



BRANCH 111 N.A.L.C.
"THE WASATCH BRANCH"

The Pavement Pounder

April 2009

Volume 9 Issue 3

Cottonwood

Downtown

Foothill

Heber

Holladay

Kearns

Lehi

Maena

Millcreek

Midvale

Murray

Sandy

South Salt Lake

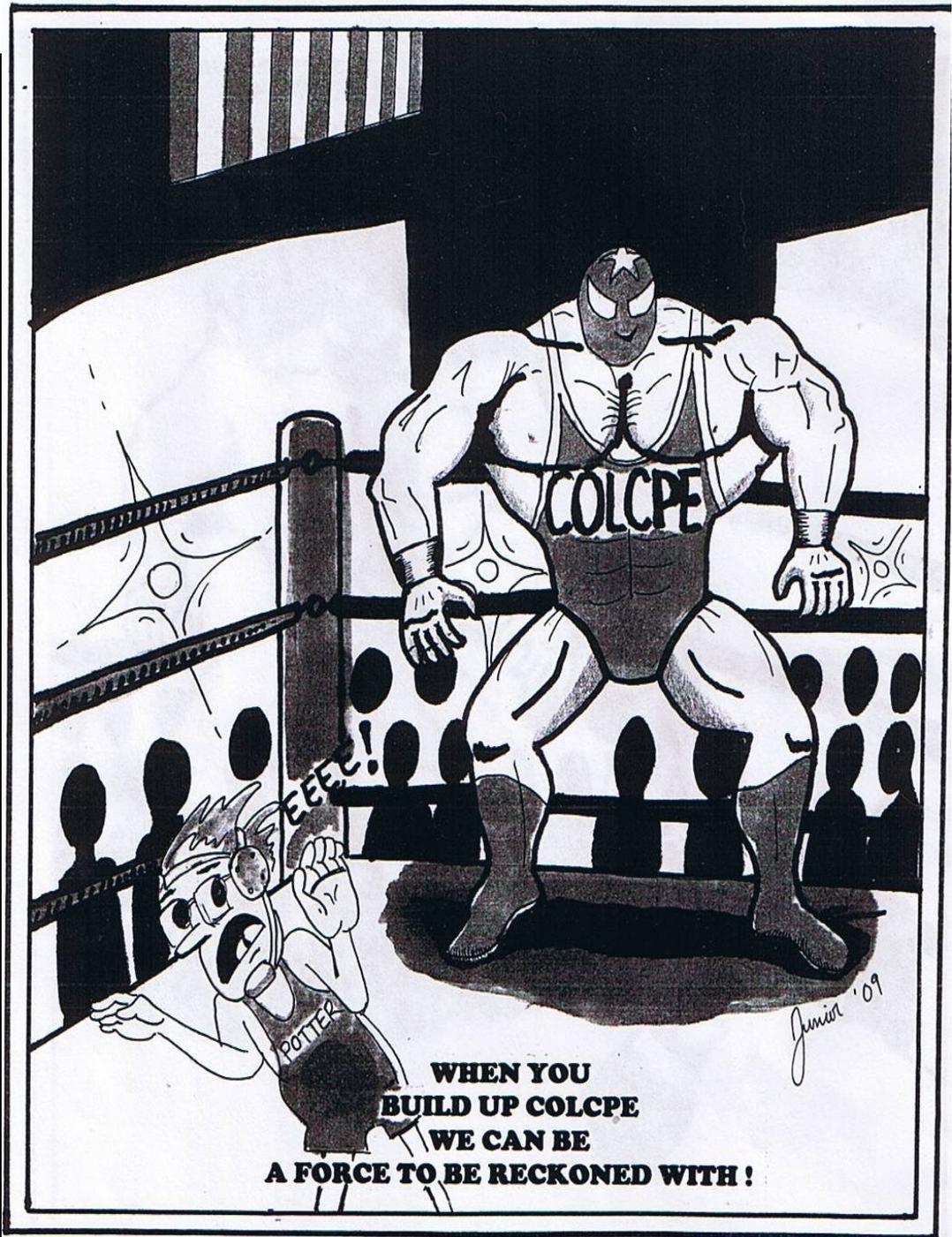
Sugarhouse

Tooele

West Jordan

West Valley

Dugway



The Winners Box

Union Meeting
Drawings
January 8, 2009

2 Door prizes
\$25.00 Each

Alan Crocker
Bob Torrance

Progressive Retirees
\$75.00

Harvey Olsen
(not present)

