

# National Association of Letter Carriers

## Branch 782

### E.A. Baker Union Update



ARVIN  
CALIFORNIA CITY  
McFARLAND  
TAFT

AVENAL  
DELANO  
MOJAVE  
TEHACHAPI

BAKERSFIELD  
EDWARDS AFB  
RIDGECREST  
TRONA

BORON  
LAMONT  
SHAFTER  
WASCO



CHARTERED FEBRUARY 25, 1891

NUMBER 1

JANUARY 2014

at the  
**Mike**



As most of us clock in each day, we repeat a process that we've gone through many times. We may feel that nothing is ever going to change...

I want to share a part of an article which originated in Florida. Could this be a part of your future?

## The Grinch Who Stole Christmas

"I received a phone call just before Thanksgiving informing me that all offices will be moving their starting times to anywhere from 9:00 to 10:00 in the morning. My reaction was: **"ARE YOU SMOKING CRACK? WHO IS THE MORON THAT DREAMED THIS UP?"**

Well, if you have been in the Post Office for any length of time, I'm sure you have seen the finger-pointing game. Nobody wants to take credit for the decision. I explored every option to discover who is responsible. It appears that a "Voice" came out of a sinkhole and instructed all of them to obey their master. So here we are.

Now the excuse you will hear is that the processing plant has closed and the mail takes longer to get to the different cities and Stations. Well...how much longer does it take??? The truth is: *They cannot handle the mail volume from two plants and it takes longer to process the mail.* **THAT** is what is delaying the mail. They need to reopen the plant they closed! But, everyone is afraid to tell the "Voice" from the sinkhole. You want to laugh but this is serious business! **IT IS UNSAFE TO DELIVER MAIL AFTER DARK.**

Here are some of the incidents throughout the country concerning the safety of Postal Carriers delivering after dark.

1. Woman hit by Postal Truck in Michigan
2. Mail Truck hit in drive by shooting
3. Mail Carrier robbed in Hempstead
4. Carrier struck by Van in Wentzville
5. Carrier shot to death in Maryland
6. Customer firing warning shot at Carrier on porch delivering mail.

Most postal Employees simply do not feel safe delivering mail after dark. And, those on park-and-loop routes who might cross a lawn in the daytime—where they can see—are cautious to do so at night where they cannot see where they are walking. For those on mounted routes it is impossible to drive with the dome light on. You are blinded by the light hitting the windshield...and if you add rain to the picture it's a death trap! Management turns a blind eye to Safety when it comes to the almighty buck and their precious bonuses. We **WILL** continue to suggest ways to eliminate the late deliveries. If only someone in Postal Management would listen, maybe some lives will be saved."

Thank you, Steve Halkias, President of Tarpon Springs, FL Branch 2008!!!

# Johnny on the Spot



A new spending Bill was passed on January 13, 2014 which included the requirement to maintain mail delivery at the 1983 levels. (6 Day Delivery). The Bill runs until September 2014, when Congress will meet again to discuss a new spending Bill.

“We are grateful that Congress recognizes the value of Saturday delivery to millions of American businesses that rely on the most efficient last-mile delivery system in the world,” NALC President Fredric Rolando said. “As the economy recovers and e-commerce booms, the Postal Service has returned to operational profitability, which would be threatened by cutting the Saturday service on which millions of small businesses - See more at: <http://www.postal-reporter.com/blog/nalc-6-day-mail-preserved-in-spending-bil/#sthash.gu7R6ykk.dpuf>

I’m sure we have all heard by now that parcels and scanning are our future. Management has new “tools” to use to ensure that we are scanning each and every barcoded item we receive. I have recently been shown that they can match the barcode to an actual delivery address now. So now they can trace missed scans which could lead to discipline. So when you see a barcode “SCAN IT” our customers are depending on us.

I read an interesting article that I want to share...

JOHN ORTEGA, NALC Branch 782 Vice-President

## FACT OR CRAP

My son moved out and I turned what was his bedroom into a girl-cave. I’d have called it a woman-cave but that sounded too pretentious, even to me.

It’s nothing fancy—a futon, a side table and a 26 inch tv. Oh, and three full book shelves. My son was an English major and his books mock me. Three shelves are filled with “classic” titles that I never got around to reading; *Moby Dick*, *Brave New World*, *Paradise Lost*, *Uncle Tom’s Cabin*, *The Sound and the Fury*.

My ego takes a hit each time I walk in the room. But on the bottom shelf right under the television is a stack of board games and one of them speaks to me without calling me a loser.

It’s called “Fact or Crap”. Wanna play?

**Q. FACT OR CRAP?** The Postal Service continues to lose money at an alarming rate. The only way to fix it is to close post offices, eliminate Saturday delivery and relax delivery standards.

**A. CRAP!** Without calculating in the future retiree health benefits payments, which the service defaulted on, the USPS made a profit of \$600 million this fiscal year.

**Q. FACT OR CRAP?** Of all federal civilian jobs, Letter Carrier is the most dangerous.

**A. FACT!** Excluding military, foreign service and intelligence, *postal workers made up one third of federal civilian employees who died on the job in 2013*, according to the *Federal Times*.

