

MAIL CALL

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ANTHONY TRIPOLINO BRANCH 2200, N.A.L.C.

SERVING

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Pros and Cons of Joining a Labor Union

By Larry Keller Published April 2012 Fox Business

Thanks to labor unions, wages have improved, the workweek is shorter and the workplace is safer. However, employers sometimes complain that unions are harmful to business and to the economy. From an employee standpoint, is being a union member beneficial? Here are some pros and cons of union jobs.

The Pros of Belonging to a Union

Better wages. The median weekly income of full-time wage and salary workers who were union members in 2010 was \$917, according to the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics. For nonunion workers, it was \$717.

More access to benefits. Some 93% of unionized workers were entitled to medical benefits compared to 69% of their nonunion peers, according to the National Compensation Survey published last year by the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics. The survey represented about 101 million private industry workers and 19 million state and local government employees.

Unmarried domestic partners -- same sex and opposite sex -- also had access more often to these benefits if they were unionized. Workers with union representation also had 89% of their health insurance premiums paid by their employer for single coverage and 82% for family coverage. For nonunion workers, the comparable numbers were 79% and 66%, according to the Bureau of Labor Statistics. And 93% of unionized workers have access to retirement benefits through employers compared to 64% of their nonunion counterparts.

Job security. Nonunion employees are typically hired "at will," meaning they can be fired for no reason. There are exceptions. Employers can't terminate a worker for discriminatory reasons such as race, religion, age and the like. Nor can they fire an at-will employee for being a whistleblower and certain other reasons. However, workers with union jobs can only be terminated for "just cause," and the misconduct must be serious enough to merit such action. Before an employee can actually be fired, he or she can go through a grievance procedure, and if necessary, arbitration.

"If I know I can't be easily fired, I can speak up more freely," says Monica Bielski Boris, assistant professor of labor and employment relations at the University of Illinois.

Strength in numbers. Unionized workers have more power as a cohesive group than by acting individually. "What you gain is the muscle of collective action," says Hoyt Wheeler, a professor emeritus at the University of South Carolina who is now a labor arbitrator. Through collective bargaining, workers negotiate wages, health and safety issues, benefits, and working conditions with management via their union.

Seniority. Rules differ among collective bargaining agreements, but in the event of layoffs, employers usually are required to dismiss the most recent hires first and those with the most seniority last -- sometimes called "last hired, first fired."

In some cases, a worker with a union job who has more seniority may receive preference for an open job. Seniority also can be a factor in determining who gets a promotion. The idea is that seniority eliminates favoritism in the workplace "The chief advantage of seniority is it is objective," Wheeler says.

See Cons – Page Two

Cons – The Drawbacks of a Union Work Life

Union dues and initiation fees. Dues can range from \$200 to several hundred dollars per year, partially offsetting higher wages. Some unions also require a one-time initiation fee. Dues help the union pay for officials' salaries and conducting union business, but members sometimes complain about the amount they pay, how the money is spent, and how it is allocated between the national and local union.

Loss of autonomy. The flip side of job security is that union members sacrifice individuality by belonging to a group. You may disagree with the union's decisions, but you are bound by them.

"It's a trade-off," Bielski Boris says.

Less collaborative work environment. Unionized workers experience less of a sense of partnership and trust with their supervisors, according to a survey conducted by the Gallup and Healthways organizations last year.

More than 149,500 interviews of workers were conducted. Regardless of whether they worked in local, state or federal government or outside of government, unionized employees more often said their supervisor treated them like he or she was their boss and not a partner than did their nonunion counterparts. Among nongovernment employees, for example, the margin was 48% to 36%.

Similarly, nonunion employees across the board said their supervisor created an environment that is trusting and open more often than those who were unionized. Among nongovernment workers, the margin was 80% to 71%. Despite this, there aren't large differences in job satisfaction between the two groups, according to Gallup and Healthways.

Employers' relationships with unions have become more acrimonious since the 1970s, Bielski Boris says. And nowadays, some governors of revenue-starved states are blaming public sector unions for their woes and aggressively attempting to reduce benefits and curtail collective bargaining rights. (Public sector unions account for more than half of all union members in the United States.) "The political climate can often turn against unions and their members," Bielski Boris says. The political attacks, combined with declining membership rolls, could weaken gains made by unionized employees.

