

National Association of Letter Carriers

Branch 782

E.A. Baker Union Update



ARVIN
DELANO
MOJAVE

AVENAL
EDWARDS AFB
RIDGECREST

BAKERSFIELD
LAMONT
SHAFTER

BORON
McFARLAND
TAFT

TEHACHAPI

TRONA

WASCO



VOLUME LXXXI NUMBER 5

MAY 2009

at the

Mike:



On May 1, 2009, Branch 782 member Paul Shaw retired from the Postal Service after 49 years, 10 months. Had it not been for some health issues, I think he would still be working.

Many of our members in Bakersfield kept bringing me copies of a column written by Mr. Herb Benham. He highlighted Paul and his career. He graciously gave us permission to reprint what he wrote in our newsletter. Thank you Mr. Benham!

Continued on page 4...

Mail carrier signs, seals and delivers 50 years of service

Paul Shaw's been bitten 10 times. Ten times in almost 50 years. That seems like a lot, even for a letter carrier.

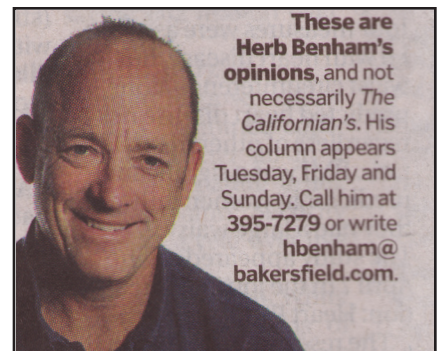
If you're a civilian, one bite may be too many, but for the old guard like Shaw retiring in May after almost 50 years with the post office, 10 could have been 20 and still the mail would have been delivered—usually on the same day—and probably without a subsequent lawsuit against the dog's owners.

Fifty years. Who does that anymore? Fifty years with one com-

pany while most of are just trying to make it through the work week until they change the name on our building.

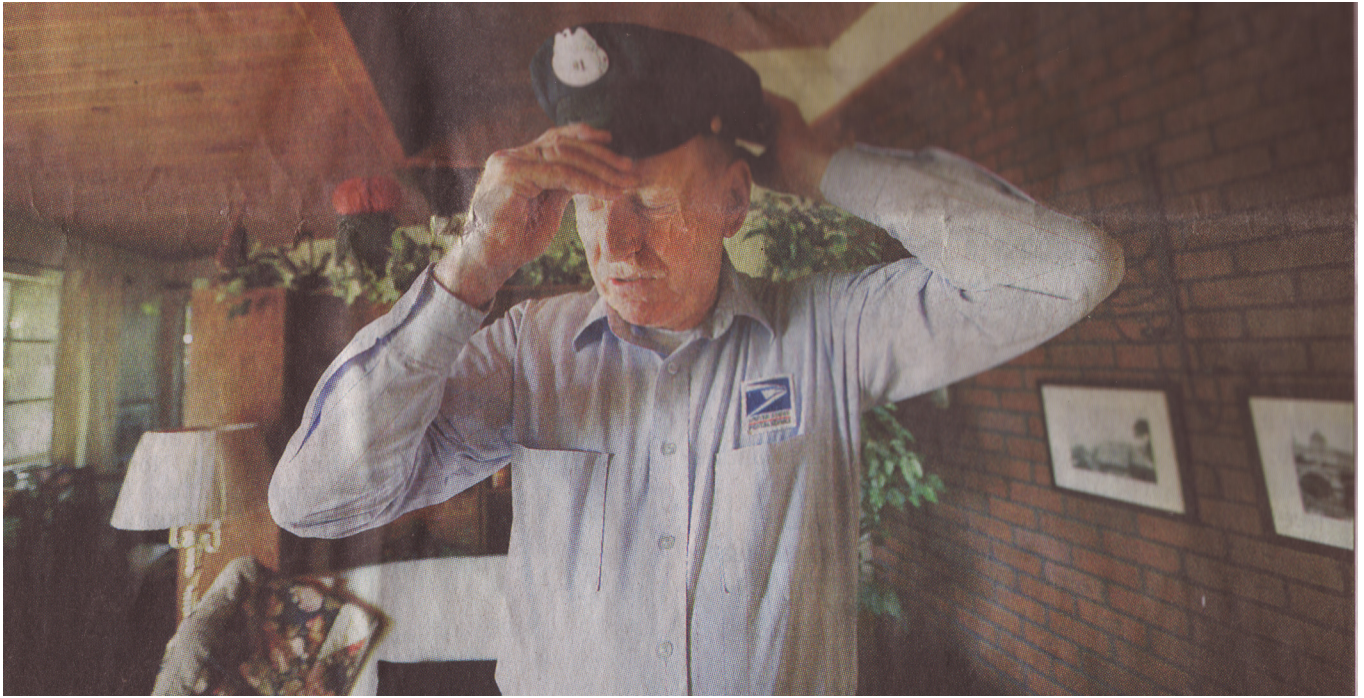
The job requires spect. What's more basic than bringing the mail? Mail delivery constitutes one of life most reliable routines.

