

National Association of Letter Carriers

Branch 782

E.A. Baker Union Update



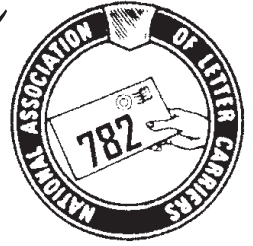
ARVIN
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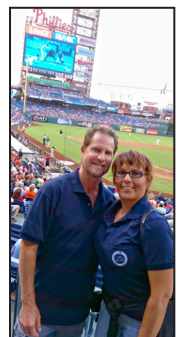
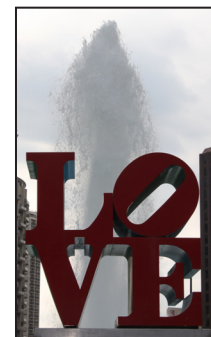
BORON
LAMONT
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CHARTERED FEBRUARY 25, 1901



Web Version

AUGUST 2014



Philadelphia was an amazing experience which required a lot of energy and dedication by your Branch delegates!

Johnny on the Spot



The 69th NALC Biannual Convention was held in Philadelphia, PA from July 21st thru July 25, 2014. Branch 782 sent nine delegates to the convention.

It was business as usual: Classes started at 7:30am and ran til 9:00am, the General session was 10am til about 3:30 most days and finally right after the General session adjourned it was straight to the afternoon classes which went until 5pm or a little after. We actually got out of class so late that the buses that took us from the convention center to our hotel stopped running, so we had to walk back to the hotel.



The General sessions start with the NALC President addressing the delegates with a speech/report on the status on what Headquarters has been doing the past 2 years. Guest speakers appear daily and tell us what and how they are aiding our cause. Committees report on their findings regarding how National is conducting business, then we, the delegates vote to pass or object to their reports/findings.

There are resolutions that are made from various branches across the country that are heard, debated, then voted on by your delegates. The “theme” this year was CCA’s. The CCA topic dominated most of the resolutions made.

There were resolutions approved to negotiate for: CCA Sunday premium; Allow CCA’s to carry over the maximum amount of annual leave currently 440 hours; Including CCA’s to be eligible employees to receive military pay; Allowing CCA’s to put in for mutual exchanges with other CCA’s; Allow Article 25 to apply to CCA’s for bargaining unit work (T-6 details).

Please remember that these are resolutions. These are requests the membership is telling National we want them to bargain for, we still have to negotiate with Postal management to get them resolved.

Postmaster Donohoe is back again with his shrink to survive ideas. He now claims he has the authority to slow down delivery standards and thus is moving forward with a plan to close 82 processing plants. One of those 82 is our very own Bakersfield facility. No big deal right its only clerks jobs. WRONG: If this happens, where do you think all the clerks that don’t have a job anymore are going to go? Exactly!!! They will be placed into the Carrier craft!! The problem with that is we don’t have enough positions for them either. We currently have eleven PTF’s waiting to become regular (Contractually they have to be converted by 2016). There were plans to convert more this month but that has been stopped in its tracks by Postal management at the Area level in anticipation that the Bakersfield P & DC will be closing.



This also means they are going to put us in a withholding status again. This means when a job goes unbid and becomes a residual position the Area snags it up and holds it in anticipation of excessing. Previously when this has occurred we have promoted the senior PTF into the position. What is going to happen to our CCA’s. How is there going to be enough hours left over for them. I am not trying to “scare” anybody. I want you all to be educated on what we are all facing.

Now for some good news. As I write this article there are fifty Senators signed on to a one year moratorium delaying the closure of these plants. It buys us some time if we can get it passed. The truth is Congress could have fixed all of our issues long ago, but they are unwilling to compromise and thus get nothing done.

The elections in November of this year will have a big effect on us. COLCPE, COLCPE COLCPE is how we get our voice heard on Capitol Hill, its how we get Labor friendly candidates elected, its how we protect our jobs!!! Five bucks a pay period is all we ask for.

Respectfully,

JOHN ORTEGA
Branch 782 Vice-President

Minutes of the July 2014 General Meeting

The regular meeting of Branch 782 was called to order by President, Mike Towery at 7:00 p.m. on the 22nd day of July, 2014 at the branch office, Bakersfield. The flag salute was led by Sgt. at Arms, Vice President, John Ortega; Financial Secretary, Anita Holderman; Trustees, Darryl Holderman and Frank Martinez who were attending the National Convention. The stewards were present from Arvin, Downtown, Lamont, Hillcrest, Oildale and South. Also present was S.A.N.E., Fred Acedo; Webmaster, Rick Plummer; OWCP Representative, Rick Gerdes and Asst. Treasurers, Debbie Guillet and Lucinda Martinez. The minutes of the June 24, 2014 were read and accepted with no additions or corrections. The communications were read.