Seniority. The advantages that seniority provides can be a detriment to newer employees. You may be more productive or talented than a veteran worker, yet you're the one who likely will be laid off in a downsizing.

A union's collective bargaining agreement also may require employers to provide other perks based on seniority rather than merit to the detriment of junior workers with union jobs. Some agreements enable a worker displaced from a job to "bump" another worker with less seniority and take his or her job.

Wheeler, **the labor arbitrator****, understands the pros and cons of being a union member better than most.

"On balance, I think workers are better off with a union than without one, by far," he says.

****Independent and impartial third party, settling disputes between labor and management**

The above article was not edited in any way (other than definition of a "labor arbitrator") and was published April 10, 2012 by Fox Business, hardly a labor-biased organization.

There are a few non-members in most of our stations. It is our goal to have 100% membership – perhaps this article may help you to convince a non-member to join.

Please talk it up with your co-workers!!

The Desk of the President will return next issue.

The Funnies

Albert Einstein dies and goes to heaven. "I'm terribly sorry," says St. Peter, "but your suite is not quite ready yet and you'll have to spend a week in temporary quarters."

Arriving at the dorm, Albert finds he'll be living with three other men.

"Hi," say the first man. "We're well matched, as I have an IQ of 180."

"Great," says Al. "We can discuss quantum physics."

The second man says hello and mentions that he has an IQ of 159.

"Well, we can discuss the latest mathematical theories," says Einstein.

The third introduces himself and says, "I'm honored to meet you, sir, but my IQ is only 85."

"No problem," says Einstein. "So, tell me, what's it like to be a supervisor?"

—From *Workplace Jokes: Only SOME of Them Will Get You Fired!*

GENERAL MEMBERSHIP MEETING

July 8, 2014

The meeting was called to order at 7:10 p.m. by President Mike Wyly. The pledge of allegiance was led by Sergeant-at-Arms Ric Roldan and there was a moment of silence for departed brothers and sisters since the last meeting. The roll call was answered by twelve officers in good standing.

Motion passed to waive the reading of the minutes from the previous meeting, accepted as printed in the Mail Call (Zorn/Siechert). Motion passed to excuse Vic Temblador from June meeting, and Rob Burskey and Larrie Rhodes from the July meeting (Costanzo/Trieu). Motion passed that warrants be drawn and bills be paid (Siechert/Costanzo).

President Wyly updated on National reporting of Food Drive. MDA Coordinator Carolyn Zorn reported on upcoming MDA Camp. Motion passed that the Branch donate \$100 for MDA prizes at camp (Zorn/Temblador).

Carolyn Zorn and Jan Siechert spoke regarding legislative issues and COLCPE. Less than 5% of our Branch members are contributing to COLCPE – names may be published in Mail Call. Discussion followed on legislative bills, maintaining six-day delivery, and the City of Pasadena's position on the crucial issues.

President Wyly led the discussion on a variety of topics, including the following: Probation Department rental at Pasadena GMF, CCA's full complement and working seven days a week including most holidays, route checks resulting in added routes in some stations, rotating employee parking in Glendale, COLA raise in September, and supervisors casing mail.

Motion passed to adjourn at 7:52 p.m. (Siechert/Temblador).

Nancy Norman
Secretary-Treasurer

GENERAL MEMBERSHIP MEETING

August 12, 2014

The meeting was called to order at 7:02 p.m. by President Mike Wyly. The pledge of allegiance was led by Sergeant-at-Arms Ric Roldan and there was a moment of silence for departed brothers and sisters since the last meeting. The roll call was answered by twelve officers in good standing.

Motion passed to waive the reading of the minutes from the previous meeting, to be printed in the Mail Call (Zorn/Smith). Motion passed to accept the application for membership from Benjamin Padilla (Burskey/Trieu). Welcome!!

President Wyly reported on H Res 711 which insures continuing door to door delivery to customers. He made contact with Congressional Representative Judy Chu to sign on to the bill. MDA Collection and Snack Jar took in a total of \$367 – \$117 in Cash, Dr. Vo, an Arcadia dentist donated \$200 and Alan Yang donated \$50 to MDA. President Wyly is selling raffle tickets to support "The Boys from California" in the upcoming national election of officers.