In the days of yore, the arrival of the mail was something to look forward to. An event for which to dress up. For Shaw's older patrons, mail was a special occasion.



These are Herb Benham's opinions, and not necessarily The Californian's. His column appears Tuesday, Friday and Sunday. Call him at 395-7279 or write hbenham@bakersfield.com.

Continued on next page...



CASEY CHRISTIE/The Californian

Retiring post officer letter carrier Paul Shaw tries on one of his first hats he wore close to 50 years ago while delivering mail in Oildale. He said this particular had was a little hot in the summertime because it lacked holes for ventilation.

“I’d see them peeking out from behind their curtains,” Shaw said. “They’d greet me at the door and, on hot days put out a glass and a pitcher of lemonade.”

On the days that the PG&E bill arrived, some of Shaw’s patrons would take the bill and by the time he had turned around and was delivering on the other side of the street, they’d have the envelope with a check in it, ready for Shaw to take with him.

“It must have been going through the Depression or hard times and having their power rutned off, Shaw said. “They were afraid that that might happen again.”

Shaw, now 68, was built to be a letter carrier. He’s 6 feet 2 inches tall, 205 pounds, strong, agile with big hands and large feet. When he started on June 27, 1959, he wore a size 12D. Now, Shaw is a 13 triple wide. If you had walked as much as he had—30,000 miles—your feet would have spread out, too.

Many of those miles were in Oildale. Don’t expect him to say anything bad about 93308. He won’t. He delivered mail in Oildale before there were drugs,

tattoos and a shortage of shoes.

“Early on, I fell in love with the people in Oildale,” Shaw said.

One of his favorite customers was a 94-year old woman on the 700 block of Decatur who had come to Kern County in a covered wagon. Another woman traveled on the orphan train. In Oildale, Shaw found good people who worked hard, complained little, and appreciated getting their mail.

The people made things interesting, the dogs, exciting.

“I remember a letter carrier named Harry Kidwell,” said Shaw. “This pit bull had knocked him down and was chewing on him. An older lady with a broom helped him fight off the dog. He went back to the station, took some first aid and then finished his route.”

“Fighting a pit bull was nothing com-

paed to what I went through in World War II,” Kidwell told him.

“The worst kind of dogs are not pit bulls,” Shaw said. “Watch out for Queensland Heelers. They are quiet and sneaky.”

The onlyh thing tougher than the dogs were the letter carriers. Dale Barker carried a tree limb under his seat for overeager cliets and enthusiastic dogs.

Another mailman, a veteran of the

Bataan Death March, ran the heater in his car when it was 108 outside so the engine wouldn't overheat.

Shaw liked being a letter carrier for simple reasons: being in the sunshine, meeting people and checking up on the oldsters.

"There was something that always seemed odd to me," Shaw said. "You'd have couples where one person was infirm or in a wheelchair and the other was in good health. The one in good health would have a heart attack or a stroke and the one in the wheelchair would live another 15 years."

There is a moral to that story, but this probably isn't the time to go into it.

CASEY CHRISTIE/The Californian

Before Shaw was diagnosed with prostate cancer almost a year ago, he rarely missed a day. He won the Million Mile Safety Award, having never been in an auto accident during his tenure.

