



BRANCH 193

Bulletin

Campbell ♦ Gilroy ♦ Los Gatos ♦ Milpitas ♦ Morgan Hill ♦ San Jose ♦ Saratoga

Messages from the President

No. 1 - 13 August - September 2011

Laurie Duarte

VOLUNTARY EARLY RETIREMENT OPPORTUNITY

The Post Office is offering a voluntary early retirement (VER) for qualified employees. The qualifications are: Age 50 with 20 years of Service or Any Age with 25 years of Service. There are no incentives. Civil Service Retirement System (CSRS) annuity benefits will be reduced by 2% for each year (1/6 % per month) that you are under age 55 on date of retirement and the reduction is permanent. Federal Employees Retirement System (FERS) no reduced annuity benefits and Special Retirement Supplements are payable until age 62 when you reach the minimum retirement age (55-57 depending on when you were hired). All eligible carriers should have already received their VER offer letters showing annuity estimates. If you believe that you qualify and did not receive this package call Shared Services at 1-877-477-3273. The application deadline and irrevocable date is August 26, 2011. Effective date is either August 31, 2011 or September 30, 2011.

SAFETY

As said before now with FSS you are getting out of the office early in the morning and management is doing more and more street observations. It seems that there has been a rash of discipline issued due to safety infractions. You get paid to do the job professionally and safely, don't let management intimidate you into delivering the mail in an unsafe manner. When you are out there delivering the mail make sure that you are wearing your seatbelt and the door is shut when the vehicle is in motion, you have halt and your satchel, your not fingering mail when going up or down steps or crossing the street, you are parked legally, curbing your wheels, setting your handbrake, using your blinkers, check your clearance, and scan the area you are walking. Case in your dog warning cards and if you have a dog or any potential safety problem notify your supervisor and if they don't take care of it let your Shop Steward

know. Be a defensive driver and be proactive on your route to protect yourself from any injuries, your family depends on you.

INSURANCE SCAMS

Just because you receive mail from insurance companies doesn't mean that they are backed by the Union. Be careful who you give important identity information to. All RETIREE'S it has been reported that some Medicare-eligible retiree's have been approached concerning dropping out of the Federal Employees Health Benefit Program (FEHBP) and enrolling in Medicare Advantage. Be Careful. Once you drop out of FEHBP under this condition, you cannot get back in.

BRANCH OFFICER ELECTIONS

This is official notice to the membership of Branch 193, that nominations for the election of Branch Officers will be held at the regular monthly Branch meeting, October 12, 2011 @ 7:00 pm located at the Italian American Heritage Foundation Hall 425 N. 4th St. San Jose, CA 95112. The term of office is three (3) years, beginning with the installation of officers in January.

Nominations will be held for the following Branch offices: President, Vice President, 2nd Vice President, Recording Secretary, Financial Secretary, Treasurer, Sergeant at Arms, (5) Trustees, and Health Benefits/MBA Rep.

Nominations for delegate to the National Convention will also be held at the October 12, 2011 Branch meeting.

All candidates for office or delegates for the National Convention must be present at the Branch meeting when nominated or signify to the Recording Secretary in writing within three (3) days their intention to run for the position.

The election will be conducted by secret mail ballot, and such ballot shall be mailed to the member's address of Branch record in November.

The Branch 193 Bulletin is published by Branch 193, National Association of Letter Carriers, AFL-CIO. Opinions expressed in this publication are not necessarily those of Branch 193. We invite all members to contribute articles for publication. The Editor retains the right to edit, delete, or reject any article for the good of the Branch.

Branch 193 Bulletin

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Return Service Requested

Published by:
National Association of Letter Carriers
Branch 193
P.O. Box 5721
San Jose, CA 95150-5721

Non-Profit Organization
U.S. Postage
PAID
San Jose, CA
Permit No. 5593



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www.nalcbbranch193.com

Greetings!!...from Life on the Other Side

Submitted by:

Danny Laffan, Past President, Retiree

Many changes have occurred since I retired a year and a half ago. Several of these changes have had a major impact on our job as a City Letter Carrier. The National Reassessment Program followed directly by the Flat Sequencing System (FSS) implementation has led to the need to excess junior regular letter carriers to other crafts or installations. Scores of letter carriers from Branch 193 have been adversely impacted. Every letter carrier has been impacted by the new work methods and unilateral route adjustments made by management after FSS arrived. These issues are the latest in a series of challenges that President Laurie Duarte and the officers of Branch 193 will continue to face as the Postal Service adjusts its' business model. I am confident that with your support they will be able to address the issues and find successful strategies to lessen the negative impact recent changes have brought forward.