APPLICATION FOR MEMBERSHIP: An application was received from Becky Marie Lamb from Boron.

REPORTS OF STANDING AND SPECIAL COMMITTEES: Teresa Ortega reported that the picnic will be held at Jastro Park on October 12. Molly Biggar reported that two books were sold this evening, there are 1202 books remaining.

GOOD OF THE ASSOCIATION: Mike Towery reported that the delegates are attending the National Convention this week. They will be attending classes in

the morning prior to the convention and in the afternoon following the convention business sessions.

IMPROVEMENT OF THE ASSOCIATION: A discussion was held regarding the air conditioning. The unit in the steward office needs a new compressor. Molly Biggar will check into the cost of a new compressor versus a new unit. Mike Towery acknowledged former Bakersfield carrier Ron Gross who is visiting. Webmaster Rick Plummer reported that the newsletter is not on the website yet, but will be soon.

FINANCIAL SECRETARY'S REPORT: Treasurer Molly Biggar reported that the income for July is \$12,404.49.

TREASURER'S REPORT: Molly Biggar reported:

May 2014	June 2014	
Beginning Balance	\$79,657.09	\$86,232.56
Dues & Income	\$11,458.37	\$17,711.95
Interest Income	0	0
Total Balance	\$91,115.74	\$103,944.51
Total Expenses	\$ 4,882.90	\$ 24,731.54
Ending Balance	\$86,232.56	\$ 79,212.97

The MDA 50/50 Drawing was won by Mike Munoz.

The General Meeting Drawing for \$500.00 would have been won by Michael Hall, if he had been present.

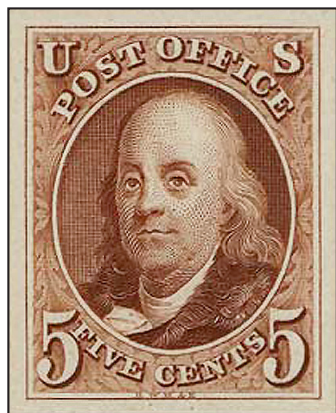
There were 31 members present.

The meeting adjourned at 7:16 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,

KIM GERDES
NALC Branch 782 Recording Secretary

Non-Member List July 2014*



Downtown Station

S. Kirby
J. Cruz

South Station *100% UNION!!!*

Brundage/East Bakersfield

D. Kinglee

Hillcrest *100% UNION!!!*

Dole Court

D. Morris
S. Hancock

Stockdale

J. Oh
M. Martinez
S. G. Flippen

Camino Media

C. Rodriguez

Arvin *100% UNION!!!*

Avenal

B. Howard

California City

S. T. Ivory

Delano

L.A. Campos
C.V. Quebral

Lamont

E. Gonzales

Ridgecrest

S. P. Pierce
G.D. Weaver
B. Leroy

Shafter

M. D. Voights
L. M. New

Taft

A. Veach
B. M. Krier
K. J. Hughes
T. Bullard
A. M. Rodriguea

Tehachapi *100% UNION!!!*

Trona *100% UNION!!!*

Wasco *100% UNION!!!*

*CCA names are in italics.

The Sombrotto Poem Tribute Project has been completed!



Basil requested that Branch 782 Photographer Anita Holderman take some photos of the process of preparing the framed prints for shipping. Anita, and her husband (Branch 782 Trustee Darryl Holderman) came to my home and she took a few photos. Anita prepared the photo shoot as though it was going to be printed in *Newsweek* magazine! Anita and I adjusted the lighting to reduce any glare as Darryl watched/directed and drank cold beer from my fridge.

