and send to the District Manager for his consideration.

They will also send copies to myself of each letter carrier whose name has been put on the Accident Repeater List at this time, and I will review each one of them and send the results of my investigation and recommendation to Liz and Arlynn for them to consider. It is our hope that this will eliminate some of those who were

unfairly put on the list and as a result have had to endure being watched in the office and on the street on a weekly basis. It is our goal to have all issues resolved so that we can start the New Year with a clean slate.

With all of the carriers retiring over the past year, we have an abundance of uniforms that retirees have brought into the office. If you know of any PTF's that need pair of pants or a shirt to work in please inform them that, if they are a member, they can come down to the Union Hall and pick out what they need to get them through until their clothing allowance comes through.

Last but not least, a bit of news on how the progressive drawings are going at the meetings. Our Brookfield drawing in December was for \$90 and Ray Berrett's name was drawn, but Ray was not at the meeting to collect his \$90 winnings, too bad, maybe next time Ray, next month the Brookfield drawing will be for \$105.

The retiree's progressive drawing was up to \$75 and Brigham Young's name was drawn, and he was at the meeting, congratulations Brigham, now don't forget to tell your wife you won some money. And for the Big Branch Progressive Drawing, it was up to \$425 at the December meeting and Howard Steel's name was drawn, but Howard was nowhere to be found, someone be sure to let him know that he missed out on \$425 by not being at the meeting. Next month the Branch Progressive Drawing will be for \$450, but if your not present at the meeting your not eligible to win.

I encourage all of you to be at the meetings, and not just for the progressive drawing, but also for the opportunity of the comradery with your fellow carriers in the Branch and most important for the information you will receive at the meetings. If you're not at the meeting you wont know what's going on, and as one past President Joe Wood used to say, "Be there or be square." See you at the January 13th meeting.

Legislative-Phillip Rodriquez

I hope everyone had a wonderful year. A new year awaits and by the countless phone calls from our member's, postal reform (or lack of) is on everyone's mind. As I have written in the past postal reform is vital to our survival. The Postal Service continues to lose revenue due to the decline of first class mail. While revenues fall, our financial obligations continue to rise. This year it is estimated that the Postal Service will generate about 65 billion dollars in revenue. Of the 65 billion two thirds is generated from first class mail. Good news right?

A fact that no one disputes is that first class mail has and will continue to decline. In the year 2000 the GAO (general accounting office) projected that the Postal Service will not generate enough revenue to cover expenses. This year the services liabilities are estimated at or around 70 to 75 billion dollars. These liabilities include operating expenses, retirement

obligations, injury compensation expenses, labor cost's as well as the multiple security mandates issued by the government post 9-11. Security mandates that congress have yet to fund. In the year 2004 the Postal Service did not generate enough revenue to cover the expenses forcing the service to borrow more than 12 billion dollars to cover the short fall. In five years more than half of our employees will be eligible for retirement. It is estimated by the year 2012 the Postal Service yearly liabilities will be in excess of 85 billion dollars while at the same time revenue will continue to decline. Today, or in the future, the Postal Service will not generate enough revenue to cover expenses. With revenue declining and expenses rising, clearly Postal Reform is a priority. Postal reform that guarantees universal coverage at a universal rate. Postal reform that guarantees and honors our collective bargaining rights. Postal reform that gives the Postal Service the ability to change,

adapt and compete in the new technology driven economy. The laws that govern the Postal Service are antiquated and outdated and no longer work. Without this type of reform the Postal Service cannot survive.

In 2002 the NALC, Postal Service and the Direct Marketing Association formed a coalition to initiate and implement a comprehensive reform bill. This coalition for two years lobbied congress about the necessity of Postal Reform. I, with other Branch 111 members, traveled to Washington DC on several occasions to lobby our representatives about the importance of Postal Reform. In May of 2004 two bills were sent to the house and senate. These bills contained language that all parties could accept. It protected our wages and benefits and at the same time allowed the Postal Service the flexibility to generate revenue. Days before the bills were going to the respected floors for votes; the White House staff issued a statement stating the administration would not support the bill as written. The administration opposed the transfer of 28 billion dollars from the Postal Service to the Department of Treasury for military retirees. Two years earlier the administration transferred 28 billion dollars to the Postal Service to pay for military retirees that previously have been paid by the Department of Treasury. No other federal agency has ever been obligated to pay for military retirements. The administration did not want to add another 28 billion to the already skyrocketing (450 billion) federal deficit. This opposition to one part of the bill essentially killed any Postal Reform.

Where does Postal Reform stand? Most members of congress agree that reform is needed. Senator Collins of Maine, who chairs the committee for postal reform, addressed the issue of the transfer of military retirements from the Postal Service. She stated, ***“This liability, which is not a product of any Postal Service activity, represents an unfair transfer of an enormous obligation to postal customers,”*** Collins said. ***“No other federal agency is***

required to pay that military obligation, and the Postal Service should not be singled out to bear this cost.” All parities are hopeful that in 2005 a Postal Reform bill will be enacted. It will be tough because congress has shifted further to the right. We have an administration and congress that is not “worker friendly.” In November 2004, President Bush issued a statement that the Postal Reform bill of 2004 is insufficient. Not only is he opposed to the transfer of the military retirements, but also the President wants to address labor costs, which now make up 76 percent of the Postal Service’s expenses.