Shaw has recovered from prostate cancer, but it's time to put away his sunblock and spend more time with Geraldine, his wife of 38 years.

But Shaw will still be in the delivery business. He's the head usher at Canyon Hills Assembly of God. Once he delivered mail, now it's people.

This was originally a front page article in the Tuesday, April 21, 2009 *Bakersfield Californian*. Thank you Mr. Benham and Mr. Christie!!!



Paul Shaw...I'm still here!!

In August of 1986, I was hired by the Postal Service. Two weeks of in-class training were followed by three days of street training which were to start the following Monday. I wasn't able to start that Monday due to my wife being in labor. The supervisor allowed me that day off.

On Tuesday, I was teamed with Paul Shaw. We started out with the loading the vehicle. In Oildale, at that time, we had Chevettes. *Those* were fun! When we arrived at the route, Paul would load his satchel and walk that first street as I watched him. The next street was mine.

Eventually, Paul would say, "I'll watch you from the car." When I got back to the car, he was eating his breakfast. That

happened every day of those three days with my on-the-job (OJI) instructor, Paul Shaw.

He must have trained me well because I'm still here! (Ha-Ha!)

I learned a lot from him and consider him my friend. Funny thing...when I was hired, Paul was an OJI. And now, when he's retiring, I'm an OJI.

Thank you Paul! Enjoy your retirement!

DANNY BLAIR
Branch 782 Trustee

“at the Mike”

Continued from page 1...

Paul Shaw started with the Postal Service in 1959 and worked at the Oildale Station for at least 35 years. On his last day Paul and his wife Geri had breakfast catered from Hodel’s for the Oildale city carriers and clerks. Paul was then presented with the “Two Million Mile” award for over 45 years of safe driving.

Paul was always the professional Letter Carrier and was always willing to help new Carriers learn their job. In fact, he was one of the first to help me when I started back in 1973.

I will miss working with Paul and the Oildale Station will not be the same without him. It’s truly an end of an era. I wish Paul has a long and happy retirement.

The last several months have been a very busy time. Several of us were fortunate to attend the National Rap Session at the end of April. There were two events which I feel were the highlight of the training.

The first was the training on the new Modified Interim Route Adjustment Process that the NALC and Postal Service have agreed to on April 7, 2009. By this time everyone should have heard about the details. Even though there are concerns about using the DOIS information to establish office time for a route, it is important to understand that the agreement in itself is historic. It is probably the first time ever that the Postal Service has attempted to evaluate and adjust every route in the nation during a six month period with the union being involved in every aspect of the process.

The second highlight was when President Young spoke to the 1600 attendees. During the meeting a video was shown of President Young’s dynamic testimony before Congress concerning the future of six-day delivery. President Young stated that the National Officers were not content on just sitting

back and that the Letter Carrier union would be out in the lead to insure that the Postal Service remains a viable company long into the future. I am confident we can meet all the challenges ahead with the outstanding leadership of the National Officers.

On May 9th, Branch 782 was one of the 1400 branches which participated in the 17th Annual Letter Carriers Food Drive and it looks as though we will surpass the record amount of food collected last year in spite of the difficult economic times.



(l-r) Branch 782 President Mike Towery, NALC National Business Agent “Manny” Peralta, and Bakersfield Postmaster Jim Brouillard speaking with Channel 29 personality Miles Muzio before going on camera..

Locally, we were fortunate to have the enthusiastic support of Bakersfield’s Postmaster, Jim Brouillard, who—through his contacts— managed to secure, for the second year, the support of Channel 29 television station.

I was also delighted and honored to have NALC National Business Agent Manny Peralta in town to help with the food drive. Both Manny and Postmaster Brouillard participated in the kickoff news conference on Thursday during the live news report at five o’clock in the morning from the Food Bank and helped to unload the food at the GMF on Saturday. They also visited all the Carriers who were in front of the grocery stores after work on Thursday.

I also want to thank Branch Food Drive Coordinator Teresa Garcia and all of the station Food



Teresa Garcia, the “Face of the Food Drive” being interviewed

did an outstanding job as the Branch Coordinator and was a “natural television star” when she was interviewed by Channel 29 news.