Next month
\$100.00

Progressive Union B
\$200.00

Karen Anderson
(not present)

Next month \$225.00

Progressive Union A
\$650.00

Eric Tallman
(not present)

Next month
\$675.00

The next drawings will
be at the April 9, 2009
Union Meeting

You Must be
present to
WIN!!!

The Wahlquist Report

Mike Wahlquist, President.

Overtime Over Time

Management has not hired any career Letter Carriers in over a year and a half. True, they hired Transitional Employees (thank goodness for at least that much help!), but they have not hired any new TE's for over a year now. And to top it off, management has informed us that, based on volume (According to DOIS no doubt), we are overstaffed in Salt Lake City by about 20 positions. We can assume that DOIS is telling all of the Associate Offices something similar.

What does this mean to us? Well, first of all, I know that we are not overstaffed by 20 positions! In fact, I would venture to say that we are understaffed, but since I do not possess the omniscience of DOIS, I would not venture to give an exact count by which we are understaffed. My basis for believing that we are understaffed is founded in all of the improper mandating grievances, the denial of Stewards time grievances, and the crossing craft grievances that are now being filed, all of which are caused by understaffing.

Of course we are not the only ones affected by understaffing. This same scenario is being played out all over the United States in almost every office. In fact, I had an opportunity

to speak to the Rural Letter Carriers Union last week, and they told me that their members are furious over their last evaluations. Not only do they now receive much less yearly salary, but they also had massive amounts of time added to their routes. They make less money, and they also have to work more hours to get it! They told me that they wished that they were City Letter Carriers so that they would at least get paid for the extra hours. I can honestly say that this is the first time I have ever seen a Rural Carrier envious of a City Carrier.

In addition, the Postal Service has announced that they will be offering another "early retirement" opportunity (dates are unknown at the writing of this article, but Carriers are eligible with the same terms as the offer we received in 2008), is shutting down six district offices, and is eliminating 1,400 mail processing supervisor and management positions at nearly 400 facilities around the country. So, as I see it, once again, we will be asked to do more with less, which means that we will be working more overtime than ever. Carriers need to remember that Article 8 allows management to mandate, when necessary, to get the mail delivered. Some have asked me to file a grievance for the lack of staffing, but I have had to explain that until management is regularly working Carriers more than

12 hours per day or 60 hours per week, we cannot win a staffing grievance, because Article 8 governs the distribution of all overtime up to those limits. The inherent penalty for overtime is that we get time and a half to 10 hours, and double time to 12 hours. That penalty is supposed to ensure that management staffs correctly, but for the first time, I am seeing that management has stopped caring about overtime. In fact, lately we have been filing numerous grievances for "Improper Mandating" (yes, even though management may mandate, they still have to get it right!), and we have been winning hundreds of hours for 12/60 ODL Carriers who were left sitting at home while their fellow Carriers were improperly mandated to carry overtime. I would like to mention one additional thing about which we need to be careful. As we are working more hours, make sure that we do not sacrifice safety or the sanctity of the mail just to get our jobs done a little bit faster. We are getting paid to make sure that all deliverable mail makes it to its final destination safely and expeditiously. It is actually a Federal Offense to steal, throw away, or even delay the mail, so we want to make sure that even in the face of increasing overtime, we are doing what we were hired to do, which is to timely deliver the mail that has been entrusted to us.