**Q. FACT OR CRAP?** DOIS determines your leaving and returning time?

**A. CRAP!** DOIS is a management tool. But, when all you have is a hammer, everything looks like a nail. **YOU** determine your leave and return time. Just be sure to keep management informed via a 3996.

**Q. FACT OR CRAP?** Safety is the Postal Service's number one priority?

**A. CRAP.** The **TALK** of safety, the **ILLUSION** of safety, the **DISCIPLINE** for safety—*these* the USPS takes seriously. When it comes down to actual safety, providing a safe working environment for Letter Carriers, it drops well down on the priority list.

After the recent murder of a Carrier working after dark in Maryland, a post office spokesperson was asked why the Carriers weren't starting their day earlier, in order that they'd be finished before dark. He said that the Carriers couldn't start any earlier because there might be times when they had to wait for mail to be sorted to them. Numbers above safety.

**YOU MUST BE THE JUDGE OF YOUR OWN SAFETY!**

Darkness alone is not inherently unsafe, but darkness combined with a high crime neighborhood, loose dogs, heavy traffic, unfamiliar surroundings, broken sidewalks—and any number of other hazards—puts your safety in jeopardy. If it is unsafe to deliver, bring the mail back.

Your most important delivery of the day is your last one—delivering yourself home to your family.

**Q. FACT OR CRAP?** All routes have “built in under time”.

**A. REALLY? DO YOU EVEN HAVE TO ASK?**  
Completely a load of crap!!

**Q. FACT OR CRAP?** A Carrier only has 5 minutes to complete his or her PM office duties.

**A. CRAP (AGAIN).** DOIS “allows” for 5 minutes but the M-41 lists Carrier duties to be completed on office time at the end of the day, including clocking back in to the station along with clock rings for any delivery time used on other routes or collections, clearance of accountables, (notice the word *clearance*...an inclusive word that requires another person, an accountable clerk, to do the clearing), the processing of undelivered mail, and the disposition of forwardable and undeliverable mail. The instruction to leave any mail at your case for the next morning is an improper order and should be grieved. If this can be accomplished in 5 minutes, great, but there is no 5 minute “rule”.

**Q. FACT OR CRAP?** An hour is an hour.

**A. THIS IS A TRICK QUESTION.**

**Fact:** An hour is sixty minutes, which is an hour. It only turns to crap in the postal service lexicon of pivot cuts. A route that has 6 plus hours of street time, cannot be broken into 5 “hours”.

Management will go so far as to say they have taken out “allied time” that you won't need. Hmmm. Unless you are going to teleport to your pivot cut, you will use travel time to and from your own route. The satchel isn't going to load itself. And, I've left out the important FACT that it wasn't an “hour” to begin with! If you are given street delivery in a route other than your own, you will need a 3996. The bottom portion should be filled out with the begin travel time, the begin delivery time, end delivery time and end travel time. It takes what it takes.

I think, as one of his Christmas gifts, I'll pack up my son's books, wrap them in pretty paper and make him take them home with him just so they stop making fun of me. He can leave the game.

One more for the road...

**Q. FACT OR CRAP?** I wish all my Brothers and Sisters of Branch 3 a happy, safe and healthy holiday season, filled with the love and joy of family and friends.

**A. ABSOLUTE FACT!**

Susan Lewis, Executive Vice President  
Buffalo, New York NALC Branch 3

**OUT THERE**



# Minutes of the December 2013 General Meeting

The regular meeting of Branch 782 was called to order by President, Mike Towery at 7:00 p.m. on the 17th day of December, 2013 at the branch office, Bakersfield. The flag salute was led by Sgt. at Arms, Jerry Patterson. All members of the Executive Board were present. The stewards were present from Arvin, Brundage, Camino Media, Downtown, Hillcrest, Lamont, McFarland, Oildale, Shafter, South, Stockdale and Taft. Also present was Newsletter Editor, Basil Zuniga, Photographer, Anita Holderman and Frank Martinez of the Social and Recreation Committee. The minutes of the November 26, 2013 were read and accepted with no additions or corrections.

**APPLICATION FOR MEMBERSHIP:** An application was received from Joe Monzo, Stockdale.

**REPORTS OF STANDING AND SPECIAL COMMITTEES:** Basil Zuniga reported that there was a miscommunication with Hillcrest Station. Pam Smith thought it was their turn in January, so next month will be Hillcrest's turn. Basil suggested that members go to the Website to see the November newsletter in color. Frank Martinez reported that there have not been any meetings of the Social and Recreation Committee. Molly Biggar reported that 12 books were sold this month with the total number of books sold as 1266.