I believe that it is important to realize that adjusting to change is a constant in our lives. Whether it is work, financial or family issues things are constantly changing and we need to make adjustments. How we allow these changes to affect us is the key to being able to come to work with a good attitude and do our job in a professional manner. When we let the changes aggravate us or react with defiance to the challenges change brings, we are letting the changes control us. That behavior will only lead you to constant frustration. We must and will find ways to overcome the frustrations created by

changes that seems to make no sense. I am confident you will find ways to adjust to the new work methods. I have witnessed letter carriers find the way to make things work for over forty years now. My concern is the damage to the concept of taking pride in the work we do that some carriers are allowing to occur. Our Union has always promoted the concept of a fair days' work for a fair days' pay. Letter carriers have to understand that it is that simple. Don't worry about things you can not control or influence. Do the best you can with the situation as it exist and take pride in the work you do. Realize our job is to deliver the mail in a safe and efficient manner and go about your business doing just that. Come to work with a good attitude and make returning to your family safe and sound your objective for the day. Getting caught up in the frustration only prevents you from accomplishing that goal. Don't let that happen to you. You deserve better! Support each other and find the way to make things as comfortable as possible.

Start Planning for the Future Now

Thoughts of what it would be like to be retired entered my mind many times throughout my "working days". When asked I would respond I planned to do some fishing, play golf, travel and spend time with my family. Now that I have experienced the first year and a half of retirement I find myself comparing those thoughts to my life as it is right now. I am very thankful that my wife Lucy and I have been able to do those things and are enjoying our retirement. We are busy keeping up with

the exploits of our three grandsons. Whether it is baseball, soccer, or school activities, we keep the road to Sacramento and beyond pretty hot. Being able to do these things doesn't just happen. It took some long term planning. I would like to encourage you to start your plan as early as possible. I got some great advice about eight years into my career; a senior carrier, Jerry Cox (better known as quack-quack), talked to me as we cased the mail in the morning. He told me to learn to live on the money I was currently making and start an allotment to the credit union then as salary increases and colas occurred to increase the allotment accordingly. He told me I would be surprised by how much I would save that way. It was a good plan and worked well. I would like to offer you a revised version of the same concept. Deferring a portion of your salary into the Thrift Savings Plan (TSP) offered by our employer will help you significantly in planning for the future. The TSP also offers matching funds from the employer for a portion of your contribution. In essence, these matching funds are free money for you. I am amazed at how many of our members are not participating in the TSP. You are passing up free money and a great opportunity to be more comfortable in the future. Get involved with creating a brighter future by joining the TSP as soon as possible. Defer as much as you can and manage your investment but participate at least to the level you get all the free money available to you.

Thank you Jerry for the advice you gave me. I hope my paying it forward will help others. Take care and be safe out there!!

2011 NALC Fundraising Events for MDA

This fall the National Association of Letter Carriers (NALC) on behalf of the Muscular Dystrophy Association (MDA) will be conducting two fund raising events across the country as well as locally through San Jose Local 193. These events will raise funds that will provide needed special services (i.e., wheel chairs, medical treatment) and events, particularly, summer camp, for local children afflicted with one of many devastating muscular degenerating diseases.

The first of these events is "Fill the Satchel" scheduled for Sunday, October 2nd. Letter carriers, in uniform and armed with the mail satchels and in groups of three, will be manning shopping malls and other public places throughout the city, encouraging patrons to donate to the cause. This event reflects a similar successful fundraising effort by fire fighters recently. Friends and family members are invited to help. This is the first time this effort is being conducted nationwide. Let's make San Jose proud with our participation.