I wanted to thank Carmen Castillo for all her behind the scenes work in organizing and making the food drive a success. And thanks also go to Georgette Breedveld for all her help and for doing the barbecuing on Saturday at the GMF. This is just one example of what can be accomplished when everyone manages to work together toward a common goal.

Drive Coordinators for all their time and hard work. Teresa, also known as the “Face of the Food Drive”,

to work together toward a common goal.



Mike Towery—are you ready for this— “At the mike”...



Satchel full, South Station’s Bonita Lewis smiles!



Cindy Flores started out slow and finished strong!



Okay, Rosie and Mabel...who are the rest of these folks?

Continued on next page...

On a more personal note, I want to thank all those who called; sent cards and flowers; visited the hospital; provided food and gave their support when my wife was in a near fatal automobile accident on March 8th. She spent 27 days in the hospital, most of the time in intensive care. She then had to have surgery and speny another nine days later on due to complications.

I can tell you though, my wife Diana is feeling a lot better because she keeps asking me, "When we are going to get another car?"



I will always remember and am very thankful for all the kindness shown.

It was as if I have three families, my biological family, my Postal family and then my Union family.

Thank all of you! I feel very fortunate and blessed to have so many caring friends and families.

MIKE TOWERY
Branch 782 President
and a grateful husband and father

“
*...my wife
was in
a near
fatal
automobile
accident...*



Proposed By-Laws Changes

The following proposed By-Laws changes are published to inform the membership that these issues will be discussed and voted on at the General Meeting on May 26, 2009. Changes to existing language appear as bold italicized print.

ARTICLE V

ELECTIONS

Existing Language

SECTION 1. The provisions of this Article shall govern the election of all delegates to the National and State Association Conventions and the election of Branch Officers. The elected officers of the Branch shall be: President; Vice President; Recording Secretary; Treasurer; Financial Secretary; Sergeant-at-Arms; Health Benefits and MBA Representative; Three Trustees. By virtue of the position, Branch 782 President shall be a delegate to both the National and State Conventions

Proposed Language

SECTION 1. The provisions of this Article shall govern the election of all delegates to the National and State Association Conventions and the election of Branch Officers. The elected officers of the Branch shall be: President; Vice President; Recording Secretary; Treasurer; Financial Secretary; Sergeant-at-Arms; Health Benefits and MBA Representative; Three Trustees. By virtue of their positions, Branch 782 President *and Vice President* shall be delegates to both the National and State Conventions

Existing Language

SECTION 8. The term of office for all elected officers of this Branch shall be two (2) years or until their successors are duly elected and installed

Proposed Language

SECTION 8. The term of office for all elected officers of this Branch shall be *three (3)* years or until their successors are duly elected and installed.

ARTICLE III

MEETINGS

Existing Language

SECTION 1. The regular meeting of this Branch shall be held on the fourth Tuesday of each month, excluding December, at 7:30 P.M. at the Branch 782 Union Office, 2628 "F" Street, Bakersfield, California. The December meeting will be held on the third Tuesday of the month.

Proposed Language

SECTION 1. The regular meeting of this Branch shall be held on the fourth Tuesday of each month, excluding December, at *7:00* P.M. at the Branch 782 Union Office, 2628 "F" Street, Bakersfield, California. The December meeting will be held on the third Tuesday of the month.

Minutes of the April 2009 General Meeting

The regular meeting of Branch 782 was called to order by President, Mike Towery at 7:35 p.m. on the 28th day of April, 2009, at the branch office, Bakersfield. The flag salute was led by Sgt. at Arms, Jerry Patterson. All member of the Executive Board were present except Chief Trustee Lucinda Martinez. The stewards were present from Brundage, Camino Media, Delano, Downtown, East Bakersfield, Hillcrest, Lamont, Oildale, Shafter, South, Stockdale and Wasco. Also present was the Newsletter Editor, Basil Zuniga, Frank Martinez and Emma Gonzales of the Social and Recreation Committee and Asst. Secretary Shari Sharpe. The minutes of the March 24, 2009 meeting were accepted with no additions or corrections.

APPLICATION FOR MEMBERSHIP: An application was received from Michelle Henry.