**UNFINISHED BUSINESS:** Andrew Garcia reported on the CCA meeting, he stated that he hoped another meeting would be held soon. He asked that the stewards get the word out to the CCA's to attend the meeting. He stated the importance that CCA's know their rights. The issues regarding CCA's are being told not to use their time cards when working on Sunday. They have been told to wait in the break room until management tells them to begin work. There is a grievance in the process. CCA's who signed up for health benefits and chose the self-only options had to take the Post Office Plan

**GOOD OF THE ASSOCIATION:** Mike Towery reported on a grievance in Ridgecrest, a PTF should have been promoted to regular and filled a residual position. The postmaster refuses to abide by the grievance settlement and place the carrier on the assignment. Mike Towery informed the members present that our steward in Ridgecrest, Lynnel Howell fell on her route and broke her leg and sprained the ankle on the other leg. Molly Biggar informed that the Budget needs adjust-

ment. There will not be a DC Lobby trip this year, the money will be transferred to budget items, Insurance and Refreshments for Newsletter folding.

**FINANCIAL SECRETARY'S REPORT:** Anita Holderman reported that the revised income for September is \$11,661.67.

**TREASURER'S REPORT:** Molly Biggar reported

Beginning Balance	\$71,170.76
Dues & Income	\$11,975.89
Interest Income	\$0.00
Total Balance	\$83,146.65
Expenses	\$ 9,845.63
Ending Balance	\$73,301.02

The MDA 50/50 Drawing was won by Dicie Wilder.

The General Meeting Drawing for \$250.00 would have been won by Danny Lujan if he had been present.

There were 33 members present.

The meeting adjourned at 7:28 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,

KIM GERDES  
NALC Branch 782 Recording Secretary

## OUT THERE



*If we all don't stick together now, there's going to be no one left to blame... We ALL should be Carriers in a Common Cause. Really? YES!!*

## NON-MEMBER LIST\* December 2013



**Downtown Station**

Sarah Kirby  
Javier Cruz

**South Station**

Pedro Olvera  
Rosa Villalobos

**Brundage/East Bakersfield**

David Kinglee

**Hillcrest**

R. K. Gomez

**Dole Court**

Oscar Salazar  
Dana Morris  
Sharon Hancock

**Stockdale**

James Oh  
Marty Martinez  
Samantha Huckaby  
RA Hinojosa

**Camino Media**

Christopher Rodriguez

**Avenal**

Brent Howard

**California City**

Stephen Ivory

**Delano**

L.A. Campos  
C.V. Quebral

**Lamont**

Erik Gonzalez

**Ridgecrest**

R. P. Zurn  
S. P. Pierce  
GD Weaver  
Bonnie Leroy  
Deangelo Johnson  
H. G. Blanco  
Christina Celaya

**Shafter**

M. D. Voights  
L. M. New

**Taft**

Ashley Veach  
Alicia Rodriguez  
B. M. Krier  
K. J. Hughes  
Terra Bullard

**Tehachapi**

TR Landis

**Trona**

William Campbell

**Wasco**

\*CCA names are in  
Italics

**We are an "Open Shop".  
MEMBERSHIP IS VOLUNTARY.  
400 Letter Carriers are in the  
complement assigned to cities  
represented by our Branch.  
35 ARE NON-MEMBERS\*\*.**

\*\*18 are Career employees and 17 are CCAs.

# In Memorium

John "Jack" Van Buskirk, Retired Carrier

Wayne Cameron, Brother of Retired Carrier Mickey Cameron

# VETERANS CORNER

## JANUARY 2014

### Military Service Credit for Federal Civilian Retirement

Many Federal employees are thinking ahead and planning for retirement. For this reason, the Department of Defense would like to take this opportunity to provide some vital information to those of you who have performed honorable active military service after December 31, 1956. This service may be potentially creditable for retirement purposes. Beginning January 1, 1957, military service became subject to the Social Security tax. As a result, this service is used to determine entitlement for an individual Social Security benefit. In general, military service performed before January 1, 1957 must be credited in the computation of a civil service retirement or survivor annuity. The Social Security Administration (SSA) cannot use pre-1957 military service to compute benefits if a civil service retirement or survivor benefit is based on such service. An individual has no choice as to which benefit computation includes the pre-1957 military service (there is an exception for survivor annuitants). For the Civil Service Retirement System (CSRS) purposes, crediting of post 1956 military service depends on the following:

**Federal Employment before 1 Oct 82.** Generally, if you were first employed in a position covered by CSRS before October 1, 1982, you may receive credit for your post 1956 military service if you retire from civilian service prior to age 62. However, if you do not make a military service deposit prior to separation from Federal employment, the military service will be eliminated from the computation of your CSRS annuity when you reach age 62, IF you are entitled to Social Security benefits.

**Federal Employment after 1 Oct 82.** Generally, if you were first employed in a position covered by CSRS on or after October 1, 1982, you will not receive credit for post 1956 military service for any retirement purpose unless you make a military service deposit prior to

separation from Federal employment.

The amount of the deposit is a sum equal to 7-percent (special category employees may pay a higher amount) of the military basic pay earned during the period of military service, plus interest.

For the Federal Employee Retirement System (FERS) purposes, crediting of post 1956 military service depends on the following:

Generally, if you were automatically covered under the Federal Employees Retirement System (FERS) on January 1, 1987 or at any time thereafter, you must make the military service deposit prior to separation from Federal employment to receive credit for any retirement purpose. Military service is credited under FERS rules if it was performed after you became covered by FERS or you had less than 5 years of civilian service (other than CSRS Interim or Offset service) upon becoming covered by FERS.