The second event will be our 3rd Annual Bowl-a-thon held at Cambrian Bowl on Sunday, November 6th, from 1:30 to 3:00. This event has been successful in the past and fun for everyone involved. Last year we were treated with free bowling towels, pizza, sodas, and a slew of wonderful door prizes for the bowlers. Each bowler is responsible for collecting a minimum of \$50. Last year with over 60 bowlers we netted about \$3000 in the one-day event. Letter carriers, family, friends, associates, patrons and anyone else are welcome. We have set a goal of 100 bowlers this year. Shop stewards, we especially need your help this year to bring fellow workers on board as donors or bowlers. You will have the best results in recruiting co-workers with direct one-on-one conversation before or after work.

We would like to add just a few words about summer camp. Week-long summer camps are held at rural locations, often in the Sierra Nevada, throughout California all summer. Summer camp is a special week for these children when they come together for a week of outdoor fun and know that they are not alone and that others care for them. Many of them say that it is the best week of their lives. Let us all support these funding raising efforts with our time – only a couple of hours – and donations. Whatever you can give helps so many young lives.

ATTENTION MEMBERS

If you are interested in taking an active role to protect your wages, benefits and letter carrier issues. Please fill out the form below.

I am an active retired Letter Carrier.

Yes, you can count on me to do my part.

First Name Middle Name Last Name

Address:

City State Zip

Home Phone Cell Phone

E-mail:

Sign up to make a difference! (Please check all that apply)

- I am interested in becoming an NALC Legislative E-Activist.
- I am interested in becoming an Activist/Volunteer for Branch 193.
- I am interested in contributing to the Committee On Letter Carrier Political Education (COLCPE)

Mail completed form to:

NALC Branch 193, c/o Ernie Arrañoaga,
1060 Minnesota Ave., Suite 9, San Jose, CA 95125 – 2461

An Important Message from Ernie Arrañaga

With all the uncertainty occurring throughout the country from coast to coast, with the attacks on unions, the middle class, hard working families and collective bargaining just to name a few, it is becoming clear to me that the focus in America is targeted against unions and hard working families. Just think about it for a moment. Remember what happened in Wisconsin or better yet what is currently happening here in the city of San Jose. There are some who would say that what is happening is nothing but a concerted effort to cripple and defund unions, just to hurt the re-election chances of President Obama. And if this is the case “GET READY: THEY’RE COMING for your jobs, benefits, paycheck and union.” I know you have been hearing that we are going to be in for a fight this upcoming 2012 Election (by the time this article gets to you we will probably be 15 months away) and if we do not begin now to plan and prepare for this, it will be on us the backs of the middle class and hard working families.

So how much are you willing to pay? Are you willing to give up your benefits, your job, your collective bargaining or your paycheck? This is a question that only you and you alone can answer; all I know is that I am not willing to. These questions that I just asked are the reasons for why I feel it is imperative that we all rise and stand together to protect what we have grown accustomed to. A steady paycheck, decent paying middle class jobs, benefits and collective bargaining. If you are thinking what it is that you can do to help?

I have a few suggestions:

1) Sign up and become an NALC Legislative E-Activist. Branch 193 is currently having a drive to sign members up.

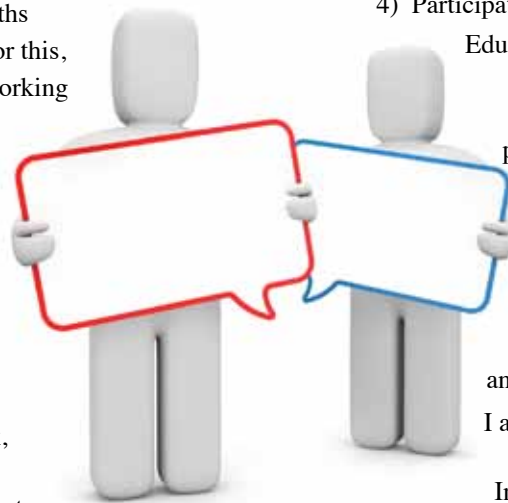
Please see your Shop Steward; they have the paperwork available to sign

you up. It is important that we are in a position to be able to act at a moment’s notice if The National Association Of Letter Carriers Headquarters should need to contact us.

2) Attend Union Meetings. This is an opportunity to share with you information that we may not be able to share in the station, meetings are held the second Wednesday of every Month at 425 N. 4th St. San Jose @ 7:00pm.

3) Sign up to become an Activist/Volunteer for Branch 193. To help support local unions and local issues.