REPORTS OF STANDING AND SPECIAL COMMITTEES: When asked for a report on the picnic, Teresa Ortega responded "It's only April---I have 5 months." Basil Zuniga discussed articles from the newsletter regarding COR and NRP. Folding and stapling went well next month the AO's are invited to have a turn, East Bakersfield will also help. Frank Martinez reported that there has not been a meeting of the Social and Recreation Committee. Teresa Garcia reported on the Food Drive. Channel 29 Eyewitness News is "on board"; there will be a kick off news conference on May 7 at 10:00 a.m. Carriers will be outside local grocery stores to collect food on May 7, 5:30 to 7:30 p.m. The T-shirts will be available on Friday, May 1st, contact Andrew. Patty Arimendez has contacted the schools and will be sending the Food Drive cards home with the students in their backpacks. Teresa asked that members take photos at their station; she will not be able to make it to all the stations on the day of the Food Drive. Mike Towery commented that Teresa Garcia is doing a great job; it is not as easy as she makes it look. He also reported that there will be live coverage at the Food Bank from 5:00 – 8:00 a.m., and reminded everyone that there will be a BBQ at the GMF from 3:30 – 6:00 p.m. Molly Biggar made a motion that the branches donate \$300. To help pay for the BBQ. Jerry Patterson seconded the motion. The motion will be voted on at the May General Meeting. Teresa shared that she went to the Food Bank; it was a reality check and very touching to see people getting food. It reminded her why we are doing this and that what we are doing is "a really good thing." If you want to donate food, tuna or spam is really needed. Sometimes this is the only protein that they get in a day. Alan Smith discussed the idea of getting thank you cards. A discussion was held. Teresa shared with the members that

she is open to any new ideas, if it cannot happen this year, there is always next year. Mike Towery thanked Pam Mauck for all her past work for the Food Drive; she kept it going for years without any help from management or the community.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS: Anita Holderman informed the branch that she and Basil sent a questionnaire to all retirees. Home Ruiz returned his at the meeting this evening. He did an amazing job with lots of stories and even photos. She encouraged all retirees to return the questionnaire. Mike Towery informed the members that the postmaster has give permission for branch photographer, Anita Holderman to take photographs at each station, on the clock.

GOOD OF THE ASSOCIATION: Bill Curtis encouraged all members to read their Voters Guide before voting. Ralphie Ochoa asked for a point of personnel privilege, she has tickets for a 50/50 drawing to benefit the Relay for Life, she asked that the members buy her remaining tickets. Mike Towery asked for volunteers to have the news media follow them on the day of Food Drive. Mike Towery discussed the Pilot Program for NRP. Only three districts have the pilot program and Sierra Costal volunteered. The program will be exactly like NRP without union involvement. Manny Peralta, National Business Agent has contacted OWCP to expedite the pay for carriers sent home. National President, Bill Young reported that the Postal Service has a contractual right to use this program for years but, has chosen not to, until now. Pres. Young informed the members at the Rap Session that the Postal Service has lost 42 Billion pieces of mail, since 1989 114,000 clerk and 35,000 carrier jobs have been eliminated. Every route in the nation, 150,000 routes, will be adjusted in the next 4 months. He knows the concerns about the new adjustment process, but the option was to do nothing, like the auto workers. If we did not participate in this process, management would do full 6 day counts and adjust with

May 2009 General Membership Meeting Drawing

\$500

There is one "catch"...
You have to be present to win.

COR, with no union involvement. And he would expect that during the next contract negotiations the Postal Service would ask to eliminate the COLA and pay raise and it that was not enough, there would be massive layoffs. Basil Zuniga said that with the new Flat Sorting machines (FSS) management would expect even more savings. Mike said the FSS will be online at some stations by fall. Anita Holderman asked for input and suggestions for a Retiree dinner or lunch.

IMPROVEMENT OF THE ASSOCIATION: Darryl Holderman read the proposed By-Laws changes that will be voted on at the next meeting: Article V Section 1: The provisions of this Article shall govern the election of all delegates to the National and State Association Conventions and the elections of Branch Officers. The elected officers of the Branch shall be: President; Vice President; Recording Secretary; Treasurer; Financial Secretary; Sergeant at Arms; Health Benefits and MBA Representative; Three Trustees. By virtue of their positions, Branch 782 President and Vice President shall be delegates to both the National and State Conventions. Article V Section 8: The term of office for all elected officer of this Branch shall be three (3) years or until their successors are duly elected and installed.