The amount of the deposit is a sum equal to 3-percent (special category employees may pay a higher amount) of the military basic pay earned during the period of military service, plus interest.

If you receive military retired or retainer pay, you will not receive credit for any military service unless certain conditions are met or apply.

There are some good reasons to consider making a deposit. Making a deposit for post 1956 military service allows you to receive permanent credit for military service under your Federal civilian retirement system, and the military service remains creditable for Social Security purposes. Making a deposit early helps to avoid the accrual of additional interest. The rate of interest charged on post 1956 deposits changes annually. This interest accrues and compounds annually on your Interest Accrual Date (IAD). Your first IAD is the date 1-year after the date the interest-free grace periods ends.

You will be given the option to make the deposit in one lump sum or through payroll deduction. All post-56 military service deposits must be made to the Defense Finance and Accounting Service (DFAS) before separation from Federal employment. Even if you don't plan to retire or leave Federal service soon, it is a very good idea to at least obtain the amount of your military earnings so that the deposit can be

computed more easily. To process the deposit, we can use your actual military pay vouchers for complete periods of military service in computing the military deposit or you can obtain a certified estimate of your military earnings from the appropriate branch of service. The DLA Human Resources Center, Customer Support Offices (CSO) can provide instructions for obtaining the certified estimate.

Once you do complete the deposit, the DFAS payroll office will send you a receipt that indicates that your deposit was paid in full, the amount paid and the period of service the deposit covers. Once you receive the receipt you will need to forward a copy to the CSO office that services you and it will be filed in your Official Personnel Folder as a permanent record. Our office needs this information from you in order to determine whether you can receive credit in your CSRS or FERS retirement benefit.

When an individual leaves Federal service or moves to another payroll office's servicing, their payroll records are closed out and sent onto the Office of Personnel Management (OPM). OPM will maintain these records until the individual applies for retirement, requests a refund or dies.

Please note that this is a brief summary of the provisions for making deposits to receive credit for post 1956 military service in a retirement benefits. Under some circumstances, particularly active military service performed after August 1, 1990 that interrupts creditable civilian service (e.g., mobilizations for Desert Shield/Desert Storm, etc.) special deposit provisions may apply due to the \*Uniformed Services Employment and Reemployment Rights Act of 1994 (USERRA) law.

**\*<http://usmilitary.about.com/od/justicelawlegislation/a/userra.htm>**

**Source: Courtesy of Department of Defense**

Thank you again from the NALC, Branch 3, and all of our members for your great personal sacrifice, vigilance and commitment to ensuring the security of our homeland and the preservation and the promotion of freedom and justice for all people.

For further information or requests, feel free to contact Mark Leon, 716-631-3940, e-mail [MrR2Leon@aol.com](mailto:MrR2Leon@aol.com) or Branch 3 716-631-3940, e-mail [NALCB3@aol.com](mailto:NALCB3@aol.com)

# “Biggest Loser” 2014

Starting off the NEW YEAR right with a weight loss competition does a body good! Can you believe that we first started this back in 2008? I know, there was a little hiatus with our last competition not since 2011, but WE are going to start off STRONG and finish HEALTHY!

As you all know, this is a competition done on the HONOR SYSTEM and that we ALL should help each other achieve a common goal—which is to lose those unwanted pounds. We appreciate those die-hard competitors out there who spark some to work out even harder to lose weight, BUT wouldn't it be even worthwhile if we also kept MOTIVATING your opponents???

Here are a list of challengers:

<b>Brundage</b>	<b>South</b>	<b>Stockdale</b>	<b>Dole</b>
<i>BEATRIZ MUNOZ</i>	Andrew Garcia	Teresa Garcia	<i>GLEN RYDER</i>
Mabel Bullis		Beatriz Rodriguez	<i>LAURA GORDON</i>
Stacy Castillo	<b>Shafter</b>	Robin Richaud	Jennifer Hernandez
Jeff Harrington	Melissa Johnson	Tina Harbour	Art Mooney
Kim Pumphrey		Tanya Courson	Dan Medina
Ruben Gonzales	<b>Delano</b>	Amanda O'Neill	Faviola Estrada
Yvonne Esquivel	<i>LUIS CAMPOS</i>	Annette Ortega	Francisco Herrera
Shurie Amick	Serena Ornelaz	Billy Herrera	
Inderdeep Gill	Gracie Silva		
Cesar Rivera			
Kim Williams	<b>Laton</b>		
<i>ROSIE PADILLA</i>	George Vaquera Jr		
<i>MARIA GUTIERREZ</i>	Maggie Young		
<i>VICKI GUERRO</i>			
John Ortega			

\*\*The *ITALICS* names are past 1st or 2nd place winners\*\*

Good Luck to you all!  
Keep it safe and healthy!

Remember we can **ALL** be winners!!!