President Wyly reported on President Rolando's speech at the National Convention covering topics of the economy and Congress, COLCPE and a name change, safety and park points, delivering mail after dark, and reaching out to City Carrier Assistants. The Leadership Conference at the Pasadena Hilton on October 19th was announced and participation encouraged.

The Branch Retirement Dinner will be held on October 26th. Motion passed to accept the Executive Board recommendation that the branch host the annual retirement banquet @ Beckham's Grill to include complimentary dinner for retirees and a guest. Active carriers will deposit \$20 to reserve a space and deposit will be refunded upon attendance at the banquet (Smith/Zorn).

Motion passed to adjourn the meeting at 8:01 p.m. (Siechert/Trieu).

Submitted by,

Nancy Norman
Secretary-Treasurer

**Meeting Attendance
July/August 2014**

Officers:

President Mike Wyly - P/P
Vice President Serop Karchikyan - P/P
Secy-Treas Nancy Norman - P/P
Financial Secy Frank Costanzo - P/P
Sergeant at Arms Ric Roldan - P/P
Health Benefits Rep Walter Washington - P/P
Trustee Donald Smith - P/P
Trustee Carolyn Zorn - P/P
Trustee Leroy Collier - P/P
MBA Representative Vinh Trieu - P/P

Stewards:

Verdugo Viejo - Serop Karchikyan - P/P
La Crescenta: Ric Roldan - P/P
Raymond Annex 01: Kevin Nguyen - A/A
Raymond Annex 06: H.T. Tran - P/A
Jackie Robinson 03/04: Carolyn Zorn - P/P
Tujunga: Rob Burskey - E/P
South Pasadena: Vinh Trieu - P/P
La Canada/Montrose: Tina Giancanelli - P/A
Area Shop Steward Leroy Collier - P/P

MEMBERSHIP MEETINGS

Tuesday, September 9th

7:00 p.m.

and

Tuesday, October 14th

7:00 p.m.

Union Office

1310 N Oxford Ave

in Pasadena



OFFICE HOURS

OPEN Most days about 9 or 10
Occasionally as early as 7, But **SOMEDAYS**
as late as 12 or 1.

WE CLOSE about 5:30 or 6
Occasionally about 4 or 5. But
Sometimes as late as 11 or 12.

SOMEDAYS or afternoons, we
aren't here at all and Lately
I've been here just about all the time,
Except when I'm someplace else.

The above are office hours for President Wyly. He is often out filing grievances on your behalf. Just know that when you call the union office, messages are retrieved several times a day. When there is a break in schedule, you will receive a return phone call. Area Steward Collier works Tuesdays and Wednesdays – same hours, as he is out in the field as well.

**NALC BRANCH 2200
1310 N Oxford Ave
Pasadena CA 91104**



Mike Wyly
President
Serop Karchikyan
Vice-President
Nancy Norman
Secretary-Treasurer

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Frank Costanzo
Financial Secretary
Ric Roldan
Sgt at Arms
Trustees:
Leroy Collier-Chr.
Donald Smith
Carolyn Zorn

September 2014

Dear Brothers and Sisters,

Congressman Darrell Issa's Postal Reform Bill HR 2748 calls for numerous service cuts. This will have a direct impact on our customers. The closing and/or consolidating of postal facilities could delay mail and parcel delivery immediately. This type of action in a still struggling economy will eliminate letter carrier jobs, one out of four of which are held by Military Veterans.

Contrary to Mr. Issa's beliefs, the Postal Service is expanding and growing, despite coming out of the worst recession in history. The Postal Service, which is solely funded by postage rates, is the most efficient and cost-effective delivery network in the world. The Postal Service has seen explosive profits, close to \$700 million this past quarter. This type of radical, short-sighted legislation would only cripple this growth, along with future growth opportunities. Congressman Issa should attempt to examine these opportunities, rather than push forward the implementation of such service hindering policies.

NALC Branch 2200 would like to urge each of our members to protect our future by becoming an E-Activist and a COLCPE contributor. By providing the NALC with your e-mail address, we can keep you informed of current legislation moving through Congress and also alert all members when there is a need to call your congressional representative. We give you the contact information and talking points, so it is easy to do.