4) Participate and Contribute to the Committee On Letter Carrier Political Education (COLCPE).



I highly recommend that you contribute at least \$5 dollars per paycheck through automatic payroll deduction. This is critical, it is going to be important that we help educate and elect Federal Politicians that will support Letter Carrier issues and have our best interest at heart.

I know that this may all sound a bit much, but I do not expect anyone to do anything that I would not be willing to do myself and I assure you, everything that I mentioned above I am doing.

In closing, I would like to share with you a quote from Ralph Waldo Emerson. “Nothing great was ever achieved without enthusiasm”. So please join me along with Branch 193, California State Association Of Letter Carriers and The National Association Of Letter Carriers in attacking this, with enthusiasm as if our survival depends upon it.

*Thank you and Keep a Smile. In Solidarity,
Ernie Arrañaga*

60 Day FSS Route Adjustment Review Update

The adjustment review team for the union and management have now started the joint process of reviewing the FSS adjustments for the 60 day review at Willow Glen Station. And it has become quite clear now more than ever that everything is data driven - due to that it is critical that we do everything correctly, for example - your clock rings must be inputted accurately to reflect your routes value, if you are pivoting or getting street assistance make sure that a PS Form 3996 is provided to you, fill it out completely and again input it into the time clock accurately!

Workhour/Workload Report

Management is now required to display this data on the workroom floor daily, take the time to review it daily to ensure that the data is accurate. If you notice any discrepancies, take notes of the day and time in question and bring it to the attention of your immediate supervisor so that it can be corrected, it would also be a good idea to share this with the Adjustment Review Team so that it can be verified that it was corrected.

Office Time

What we are interested in knowing is how much time do you spend in the office or what time do you leave the office on an average day.

Street Time

Due to the fluctuation of the volume of mail flow we are concentrating on your street time on an average day - an average day is when you are not carrying a 4th bundle (Red Plum, Penny Savers etc.). We are focusing on the remaining days of the week - Are you pivoting? - Are you working overtime? - Are you getting street as-

sistance? And if so, how much time are you doing this for. This is the information we need to know.

Your new Best Friends Clock rings - PS Form 3996 and Scans

If you are inputting your own clock rings accurately, filling out the 3996’s correctly and scanning everything that is expected of us, it will help us show how long the route actually is. If you are one who is skipping your break(s) and/or lunch the data will not reflect that time - therefore your route is less than it actually is and you will end up with an addition of up to 50 minutes, and even though your route may be overburden, the data will not justify a reduction.

This is the tentative Station order schedule for the 60 Day FSS Review

- | | |
|--------------------|-------------------|
| 1) Willow Glen | 2) Seven Trees |
| 3) Berryessa | 4) Cambrian Park |
| 5) Hillview | 6) Almaden Valley |
| 7) Cortese Station | 8) Blossom Hill |
| 9) Foothill | |

Thank you and Keep a Smile.
Ernie Arrañaga & Laurel Halfacre
60 Day FSS Route Adjustment Team



OFFICERS

Laurie Duarte *President*
 Stanley Halfacre *Vice President*
 Bill Cunningham *Second Vice President*
 Pat Mulligan *Recording Secretary*
 Sharon Epp *Financial Secretary*
 Laurel Halfacre *Treasurer*
 Guillermo Martinez *Sgt at Arms*
 Bob Krauth *HBP/MBA Rep*
 Vince Ramirez *Trustee*
 Jim Miller *Trustee*
 Joe Rosa *Trustee*
 Kelvin Kamachi *Trustee*
 Lin Zhou *Trustee*
 Guillermo Martinez/Ernie Arra~aga *Legislative Liaison*

Branch 193 Shop Stewards

Almaden Valley Pam West
Bayside Ernie Arra~aga & Bob Foster
Berryessa Henry Semillano & Collie Turner
Blossom Hill Steve Miller & Tom Cerna
Cambrian Park Ray Gauthier & David Martinez
Campbell Rosie La'auli
Cortese Tommy Rivera & JoAnn Francisco
Foothill Art Parrilla & Al Lopez
Gilroy Debra Masten
Hillview Manny Aguilar & Victor Barrientos
Los Gatos Kevin Janton
Los Gatos Dell Ian Davies
Milpitas Joel Baclig
Morgan Hill Angel Montelongo
Robertsville Theresa Hernandez & Mike Cisneros
St. James Park Chris North & Maria Marquez
Saratoga Robert Vanderpool
Seven Trees Jason Davalos & Ronnie Hodges
Willow Glen Jack Dusthimer,
 Sean McArthur & Craig Wiles