Many times during my career with the Post Office, I have heard the saying that

change is coming. Well, it doesn't look like change is coming anymore. Now it looks like change is here. What we need is a dynamic Postmaster General, who will seize the moment, make the right choices and lead us into the future where we will be a viable service. So far, he has just awarded himself tons of salary and compensation in the face of record losses. But, who knows, maybe he is planning on earning it all back with his good choices this year. Until then, we will continue to grieve overtime violations each and every day that they occur. If you see violations happening, please inform you local Shop Steward so that the Union can do its job. Thank you!

The Veep Speaks

Vice President Phil Rodriguez

Recently I had a heated discussion with a Station Manager regarding "performance standards" and her expectation of Carriers in her zone. This Manager used terms such as "daily expectations", "demonstrated performance", "not meeting office standards", "carrier integrity", "demonstrative performance" and so on and so on. Office time seems to be a concern with Management because over and over I was told that SLC Carriers was not meeting office time goals. I really don't pay too much attention because I know these terms mean absolutely nothing according to our Collective Bargaining Agreement.

All too often our fellow Letter Carriers fall for DOIS based standards, when in fact, DOIS has no contractual merit in terms of our daily workload. Remember, DOIS is a Management Tool and cannot be used as a sole basis for discipline. DOIS does not determine work performance nor route values. If DOIS had contractual merit, and we were bound to DOIS

expectations, then all of us would be disciplined because we never meet DOIS projections. Do not let your Supervisor lead you to believe that you're not meeting Postal expectations or my favorite, not meeting percent to standard. NALC Vice President Dale Hart stated in a Postal Record article, "*the only references to "percent to standard" deal with estimating impact on office time when a delivery unit begins having letter mail sorted in a DPS environment*".

What are Letter Carriers expectations according to the Collective Bargaining Agreement? Article 34 of the National Agreement states:

The principle of a fair day's work for a fair day's pay is recognized by all parties to this Agreement...The Employer agrees that before changing any current or instituting any new work measurement systems or work or time standards, it will notify the Union concerned as far in advance as practicable.

A fair day's work for a fair day's pay! I realize at times it's tough to confront an angry Supervisor but realize our Contract is on your side if you're giving a fair days work. Do not get into a debate about your daily workload with your Supervisor. In a professional manner tell them your estimate and do not fall for the DOIS projected leave and return time. Always remember to submit a 3996 as that will be the

official estimate for that day. If your Supervisor threatens you with performance related discipline make sure to immediately tell your Steward. Always carry your route safely; never cut corners in order to be "back in time". When you hurry and compromise safety for the needs of your Supervisor you will eventually have an accident that will result in your Supervisor immediately issuing discipline. Rarely will discipline be issued for taking your time by working safely.

I have received numerous phone calls from Letter Carriers who feel they have been targeted by their Supervisor for Age Discrimination. Claims such as Supervisors following them at a higher rate than younger carriers because they "are slow" compared to other Carriers. Supervisors making statements "have you thought about retiring". A Supervisor standing behind them while they case while other younger Carriers seem to get a free pass. This is troubling. Age discrimination is morally wrong and violates federal laws governing protections of workers.

Notice Of Nominations

In compliance with Branch 111 Bylaws notice is hereby given that Nomination of Delegates to the Utah State AFL-CIO Convention will take place on

April 9, 2009—6:00 PM At the scheduled branch general meeting

2261 South Redwood Road

Please consult Branch 111 Bylaws for further details of nominating procedures and eligibility requirements for delegates.

OWCP – Terry Ehlers

Well the training on Basic OWCP went very well twenty-five individuals attended from around the great state. The training was conducted by Mary Martinez RAA out of the business office of region two. Branch 111 Auxiliary did a great job of providing items for breaks and a notorious lunch and I do greatly appreciate all that they did. Individuals that attended learned OWCP in a snapshot.