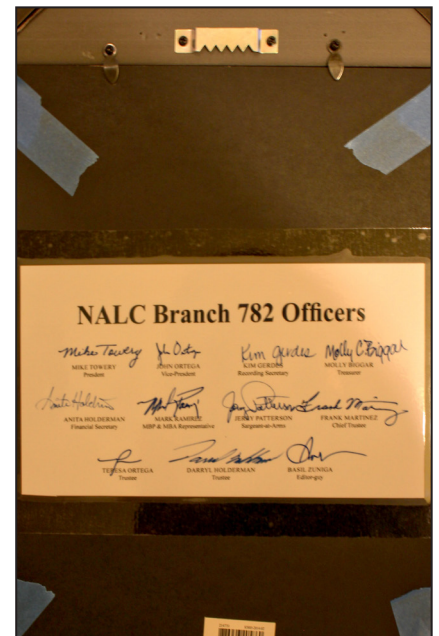


Darryl Holderman and Mark Ramirez dedicated to quality testing the packing materials!

President Emeritus Bill Young; NALC National Chief Trustee and Los Angeles, California Branch 24 President Larry Brown; and, John Beaumont, President of the California State Association of Letter Carriers. We also kept one copy which will be on display in the Branch 782 office.

MARK RAMIREZ
NALC Health Benefit Representative
and (poet at large)
Golden Empire Merged
Branch 782

The signed back of the plaque.



Pictures by Branch 782 Photographer Anita Holderman.

As some members of Branch 782 know, Branch editor Basil Zuniga and I discussed sending a framed copy of my tribute to Vincent Sombrotto to our national NALC headquarters, to past NALC President Bill Young, to the members of the California State Association of Letter Carriers, and to the members of a couple more NALC Branches.

With Branch approval, I purchased six frames, and matting to accomplish the project. Assembling the framed, matted poems was very simple. The difficult part was packaging the five for shipping.

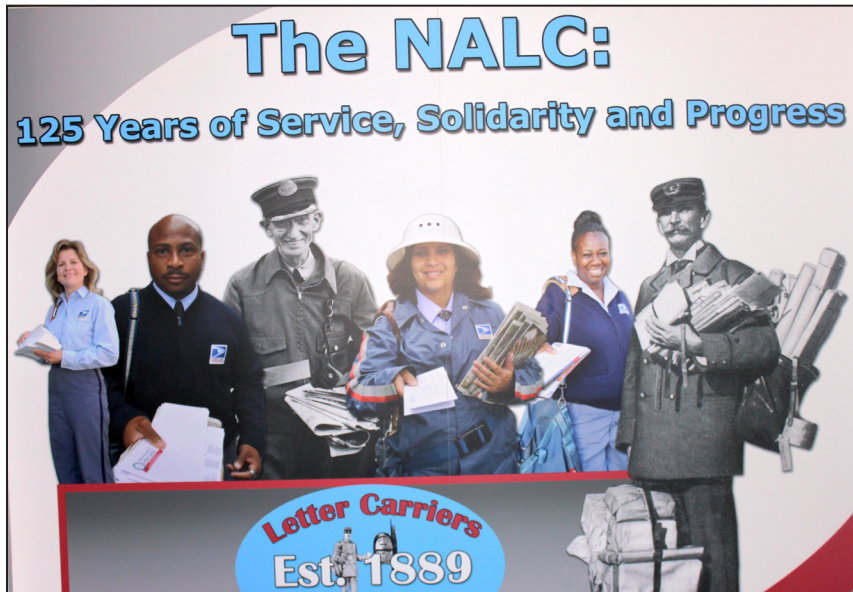
It took me almost five hours, because I carefully packaged the poems expecting a “bumpy” trip and wanted to make sure that they got to their destinations intact.

In finishing a separate project, I also had Manny Peralta’s framed poem ready to package and ship and Anita took photos of this item, also. Anita took a couple photos of me and my old dog “Missy” to add to the reality of the moment.



Mark Ramirez and “Missy”.

On behalf of the members of Branch 782, framed Sombrotto poems were sent to NALC President Fredrick Rolando in Washington, DC; Branch 36 “Vincent R. Sombrotto Branch” President Charlie Higgee in New York, NY; Past National



Vincent R. Sombrotto was, arguably, the best NALC President ever...

H.R. 2291 is a done deal!

Last Friday, President Barack Obama signed into law H.R. 2291, a bill to designate New York City's Grand Central Station post office in honor of former NALC President Vincent R. Sombrotto.

Now that this great honor to Vince is official, the Postal Service will work with Rep. Carolyn Maloney (D-NY), the bill's original sponsor, to prepare a dedication ceremony.

It is gratifying to see this simple yet profound honor bestowed on our cherished former president. A heartfelt "thank you" to all NALC activists whose hard work helped make this possible.