The memo listed other objections and recommendations:

- *Require employees to wait three days before they can receive workers compensation benefits.*
- *Limit workers compensation benefits to two-thirds of an employees’ pay.*
- *Stop paying employees workers compensation benefits when they reach retirement age, at which point they would receive a pension.*

The White House also wants a reform bill that would repeal the salary cap on executive compensation while tying executive pay to performance, set annual targets for the Postal Service to reduce its network costs, and take both the Consumer Price Index and productivity improvements into account when raising postage rates. These conditions were not part of the original bill. Again any postal reform bill must guarantee our wages and benefits. This union has fought hard for many years for the wages and benefits we currently enjoy. We will do everything possible to secure our future. It is important that everyone contribute to COLCPE. Every NALC member must step up and contribute. Two dollars a paycheck is a small price. The union officers or legislative liaisons cannot continue this fight without your help. Do not wait like other Postal unions who now face massive job losses.

Safe winter driving tips

- **Clear snow and ice from all windows and lights** – even the hood and roof – before driving.
- **Pay attention.** Don't try to out-drive the conditions. Remember the posted speed limits are for dry pavement.
- **Leave plenty of room for stopping.**
- **Leave room for maintenance vehicles and plows.** The law requires you to slow down or move over when approaching emergency or maintenance vehicles, including snowplows, parked on the side of the road when they have their flashing lights turned on. If you approach a parked emergency or maintenance vehicle during a winter storm and decide to change lanes be extra careful. The passing lane may be in worse shape than the driving lane. There may also be a snow ridge between the two lanes. Avoid making an abrupt lane change. If approaching a snowplow, stay back at least 200 feet, and don't pass on the right.
- **Know the current road conditions.** Log onto the [winter road conditions report](#) Web page.
- **Use brakes carefully.** Brake early. Brake correctly. It takes more time and distance to stop in adverse conditions.
- **Watch for slippery bridge decks,** even when the rest of the pavement is in good condition. Bridge decks will ice up sooner than the adjacent pavement.
- **Don't use your cruise control in wintry conditions.** Even roads that appear clear can have sudden slippery spots and the short touch of your brakes to deactivate the cruise control feature can cause you to lose control of your vehicle.
- **Don't get overconfident in your 4x4 vehicle.** Remember that your four-wheel drive vehicle may help you get going quicker than other vehicles but it won't help you stop any faster. Many 4x4 vehicles are heavier than passenger vehicles and actually may take longer to stop. Don't get overconfident in your 4x4 vehicle's traction. Your 4x4 can lose traction as quickly as a two-wheel drive vehicle.
- **Do not pump anti-lock brakes.** If your car is equipped with anti-lock brakes, do not pump brakes in attempting to stop.
- **Look farther ahead in traffic than you normally do.** Actions by cars and trucks will alert you quicker to problems and give you a split-second extra time to react safely.
- **Remember that trucks are heavier than cars.** Trucks take longer to safely respond and come to a complete stop, so avoid cutting quickly in front of them.
- **Go slow!**

There are some used uniforms at the union office for those in need of them. You can come to the office to pick them up. Phyllis Polster

The letter Carrier band is in need of new members. If you or your family member or friends would like to become a member just contact the names listed below.

Howard Gray Jr.
Band Director – 277-1868

Robert (Bob) Swenson
Band Manager – 968-4914

PAVEMENT POUNDER ARTICLES

Any branch 111 member may submit articles to the pavement pounder for publication. All articles submitted must comply with the pavement pounder "statement of Policy". No articles attacking or criticizing another member of the branch will be printed in the Pavement Pounder. Articles rejected by the Editor may be taken to the Executive Board.

Gean Ryans

Editor

COLCPE - (Committee on Letter Carriers Political Education)

Help protect Letter Carrier interests by contributing today.

**Why risk your hard-earned retirement benefits just to save a few dollars?
Director of Retirees Don Southern reminds all Letter Carrier Retirees that,**

"Your donation to COLCPE is absolutely critical to help NALC fight for the future of the USPS and protect our retiree benefits."

As NALC's political action fund, COLCPE helps elect candidates who support letter carriers. By strengthening NALC's voice in Congress, COLCPE protects our rights and the future of the Postal Service. You can help protect the interests of retired letter carriers in three easy ways. So help NALC work for retired letter carriers by signing up to make regular contributions to COLCPE automatically :



through automatic deposit directly from your OPM annuity, or



through electronic fund transfer directly from your bank account,



sending a check to COLCPE at NALC Headquarters today

More and more of your retired NALC brothers and sisters are doing so every day. You can join their efforts and help even more by joining the growing legions of NALC Legislative Activists and the NALC e-Activist Network. That way you will be personally contacted when NALC needs your help in calling or writing to members of Congress or other important policy makers about letter carrier interests.

"If we are to be successful in our endeavor to amend legislation that will increase our retirement income, and the income of our survivors, everyone is going to have to be on board. We must have the ability to make contributions to the campaigns of those we depend upon to sponsor and vote for the legislation so vital to our interests and we must have a legion of retirees ready to contact policy makers at a moment's notice," says Retiree Director Southern, adding,

"To those of you who are already on board I say thank you. To those who have not yet found the time to do so . . . there is no time like the present !

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
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 based on appropriateness. Articles attacking or criticizing others will not be published. The Pavement Pounder will not be allowed to be used as a weapon against anyone or group of people. The Pavement Pounder is to be used to educate and edify the membership of the branch. The opinions expressed in the newsletter are not necessarily the opinions of the NALC or of Branch 111 or of its officers or editor.

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

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Calendar of Events

JANUARY 2004		
6 th	Exec. Board meeting	6:00 pm
13 th	Branch Meeting	6:00 pm
19 th	Stewards meeting	6:00 pm

FEBRUARY 2005		
3 rd	Exec. Board meeting	6:00 pm
10 th	Branch meeting	6:00 pm
16 th	Stewards meeting	6:00 pm

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TREASURER

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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.