Article III Section 1: The regular meeting of this Branch shall be held on the fourth Tuesday of each month, excluding December, at 7:00 p.m. at the Branch 782 Union Office, 2628 F Street, Bakersfield, California. The December meeting will be held on the third Tuesday of the month.

FINANCIAL SECRETARY'S REPORT: Anita Holderman reported that \$20,233.98 was collected for the month of April.

TREASURER'S REPORT: Molly Biggar reported:

Beginning Balance	\$58,896.50
Dues & Income	\$20,078.48
Interest Income	\$ 17.76
Total Balance	\$78,992.74
Expenses	\$18,810.79
Ending Balance	\$60,181.95

Mike Towery congratulated the newest retirees: Ron Klinchuk, Melanie Ansolabhere and Paul Shaw. He reported that two carriers were assaulted last month, one was punched after spaying a dog and the other had a wet towel thrown at him after delivering a certified letter.

The 50/50 MDA Drawing was won by Emma Gonzales.

The \$500.00 Drawing would have been won by Maria Deleon who was not present.

There were 51 members present.

The meeting adjourned at 8:52 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

KIM GERDES
Branch 782 Recording Secretary

DOWNTOWN STATION

Dale Pearce
Javier Cruz

NON-MEMBER LIST February 2009

SOUTH STATION

100% Union!!!

CAMINO MEDIA

F. Medina, Jr.

EDWARDS

100% Union!!!

SHAFTER

L. M. New
M. D. Voights

EAST BAKERSFIELD

100% Union!!!

ARVIN

100% Union!!!

LAMONT

100% Union!!!

TAFT

B. W. Krier
K. J. Hughes

HILLCREST

M. M. Henry

AVENAL

J. T. Howery

McFARLAND

100% Union!!!

TEHACHAPI

V. L. Johnson

BRUNDAGE

David Kinglee

BORON

100% Union!!!

MOJAVE

100% Union!!!

TRONA

S. L. Walent
B. R. Dame
K. K. Treat

DOLE COURT

Alice Schultz

CALIFORNIA CITY

100% Union!!!

RIDGECREST

S. R. Pierce
H. G. Blanco
A. M. Connell
T. K. Miller
R. M. Nokes

WASCO

100% Union!!!

STOCKDALE

Ron Huston
G.S. Saran

DELANO

C. V. Quebral

94% of all Letter Carriers in our cities are NALC members (429 out of 456)!!!

List of names from Anita Holderman

Diane Diaz 09
Cindy Flores 09
Terry Perez 09
Amber Books 09
Tony Zaragoza 09

Ralph Moeller 01
Tony Del Valle 01

Rommi Shergill 05
George Duarte 05
Mario Marquez 06
Bill Elms 06
Otto Hernandez 06
Ozzie Ruiz 06

Diane Thoms 04
Ruben Hernandez 04

Yuri Garcia 08
Sodie _____ 04
Darryl Holderman 04
Bonita Lewis 04
Debra _____ 04
Tatia Boone 04









Acedo
Cartoon Page

or

Food Drive
Info

A Little Bit of Shafter...



Roger Lynch, City Route 1

After some encouragement from Basil, I have taken on the challenge to write an article about our station.

Our office in Shafter is small and cozy. There are five city routes and two rural routes that fit inside this brick box not much bigger than a store at the mall and we have a total of 15 employees. Carriers are Roger Lynch, City Route 1; Jorge Vaquera, City 2; Diana Mills, City 3; Mae Voigts, City 4; I am City 5; Lori New is our T6; Israel Cedillos and Arnie Reyes-Rios are our PTF carriers; Melanie Davis is Rrural 1; Fred Doll is Rural 2; Mandee Brooks is our only Regular clerk; Annette Espinoza, Carmen Vizzard, and Terry Mills are our PTF clerks. Last, but not least, our OIC is Manual Davis.