MABEL BULLIS

*This cartoon is NOT the kind of prize we should want...*

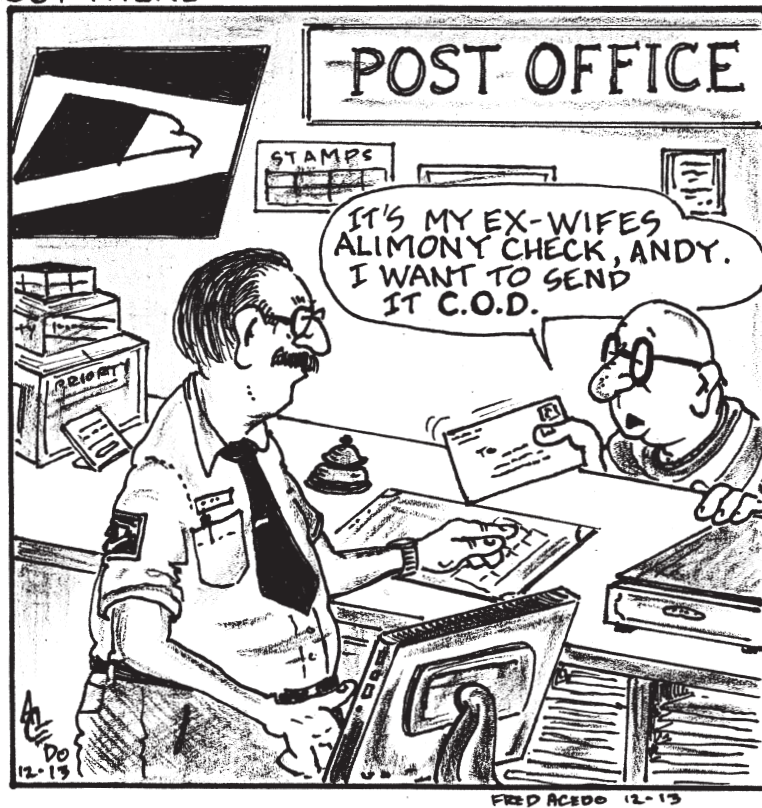
## OUT THERE



# We got a letter...

January 2, 2014

OUT THERE



Dear Basil,  
What a wonderful surprise I pulled out of my mail box today! This was better (for better) than anything I got for Christmas.... but if I had sat on Santa's lap and asked for something it - quite likely - would just be more of Fred Acedo's masterpieces....

I have collected mailman and/or postal related cartoons ever since I started with the

USPS, possibly even before that. One of the union officers (who happened to not only be my T-6, but a good friend as well) from Napa went to the National Convention in Boston a few years (when I was still employed). He brought back a very cool book of cartoons for me - done by CARRIE AUSTIN (I think Carrie is the 1<sup>st</sup> name) PLUS a few newsletters. One or 2 of the newsletters were from BRANCH 782 and featured a few of Fred's "OUT THERE" cartoons.

To say that I was impressed by Fred's cartoons would be an understatement. Here was someone who could express/vent feelings about the post office - and from the unique viewpoint/perspective of a carrier! Plus this





guy - whoever he was - was a very talented illustrator/artist. That kind of a combination is not/does not happen often.... Loved these few cartoons I had. And that was the end of the story till a few years after my retirement when I decided to try and track down this guy. I figured he

would quite likely be dead, but I was gonna give it my best shot.

And then my wildest dreams came true! Not only was he alive & well ("71 and still feel like I could carry a walking route" was how he described himself in the 1st letter), But he sends me some ORIGINAL cartoons and a wonderful, revealing letter. UNBELIEVABLE! And its just gotten better from there.

Thank you for the back issues. This was way "ABOVE & BEYOND" the call of duty. And boy was I impressed by the pack job. This could only have been done by a postal employee with some number years of experience... ABSOLUTELY BEAUTIFUL, PRACTICAL & CREATIVE. This took time, to say nothing of the \$6.15 spent on postage. WOW!

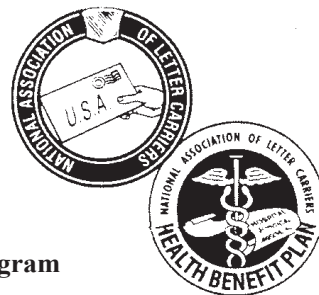
I have already written to MIKE TOWERY (at Fred's suggestion via Brazil) to get on the mailing list (and Jim happy to pay).....  
 AKK: you Fred's work - to me - is right up there with the all time GREAT CARTOONISTS (WILEY MILLER, GARY ARSEN, you name it...) and I truly appreciate the time & effort you put in to collect, package, and mail these back issues featuring Fred's work.