In solidarity,

FREDRIC ROLANDO

President
National Association
of Letter Carriers

LAWRENCE "LARRY" BROWN
PRESIDENT

STEVEN E. ABASTA
EXECUTIVE VICE-PRESIDENT

GEORGE RODRIGUEZ
VICE-PRESIDENT



Angel City Branch No. 24

National Association of Letter Carriers AFL-CIO

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(213) 483-7813
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7-29-2014

President Mike Towery
NALC Golden Empire Branch 782
2628 F Street
Bakersfield, CA. 93301

Dear Brother Towery and the Members of Branch 782,

We were honored to receive the impressive *Tribute to Vincent R. Sombrotto Poem*. We share the sentiments of Branch 782's Brothers and Sisters. We too believe Vincent R. Sombrotto was a "one of a kind" great Leader. Now we have a "one of a kind" great poem about him that is hanging in a place of honor at our Union Hall --where visiting Delegates of the next 2016 National Convention will enjoy the poem as we are.

Best regards to you, Mike, and all the Members of Branch 782,

President Lawrence "Larry" Brown, and the Members of Branch 24

THANK YOU to all the members of our union!!

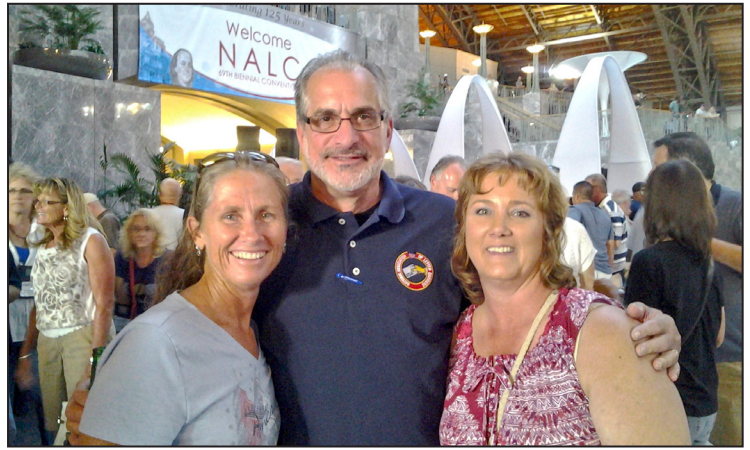
We are the best union in the nation and I hope that you all realize that! We are strong together in unity, commitment, and perseverance. I was blessed once again by our members to attend the 69th National Convention in Philadelphia. We have been united for 125 years!



Norma says, "Okay, Anita, you're not the only one who can take a candid picture for the newsletter!! I hope you like this, too!"



Branch 782 delegate Randy Courson captured exploring "The Long and The Short" of the reception festivities in Philadelphia.



Norma Hamer and Shari Sharp enjoy being greeted by NALC President Fred Rolando at the opening reception on Sunday afternoon.

There were several workshops that were offered over the course of the week. The first day I attended the Social Security workshop and the "Take 5 for your future: investing in the Thrift Savings Plan". If you do not have some sort of a retirement or savings plan going, it is never too late to start. Investing in your retirement future should not be something that you overlook, or think that you'll get to later. Planning ahead for your financial future is the best investment that you can make. The rest of the week's afternoon classes were spent in Shop Steward training while the week's morning classes were on Mutual Benefit Association, Safety and Health, Filling F/T Regular Opportunities, and processing grievances.

Even with a full week's class schedule, I was still able to spend some of the vacation time enjoying our country's history and checking out the sights.

The Tuesday night we were there, we were able to go to a Philly's game. Honestly, I am not a baseball fan, but I did enjoy my time there. Shari and I met a retired City Letter Carrier named Chuck Hirl. He worked out of the Philadelphia Station 19148. He was able to get us some seats closer to the batter's box. Players' families usually sat where we were able to sit. He mentioned to us that there were quite a few retired Letter Carriers that worked at the stadium. What an awesome job to have after one retires!! Especially if you like baseball... J.

I urge you to go to the NALC.org website and check out all the useful tools that any Letter Carrier may need. From legislative to CCA rights, from new scanners to health benefits; there is so much useful information here, right at your fingertips.

In Solidarity,

NORMA HAMER



Spare you the details? Nope!!

First and foremost I would like to thank all of the membership for entrusting me to represent them as a delegate to the 69th Biennial Convention of the National Association of Letter Carriers in Philadelphia this year!