Items addressed were:
History of Federal Employees Compensation Act (FECA)
Office of Workers Compensation (OWCP) is a division of the Department of Labor (DOL)

Federal employees are not allowed to sue the Agency That Federal employee's have rights to wages and medical benefits when injured on the job
The 5 Criteria that must be met to substantiate a claim (traumatic or occupational)
Identifying Traumatic Injury --CA-1

Identifying Occupational Disease or Injury --CA-2
Burden of Proof requirements:

- A. Employee Narrative
- B. Medical Narrative

1. Dates of Examination
2. History given by employee
3. Results of diagnostic tests
4. Medical Diagnosis
5. Treatment course
6. Prognosis of recovery
7. Physician's medical opinion, with medical evidence, as to causal relationship between the

- diagnosed condition and the factors or conditions of the employment
8. Extent of disability affecting the employee's ability to work due to the injury

Causal Relationship:

- A. Direct Cause
- B. Aggravation
- C. Acceleration
- D. Precipitation

Who decides your Claim? (OWCP ONLY?)

Legitimate Claims are sometimes denied because:

- Employee mistakes and omissions (forms, laws, response to OWCP)

- Physician mistakes and omissions (forms, laws, response to OWCP)
- Management mistakes and omissions (grieveable) (provide copies, receipt, timeliness)

Supervisors Role in claims.

OWCP forms (ca-17, ca20, etc)

OWCP denials have Appeal Rights

I personally thank all the individuals who took time away from work or family to participate in this training. This training will be of valuable use to them or someone with whom they come in

contact.
I have not received a large response for the Physician information that I asked for last month. If you just have not had the time to respond I understand but do ask that you do.

HEALTH BENEFITS - JIM KEREKES

At our March monthly executive board meeting, I asked the members of the board why we have so few union members who are not signed up with the NALC Health Benefit Plan. The responses I got were: "My doctors are not on the PPO List"; "My diagnostic labs are not on the PPO List"; "Some Hospitals are not on the PPO List".

I'm going to try and do something about these problems. I called the Health Plan and they gave me this PPO Locator phone number: 1-800-564-7642. That is the phone number that was used during open season. It may be still available at this present time. CIGNA Health Care Shared Administrative is the PPO Network for NALC.

Some things you can do to help:

You can call the PPO Locator number – 1-800-564-7642.

You can ask your doctor if he participates in the CIGNA Network.

You can refer him to sign-up in the CIGNA Network.

We can also look for them in the latest PPO List.

As to Lab diagnostics, I'll need you to tell me the ones you are using. I will ask them to try and see if they can join the NALC Networks. I'll inquire with the NALC Health Plan in the upcoming weeks, to learn more about how these Networks and PPO programs work with NALC in making contracts with the Labs.

Please contact me and let me know if there are other areas of medical care you want me to check on and try to improve in our area. Most if not all Health Plans start in May to prepare or present the 2010 coverage proposals to OPM. So, I will need your feedback as soon as possible, to get the ball rolling for next year.

I'll try to report in April on this progress.



2009 Gimme 5 for COLCPE contest: COLCPE donors could collect \$1,000

Five lucky donors to COLCPE will win \$1,000 each in a new “Gimme 5” competition announced by NALC President William H. Young. There’s a new twist to this year’s contest—the race to qualify is among NALC branches, grouped by size, with members of five winning locals automatically entered in the contest drawing.

“We want to build on our success over the past two years,” President Young said. “And by success, I mean both the way we increased COLCPE contributions and the fact that we helped elect a president who cares about working families and more pro-labor members of Congress, in both the House and Senate.”

The new contest, he said, puts the focus on growing automatic Gimme 5 donations of \$5 or more per pay period at the branch level, the source of the union’s organizational strength. The Committee on Letter Carrier Political Education, or COLCPE, is NALC’s political action committee. Funds are used to support candidates—Republicans, Democrats and independents—who support letter carriers’ issues, and to help finance get-out-the-vote and other political activities. Absolutely no union dues money is used to support political candidates.

Contributions to COLCPE are entirely voluntary. Tens of thousands of active and retired NALC members choose to give each year, many through regular deductions from their paychecks or monthly annuity payments, or by electronic funds transfer from their checking accounts.

“It’s tempting to rest on our laurels, but we can’t relax now,” President Young warned. “You can tell by the political posturing around the economic stimulus legislation that the losers in 2008 are just itching to start the 2010 campaign. We have to be ready to answer them.”