Keep the FAITH  
 Cheers, Peter  
 62 IS ALL THRU \*  
 65 IS STILL ALIVE

\* 62 was the route I retired from, Jim now 65

# 2014 NALC HBP Info

## At a glance...



NALC Health Benefit Plan	1-888-636-6252
*Hospital Pre-Certification	1-877-220-6252
Mental & Substance Precertification	1-877-468-1016
**Drug Prescription Retail	1-800-933-6252
CVS/CareMark Specialty Pharmacy	1-800-237-2767
Durable Medical Equipment	1-888-636-6252
<b>NURSE ASSISTANT (24/7)</b>	<b>1-877-220-6252</b>
CVS/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 Organ Transplant Approval	1-800-668-9682
Quit Power (Smoking Cessation)	1-877-521-0244
CIGNA Health Rewards (Discounts)	1-800-558-9443
<b>CIGNA Dental Discount Program</b>	<b>1-877-521-0244</b>
Disease Management Program	1-800-227-3728
OPM Retirement Info Center	1-888-767-6738
Federal Information Center	1-800-333-4636
Social Security Administration Info	1-800-772-1213
PostalEase Human Resources USPS	1-877-477-3273
Quest Lab Services (Bakersfield)	(661) 631-8520
LabCorp Lab Services	(661) 631-9258
<b>Shared Services (Retirees Info!!!)</b>	<b>1-877-477-3273</b>

**NALC Health Benefit Plan**  
**20547 Waverly Court**  
**Ashburn, Virginia 20149**

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

**NALC Drug Prescription "Claims" Program**  
**P.O. Box 521926**  
**Phoenix, Arizona 85072-2192**

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

**NALC Consumer Driven Health Plan and Value Option**  
**P.O. Box 18223**  
**Chattanooga, TN 37422-7223**  
**Phone: 1-855-511-1893**

*\* Failure to pre-certify for in-patient hospitalization will result in a \$500 reduction in benefits paid by our Plan. **YOU MUST** notify the Plan prior to undergoing radiology/imaging with doctor name and dates. Call: 1-877-220-6252.*

**\*\* NALC Drug Prescription Program is MANDATORY generic (unless specified by your doctor, at additional cost to member). Preferred retail pharmacy 1st and 2nd fills, you pay 20% of cost of generic/30% of name brand/45% non-formulary. MAIL ORDER/CVS PRESCRIPTIONS (when NALC is primary): 60 day supply \$8 generic, \$43 name brand, \$58 non-formulary; 90 day supply \$12 generic, \$65 name brand, \$80 non-formulary; **MEDICARE PROGRAM** (when Medicare is primary) Retail network pharmacy: you pay 10% of cost of generic, 20% of formulary, 30% non-formulary. **MEDICARE PRIMARY** (mail order); 60 day supply \$7 generic, \$37 formulary, \$52 non-formulary; 90 day supply \$10 generic, \$55 formulary, \$70 non-formulary; 90 day supply \$4 for NALCSELECT generic (certain drugs); 90 day supply \$4 for NALCPREFERRED generic (certain drugs); NALCSENIOR generic antibiotics are available **FREE** for a 30 day supply, when Medicare is primary (certain antibiotics only).**

**MAIL ORDER SPECIALTY DRUGS** (Bio-Tech drugs—**VERY EXPENSIVE**): **Your** cost for a 30 day supply is \$150; 60 day supply is \$250; and, 90 day supply is \$350. Some drugs (e.g. bio-tech asthma, diabetes, organ rejection, etc.) require prior approval before dispensing. You **MUST** call the Plan 1-800-237-2767.

Our PPO doctors and facilities—through CIGNA—save us and the Plan thousands of dollars and it is top notch care at a discount rate. You don't lose anything. You are saving money for the best care!!!  
**For example: \*CIGNA Weight Loss Program (877) 220-6252**

**Preferred Provider (PPO)**  
**Cost: \$20.00 Co-pay per office visit**

**(PPO) Deductible: \$300 Individual,**  
**\$600 Self & Family—Per Calendar Year**

## Some Websites for You...

Center for Disease Control	<a href="http://www.cdc.gov">http://www.cdc.gov</a>
American Public Health Assoc.	<a href="http://www.alpha.org">http://www.alpha.org</a>
American Cancer Society	<a href="http://www.cancer.org">http://www.cancer.org</a>
American Heart Association	<a href="http://americanheart.org">http://americanheart.org</a>
American Lung Association	<a href="http://www.lunusa.org">http://www.lunusa.org</a>
Diabetes Foundation	<a href="http://www.diabetis.org">http://www.diabetis.org</a>
<b>YOUR Personal Health Record</b>	<a href="http://www.nalc.org/depart.hbp">http://www.nalc.org/depart.hbp</a>
Asthma Information Center	<a href="http://www.ama.assn.org/special/asthma">http://www.ama.assn.org/special/asthma</a>
HR Shared Service— <a href="mailto:HRSHAREDSERVICES@GSA.GOV">HRSHAREDSERVICES@GSA.GOV</a>	

**Check out this PPO: Sendas Northwest Urgent Care**  
**3409 Calloway Suite 101 Bakersfield, California 93312**  
**Phone: (661) 587-2500**

**Sendas Southwest Urgent Care**  
**9450 Ming Avenue, Bakersfield, California 93309**  
**Phone: (661) 587-2500**

**Hours: M-F 8:00 am - 9:00 pm; Sat & Sun 8:00 am - 8:00 pm**

**Accupuncture!! Must be a state licensed or certified accu-puncturist. Chiropractic! State licensed chiropractor or D.O.**

**Mark Ramirez, NALC Branch 782 HBP Rep.**  
**(661) 398-6075**

# *I will continue to forward this every time it comes*

## **STROKE: Remember the 1st Three Letters: S. T. R.**

During a BBQ, a woman stumbled and took a little fall - she assured everyone that she was fine (they offered to call paramedics) ...she said she had just tripped over a brick because of her new shoes.