Important Dates

Aug. 20 Retirement Dinner
 Aug. 31 Executive Board Meeting
 Sept. 5 Labor Day Holiday
 Sept. 11 Branch Picnic – Saratoga Springs
 Sept. 14 Regular Branch Meeting
 Sept. 28 Executive Board Meeting
 Oct. 10 Columbus Day Holiday
 Oct. 12 Regular Branch Meeting –
 Officer/Delegate Elections
 Oct. 26 Executive Board Meeting
 Nov. 9 Regular Branch Meeting
 Nov. 11 Veterans' Day Holiday
 Nov. 24 Thanksgiving Day Holiday
 Nov. 30 Executive Board Meeting

Branch Meetings begin promptly at 7:00 PM:

Italian American Heritage Foundation
 425 North 4th Street San Jose, CA 95112

Board Meetings begin promptly at 7:00 PM:
Union Office

1060 Minnesota Avenue, Suite 9, San Jose, CA 95125

CONGRATULATIONS TO OUR NEW RETIREES

Frederick Beckman Saratoga	James Othoudt Foothill
Juanito Canlas Berryessa	Andy Pengosro Morgan Hill
Dennis Davis Cambrian Park	Jeanie Rosette Bayside-Collector
Clement Dixon Robertsville	Joseph Schembri Cambrian Park
Vittorio Forde Foothill	Gail Swartz Blossom Hill
Rajinder Hundal Foothill	Albert Young Willow Glen
Nghi Nguyen Berryessa	

RETIREMENT DINNER

The Retirement Dinner will be on Saturday, August 20, 2011 at The Italian-American Heritage Hall 425 N. 4th St. San Jose, CA 95112. Cocktail Hour begins at 6:00pm with Dinner at 7:00pm and Dancing to till 10:30pm. Great food, drinks, and dancing for only \$5.00. Retiree's are free just notify the Union office. Bring your spouse or friend and have a full evening out for a small price. See your shop steward for tickets.

BRANCH PICNIC

As voted at the June branch meeting, Branch 193 members and family annual picnic will be held at Saratoga Springs on Sunday, September 11, 2011 from 10am-4pm. The menu will be Chicken Milano, Santa Maria Steak, Saratoga Super Dogs, Chili, Garden Salad, Potato Salad, Pasta Salad, Cole Slaw, Fresh Fruit Salad, Garlic Bread, Dessert, Beer, Wine, and Soft Drinks. Vegetarian Garden Burger also available on request. Fun activities such as swimming, horseshoes, volleyball, bocce ball, and hosted games. There will also be a

Dunk Tank fundraiser, we are looking for volunteers to take a seat in the dunk tank and take the risk of being dunked all for a great cause. Prices are \$24.00 for adults 12 and up, 16.00 for children ages 4-11, toddlers' ages 1-3 are free but please let your Shop Steward know so that we can notify Saratoga Springs with a good head count. Tickets are on sale now through October 31, 2011 so see you Shop Steward for tickets, additional information or to volunteer for the dunk tank.

Moving

Let us Know of any changes in your mailing address!

Name _____

Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

Telephone number _____

Mail changes to: NALC Branch 193, P. O. Box 5721, San Jose, CA 95150-5721

Deadline

The Deadline for the **October/November 2011** issue of the Branch 193 Bulletin is **Friday, September 23, 2011**. News stories, articles, letters to the editor, drawings, cartoons, business cards, and/or photographs should be submitted to:

**Editor • Branch 193 Bulletin •
 P.O. Box 5721 • San Jose, CA 95150**

JACKPOT

Jean Voit from Saratoga Station was not at the June Branch Meeting and **Thomas Gnauden** from St. James Park was not at the July Branch Meeting to collect the \$\$\$\$\$ when their names were called for the jackpot. Come to your branch meeting for information and the possibility of winning the current jackpot of \$491.00.