“Our struggle to rebuild the middle class is just beginning,” he added.

“Gimme 5 for COLCPE” was launched just three years ago, in March 2006, with the aim of increasing the number of automatic contributors. The target of \$5 per pay period represents just 50 cents per work day. The goal for retiree contributions is \$5 each month. (Of course, any amount is welcome.)

“A steady stream of contributions is really important for planning by our Legislative and Political Affairs Department and for budgeting our resources over the coming months,” Young explained.

How the contest works

For the 2009 COLCPE campaign, the union locals will be divided into five categories:

- Branches with 2,000 or more members
- 1,000 to 1,999 members
- 500 to 999 members
- 100 to 499 members, and
- 50 to 99 members.

Between now and the end of the year, branches will strive to sign up as many active and retired members as possible as automatic Gimme 5-level COLCPE donors. The five branches with the highest percentage of members who are Gimme 5 contributors in their size category as of December 31 will be the winners.

At that point, each winning branch will conduct a raffle among all of its Gimme 5 members and the winner will receive a \$1,000 American Express gift card. In addition, the five winning branches will each receive laptop computers for branch use, and the COLCPE coordinators of each winning branch will receive a \$200 gift card upon completion of a report on their branch’s winning strategy.

There will be a special prize for making the greatest progress. The branch recording the most growth in percentage of automatic contributors during the contest months also will stage a \$1,000 raffle for eligible members, receive a laptop, and the

COLCPE CONTEST (continued from page 5)

There will be a special prize for making the greatest progress. The branch recording the most growth in percentage of automatic contributors during the contest months also will stage a \$1,000 raffle for eligible members, receive a laptop, and the COLCPE coordinator will receive a gift certificate. (The branch winning this special prize must not have won in its size category in the general competition.)

And don't think for a minute that branches with 49 or fewer members are being forgotten. All Gimme 5 contributors in these branches will be entered into a separate raffle, with one lucky winner drawn for a \$1,000 gift card.

Branch standings will be reported and updated below so members can track the progress of their home branch. Winning branches will be announced in the February 2010 *Postal Record*, the annual COLCPE recognition issue.)

The Front Line

Historically, Letter Carriers took great pride in their appearance, knowing that they represented the "face" of the Postal Service. The public came to rely on having a professional-looking Letter Carrier serving the needs of the neighborhood. As a patron, I would expect a public servant to appear clean and neat, with polished shoes and to be well groomed. Any patron expects good service; service with a smile, timely delivery of mail, and that their mail be placed in the mail receptacle as neatly as the accommodation allows.

Seeing the mailman come and leave is as close to being at the Post Office as many patrons get. When dealing with the public, leave a good impression with them so they will use the Post Office again and again. Always wear a clean and unwrinkled uniform, and most important of all, remember to smile.

By George Taylor

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April 2009

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
			1 Natl. Assoc. of Parliamentarians (NAP) 6:30 PM	2 E-Board 6:00 PM	3 Pay Day	4
5	6	7	8	9 Branch Meeting 6:00 PM	10	11
12 Easter Sunday	13	14	15 Steward Training 6:00 PM	16	17 . Pay Day	18
19	20	21	22	23 Labor / Management Meeting	24	25
26	27	28 RAP	29 RAP	30 RAP	http://branch111.com/index.htm	

THE PAVEMENT POUNDER POLICY AND NOTICES

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

National Association of Letter Carriers
2261 South Redwood Road, Suite 14
Salt Lake City, Utah 84119

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PRESIDENT

Mike Wahlquist

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MBA & OWCP

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Joan Larsen
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LEGISLATIVE

Denton Taylor

HEALTH BENEFITS

Jim Kerekes

**DIRECTOR OF RETIR-
EES**

Joe Zabriskie
(801) 968-4208

Branch Office
(801) 973-6705
Fax (801) 973-6723

**PAVEMENT POUNDER
EDITOR**

Jeff Asay
(801) 597-2380
jeffrey.asay@google.com

SAFETY & HEALTH

Arlynn Venema