COLCPE is the political action fund of the NALC. COLCPE is non-partisan, support is not based on any political affiliation. Funds are used to support congressional candidates who support the letter carriers' agenda. By donating as little as \$5 per pay period, you can help fight harmful legislation and protect the future of letter carriers.

Please complete the pledge certificate (reverse side) and return to the union office or give to your shop steward. Thank you for your continued support and commitment to being a strong voice for letter carriers' and workers' rights!

In Solidarity,

NALC Branch 2200
COLCPE Committee



COLCPE PLEDGE CERTIFICATE

Return to: NALC Branch 2200
1310 N Oxford Ave
Pasadena CA 91104

Name _____

Post Office _____ Route _____
City/Station

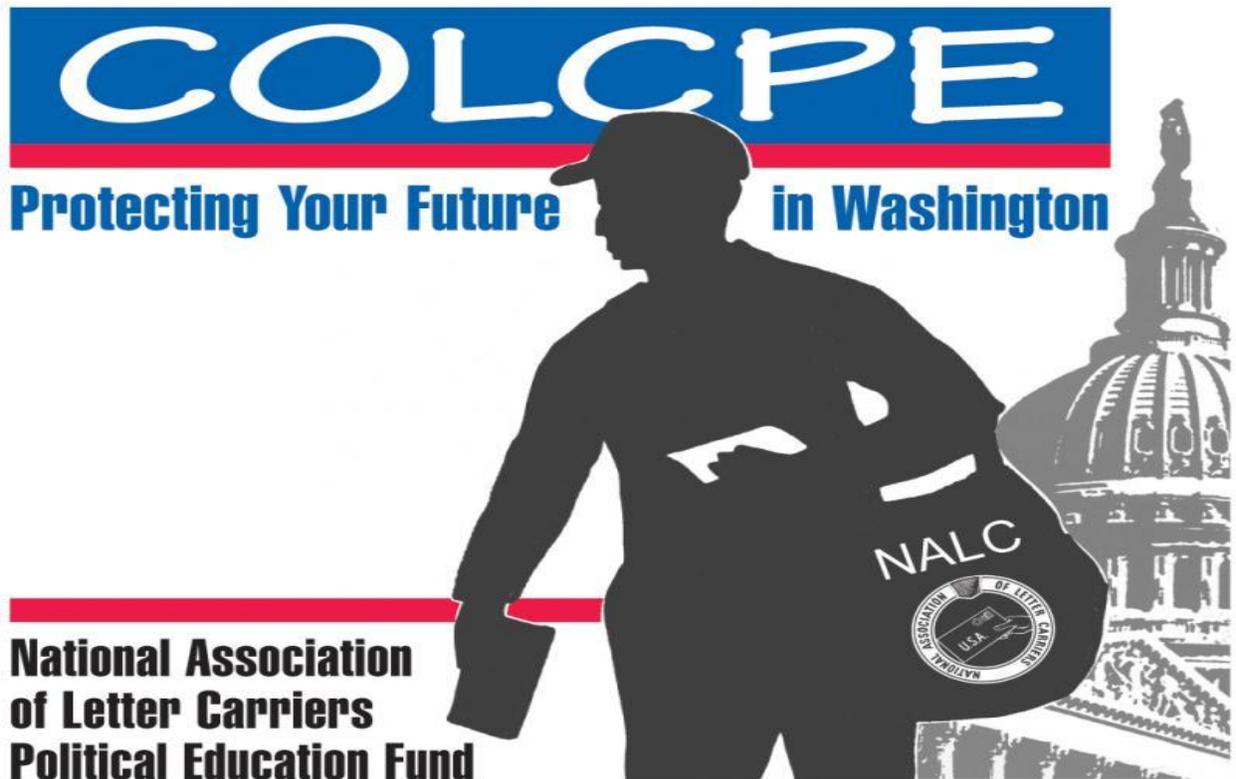
Address _____
Street, City, State, Zip

Email _____ Phone _____

I hereby pledge to have _____ dollars per pay period deducted from my check, to be contributed to COLCPE.

Signature _____

Employee ID# _____ Postal EASE Pin # _____



**National Association
of Letter Carriers
Political Education Fund**