They got her cleaned up and got her a new plate of food. While she appeared a bit shaken up, Jane went about enjoying herself the rest of the evening.

Jane's husband called later telling everyone that his wife had been taken to the hospital - (at 6:00 PM Jane passed away.) She had suffered a stroke at the BBQ.

Had they known how to identify the signs of a stroke, perhaps Jane would be with us today.

Some don't die. They end up in a helpless, hopeless condition instead.

It only takes a minute to read this.

A neurologist says that if he can get to a stroke victim within 3 hours he can totally reverse the effects of a stroke... totally.

He said the trick was getting a stroke recognized, diagnosed, and then getting the patient medically cared for within 3 hours, which is tough.

## **RECOGNIZING A STROKE**

Thank God for the sense to remember the '3' steps, STR. Read and Learn! Sometimes symptoms of a stroke are difficult to identify. Unfortunately, the lack of awareness spells disaster.

The stroke victim may suffer severe brain damage when people nearby fail to recognize the symptoms of a stroke.

Now doctors say a bystander can recognize a stroke by asking three simple questions. Remember them and you may save a life!!

**S** \*Ask the individual to SMILE.

**T** \*Ask the person to TALK and SPEAK A SIMPLE SENTENCE (Coherently) (i.e. I like Chicken Soup)

**R** \*Ask him or her to RAISE BOTH ARMS.

If he or she has trouble with ANY ONE of these tasks, call emergency number immediately and describe the symptoms to the dispatcher.

**New Sign of a Stroke ----- "Stick out Your Tongue."**

NOTE: Another 'sign' of a stroke is this: Ask the person to 'stick' out his tongue.

If the tongue is 'crooked', if it goes to one side or the other that is also an indication of a stroke.

A cardiologist says if everyone who gets this e-mail sends it to 10 people; you can bet that at least one life will be saved.

I have done my part. Will you?

---

## **ALL -TIME WORST COUNTRY-WESTERN SONG TITLES:**

*"How can I miss, you if you won't go away."*

*"Don't cry on my shoulders, cause you're rustin my spurs."*

*"I changed her oil, she changed my life."*

*"I keep forgettin I forgot you."*

*"I'm so miserable without you, It's like having you here."*

*"If love were oil, I'd be a quart low."*

*"Learning to live again is killing me."*

*"She got the gold mine, I got the shaft."*

*"She made toothpicks out of the timber of my heart."*

*"They may put me in prison, but they can't stop my face from breaking out."*

*"Velcro arms, teflon heart."*

*"You can't have your Kate and Edith, too."*

*"You're ruining my bad reputation."*

*"I don't know whether to kill myself, or go bowling."*

*"You done tore out my heart, and stomped that sucker flat."*

These song titles are painful, WOW! And to think there are words to these songs...OUCH !!!!!

Mark Ramirez

NALC Branch 782 Health Benefit Representative

BAKERSTFIELD 4TH ANNUAL

# USPS

## 4 ON 4 FLAG FOOTBALL TOURNAMENT



Who: Postal Employees &  
Spouses (+ one ringer)

When: Sunday Feb 9  
9:00 am - 1:30 pm

Where: Liberty Park  
(Brimhall & Jewetta)

Cost: \$50 per team

Call or Txt Kevin Vandiver @ 661-496-9752 w/ questions or to sign up. Sign up deadline is Wed, Feb 5<sup>th</sup>

## Will there be an 8th Annual USPS Tourney??

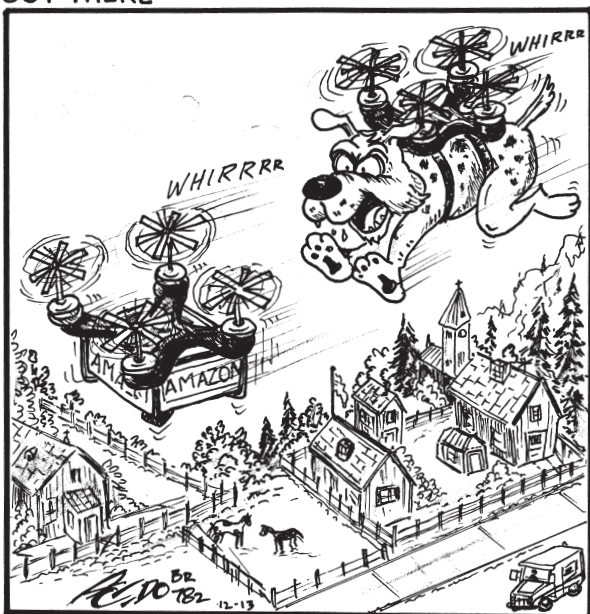
Looking for someone to coordinate this tournament...  
Anyone from any city represented by Branch 782 interested?  
Contact Andrew Garcia 661-912-1087



# Amazon unveils futuristic plan: Delivery by drone

CNN) -- Imaginations everywhere (including that Out There insight of Branch 782 S.A.N.E. Fred Acedo) have been stoked since Amazon CEO Jeff Bezos announced his company plans to start offering 30-minute deliveries via drone-like "octocopters."