Norma Hamer, Shafter shop Steward

We are all snugged in tight and on most days, we feel like we are in an obstacle course.

Between the supplies for the customers and our rolling coffins there's little room for anything else. But, we have managed to section off an area for a table, fridge, and microwave.

Food is another obstacle that we have in our office. We do like to eat and love to share new recipes with each other. On most days, you can always count of food being in the back. Whether it is leftovers from someone's dinner the night before because the cook didn't know that the rest of the family decided to eat out elsewhere; or if it was just a kind act; or if the craving for something in particular was mentioned the day before, there is sure to be something there to nibble.



Israel Cedillos, living the PTF life!



Jorge Vaquera

So, if you are ever in Shafter, stop in, say, "Hi!" Take a snack from the back! There is a birthday coming up, that means cake! Yum!

I have included a photo of the ones who let me take their snapshot.



NORMA HAMER

2009 NALC HBP Info

NALC Health Benefit Plan	1-888-636-6252
*Hospital Pre-Certification	1-877-220-6252
*** Mental & Substance Precert.	1-877-468-1016
Drug Prescription Retail	1-800-933-6252
CareMark Hearing Impaired	1-800-238-1217
*** CareMark Specialty Pharmacy	1-800-237-2767
*** Durable Medical Eqpt.	1-888-636-6252
CareMark Specialty Pharmacy	1-800-237-2767
Durable Medical Equipment	1-888-636-6252
Nurse Assistant (24/7)	1-877-220-6252
CareMark Pharmacist	1-888-636-6252
Enhanced Eldercare Services (24/7)	1-877-468-1016
CIGNA PPO Dr's & Facilities	1-877-220-6252
***CIGNA Transplant Approval	1-800-668-9682
Quest Diagnostics (Lab Services)	1-877-220-6252
Quit Power (Smoking Cessation)	1-877-784-8797
CIGNA Health Rewards (Discounts)	1-800-870-3470
CIGNA Dental Discount Program	1-877-521-0244
**** Disease Management Program	1-800-227-3728
MEDICARE Managed Care Plan	1-800-633-4277
OPM Retirement Info Center	1-888-767-6738
Federal Information Center	1-800-688-9889
Social Security Administration Info	1-800-772-1213

* Failure to pre-certify will result in a \$500 reduction in benefits paid by the Plan. Must notify the Plan prior to hospital admission with doctor name and dates. ** Mail order drug prescription program long term (maintenance drugs) 60 day supply: \$8 generic, \$24 name brand; 90 day supply: \$12 generic, \$35 name brand. Retail Pharmacy, you pay 25% . MEDICARE 60 day supply: \$7 generic, \$20 name brand; 90 day supply: \$10 generic, \$30 name brand. Network Retail Pharmacy you pay 15% of the cost of the prescription. Prior approval required for some drugs. Must call the Plan. *** **Prior Approval Required.** **** Asthma and Diabetis.

Preferred Provider (PPO)
Cost: \$15.00
Co-pay per office visit

Preferred Provider (PPO)
Deductible
\$250 Individual
\$500 Self & Family
Per Calendar Year



Branch 782
Health Benefit
Representative



Mark
Ramirez
 (661) 834-5011

NALC Prescription Drug Program
 P.O. Box 94467
 Palatine, IL 60094-4467

NALC Drug Prescription Program
 "Claims"
 P.O. Box 521926
 Phoenix, AZ 85012-2192

Optimum Health Behavioral Solutions
 P.O. Box 30755
 Salt Lake City, UT 84130-0755
 Questions: 1-877-468-1016

NALC Health Benefit Plan
20547 Waverly Court
Ashburn, VA 20149

Contact Information

Center for Disease Control	http://www.cdc.gov
National Library of Medicine	http://www.nlm.nih.gov
American Public Health Assoc.	http://www.alpha.org
American Cancer Society	http://www.cancer.org
American Heart Association	http://www.americanheart.org
American Lung Association	http://www.lunusa.org
Diabetes Foundation	http://www.diabetis.org
Muscular Dystrophy Association	http://www.mdausa.org
JAMA Asthma Information Center	http://www.ama.assn.org/special/asthma
Your Personal Health Record	http://www.nalc.org/depart/hbp
National Patient Safety	http://www.npsf.org

Death Benefit Info

Paul Shaw ended his illustrious career at the U. S. Postal Service on May 1st, 2009. *This is just one month shy of a full fifty years of service.*

He could have retired about fifteen years ago, but he remained an active duty Carrier—by choice—for love of the work, and the workers...who he considered to be his family.