OUT THERE



OUT THERE



OUT THERE



## WAR OF THE DRONES

OUT THERE



Let Fred know if you have an idea for a cartoon. You never know...

# from the editor-guy

In by-gone years when Marcelle and I had our house full of those eight children that we were raising, there was probably at least one book for some child in every room in our home.

One of those books by Laura Joffe Numeroff was, no doubt, *If You Give a Mouse a Cookie*. I think I've been living out the plot of that book for the last few weeks.

If you're not familiar with the book, the storyline goes like this: A little boy gives a mouse a cookie because the mouse asks for one. Then, the mouse wants a glass of milk to go with the cookie. After getting the milk, the mouse wants a straw, then scissors, a broom and so on and so on.

You may wonder what this has to do with my world as the Branch 782 Editor-guy.

The Branch computer that I use for the newsletter crashed for the third time and

this time was diagnosed as being "unrepairable". Hmm...*that* could be a problem.

I informed Branch 782 President Mike Towery and Webmaster Rick Plummer about my situation. Rick jumped right on it and started researching what kind of a computer we could get that would give our Branch the most bang for the buck.

Eventually, Mike Towery ordered a new computer and even delivered it to me!

The new computer runs Windows 8. This was an upgrade from what I used on the old computer. Rick Plummer checked to see if the main software that I use for the newsletter would be compatible. I was good to go. Great!

Well, here's where one thing started leading to another.

The scanner that I've been using for years and many, many, many, many of Fred Acedo's cartoons has been a trusted tool that I use all of the time. I got very frustrated trying to get it to work with the new computer. Eventually—after jumping through as many "hoops" as I could think of—I spoke with the Canon service rep. He told me that the old CanoScan 500F was not compatible with Windows 8. My only option was to get a new scanner... Geez!

After another call to Mike Towery, I received the authorization to get a new scanner. I told Mike that I was going to try to get something that wouldn't cost the Branch too much and that it would help that I was getting a "customer loyalty" discount. The scanner arrived at my house two days later.

Back to "the Mouse" thing: Couldn't get the machine to scan with the high resolution that the old unit would give me. For those of you who care, I was used to scanning Fred's cartoons at 1200 dpi. I couldn't get my new tool to scan higher than 300 dpi. I wasn't happy because I thought I was going to have to pay a higher cost for another scanner. Or, I wouldn't be able to feature Fred's cartoons at their best.

## OUT THERE



After working with another phone service representative for about an hour I was happy again because I could now do what I wanted to do with the new scanner. Oh, by the way, after the long time that he'd devoted to this issue the service rep told me that he'd discovered a limitation with the software and he thanked me.

Before I forget, there was one other *major* problem that came up when the old computer crashed. The most recent version of the newsletter mailing list disappeared! I am working on it, but that is a whole different can of worms for me. A less critical problem is that I haven't been able to get the printer to work either. But, that's something that I can deal with without the sense of "impending deadline doom"...

As I close, I want to make sure that both Mike Towery and Rick Plummer know how much I appreciate all of their help to get me up and running again!!!

With all of this said, let's see how another Fred Acedo cartoon looks, eh?

BASIL R. ZUNIGA  
NALC Branch 782 Editor-guy



# Branch Officers

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The opinions expressed in this publication are those of the writer and are not necessarily those of the publication staff or of the Officers of the Branch.

The information contained in this publication is true and complete to our best knowledge. All recommendations, on equipment and procedures are made without guarantees on the part of the authors or of the organization. Because the quality of equipment, services and methods are beyond our control, the organization and its publication authors disclaim all liability incurred in connection with use of this information.

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We invite all members to contribute articles for publication. Copy, if possible, should be double-spaced (but doesn't have to be) but **MUST** be signed by the contributor.

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).

In the hope that material contained herein may be of benefit to the goals of the National Association of Letter Carriers, permission is hereby granted to other NALC Branches to copy or use material and/or cartoons promulgated in this publication with our best wishes...but remember to cite/give us some credit.

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**Rick Plummer, Webmaster**



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**FORWARDING SERVICE REQUESTED**

**General Meeting**  
**Tuesday**  
**January 28, 2013**  
**7:00 p.m.**

Branch 782 Office  
2628 "F" Street  
Bakersfield, California

**Installation  
of  
Branch 782  
Officers  
this month!**

**CATERED  
MEAL!**

**General  
Meeting  
Drawing  
for  
\$300!!!**

**BE THERE!**

OUT THERE