If you have never had the pleasure to work around Mr. Shaw, I can tell you from personal experience that he is a rare bird. The jokes about Shaw in the office range from his appetite, to his age. Every funny true story usually ends with Shaw eating. They also joke that he and Benjamin Franklin started the Post Office together, and Shaw's stuck still working there.

You must understand, however, if this sounds slightly mean on paper, it was always done out of love, and Shaw was usually the loudest one laughing. I have only known Paul Shaw for a tenth of his career, but given the length of it, that's long enough to get to know at least a little about the man.

Mr. Shaw has never said a curse word, told a blue joke, or said anything even slightly mean about anybody in the last six year, while at work. If your office is anything like ours, with infighting, personality conflicts and general un-informed gossip, you know what a feat that is. The thing is, being around him, you get the feeling that it may not have happened in the last fifty years. He just doesn't seem to have it in him.

I have never seen him scowl or complain after any of numerous stand-ups given by uncounted numbers of previous incompetent O.I.C.'s or Postmasters with any number of hare-brained tactics on how to "fix" our office. He always kept his cool, like he knew something we didn't. And he did. He knew, after all these years in the profession, that Managers come and go. Styles differ, as do competence levels, but you aren't going to get anywhere by butting heads.

The one thing I can say without any doubt in my mind, is that Paul Shaw loved his job as much as anyone ever has loved this job, and he was as good at it as anyone has ever been. Top that off with the fact that he is leaving without having made any enemies—and has been liked by pretty much everyone he's ever worked with—and you have a career that is not only exceptionally long, it is exceptional in every aspect!

The most poignant example of Shaw's good nature that I can think of, was the last time we at Dole Court had the pleasure of his company. On May 1st, he arrived, in uniform, to have breakfast with us. He brought the breakfast! He had Hodel's cater breakfast for the entire station. For his official retirement, after fifty years of service, the man paid out-of-pocket to buy *us* breakfast. That's just Paul being Paul. At his official retirement stand-up, he was given a pocket watch, a letterman style jacket, and a plaque showing his induction into the "two million mile club."

President of branch 782, Mike Towery was there, along with Station Manager Jon Espinoza, and all three were moved within a hairs breadth of crying. It seemed like they tried to wrap the ceremony part quickly, to avoid public tears. Mr. Shaw was no less moved than they were.

If any of you saw *The Californian* about three weeks ago, there was an article about Paul's retirement. In the picture, he's wearing a modern uniform, and modeling uniform pieces of years gone by. He showed up at breakfast in uniform, too. It got me thinking how much of a shame it is that he has to take it off. He didn't want to retire, but his body disagreed, and we know who wins those arguments.

In my time with the post office, I've met few or none as genuine, agreeable, nice, and good at their job as Mr. Paul Shaw. Considering that he has fifty years in this company, he has more right than any of us to be bitter and complacent; but, he chooses not to exercise that right, to the benefit of all of us.

To Mr. Paul Shaw himself, I can only say one thing (and I think I can speak for the majority of your now "ex" co-workers): "It has been an honor and a privilege to have worked with you, Mr. Shaw. I can say with all sincerity, that you *will* be missed. We wish you health and happiness for the next fifty years, even though you won't be working out in that summer sun anymore! Cheers, Paul! Enjoy your retirement!! If anyone has earned it, it's you."

JASON MUNOZ
Assistant to the Editor

Safety
Article

from the
editor-guy



Celebrating
Ron
Happy Retirement
and
Good Luck!!!





Branch Officers

E.A. BAKER UNION UPDATE is published monthly by Merged Branch 782 of the National Association of Letter Carriers, AFL-CIO.

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The Editor retains the right to edit, delete, or reject the article for the good of the Branch (and even this is subject to persuasion).

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