I hope I can do the membership justice with the information and knowledge I was able to gain, retain, and eventually implement.

It's difficult to list all the classes and activities that were involved and it was physically impossible to attend them all. I'll spare you the details of the early morning ritual to get to class and the late afternoon classes that ran later than the shuttle buses back to the hotels.

I will say that it was the most historic place I've been to date and I can't thank the membership enough for it. It was everything from the Liberty Bell, Independence Hall, and the Betsy Ross house to the design of the city. The buildings (City Hall) and the churches were



all cloaked in history. And of course the famous Rocky steps! (I did NOT run them.)



I could probably go on and on about the history; but, I know our newsletter isn't that big.

The main issue I *did* want to write about is meant mostly for the eyes of our CCAs. However, it's important for *everybody* to get this message to be able to pass the information on to our CCAs.

The issues concerning CCAs basically dominated the convention floor. There were resolutions proposed from all over the country. And, the messages were always the same: **LET'S TRY AND GET MORE FOR OUR CCAs!**

Choose an issue: Annual Leave carryover, inclusion in Article 10, retirement contributions, same uniform allotment methods as career Carriers, higher level bargaining unit work and pay (T-6 opt that isn't an opt it's a higher level detail!), holiday pay, and Sunday premium pay.

And—of course, restore higher basic pay to the levels that were in place prior to the Das arbitration award!

It really bothers me when somebody complains that the issue of pay for CCAs in the new Contract was something that the NALC agreed to.

What the NALC *did* agree to was to enter binding arbitration and that the arbitrator would basically make both parties do what he/she said.

I understand that pay was a Big Issue; but, nobody seems to remember to look at the gains that *were* made including a direct path to career employment. **THIS WAS HUGE!**

I know it doesn't help when upper management is constantly telling the CCAs that if they don't like it they can quit; or, if they don't like working Sundays or holidays they don't need to be here.

I understand the meaning behind their message. But, management's delivery needs some work... I don't want any CCAs to let that discourage them.

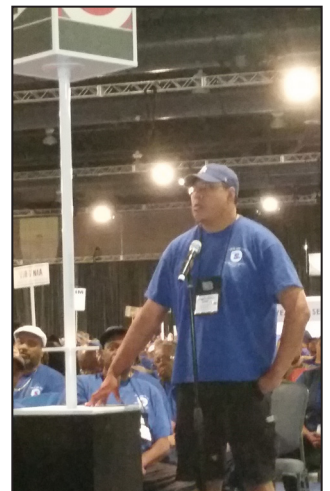
On the other hand. I get discouraged with the number of CCAs becoming 204Bs. I can't get my head around why anybody would want to perform work for which a career employee would be paid a **MUCH** higher level of pay. CCAs receive the **same level of pay they get now...**only they just took on the added stress.

Management wanted to pay CCAs less than they're making now (they were offering minimum wage). Now, management wants to get you to do their supervisor work for the same level of pay the arbitra-

tor gave you to carry mail. **THINK ABOUT THIS...**

I'm also a little disappointed with management for allowing *some* of our CCAs to become 204Bs. If they have a number of years under their belt, then it does make a little sense. But, how do they have somebody that has carried mail for about 3 months directing a 35-40 year veteran on how to perform their duties?

Ever heard of paying your dues?



This leads me into my final thought.

I can't stress enough how important it is that **ALL** Carriers join the union. It's very important that we come together in solidarity to mentor our new Carriers and instill in them the virtues of the NALC and everything it has done for countless Carrier families across the country.

God Bless America and God Bless the NALC!

Respectfully,

MIKE MEZA
NALC Branch 782
NALC Area Steward

A Busy Convention



Philadelphia, for one week, was known as the city of “Union Brotherly and Sisterly Love” as some 6300 Letter Carriers from all over the country descended on that incredible city. Our NALC national convention was held in the birthplace of what would be a hard-fought struggle for our freedoms. We should all be proud to be Americans and we should all be proud to be members of the National Association of Letter Carriers!

At every convention that I attend, I try to look and listen for what seems to be the most important themes. Our national officers had two specific items that came up again and again over the course of the five days that the delegates were convened.

The first issue that stood out was: “How can Letter Carriers help the USPS to remain

viable in a competitive market seeking to survive an economy faced with a serious downturn?” One great idea has surfaced. The USPS could generate income by establishing a postal banking system. Other countries have done this and it has been a beneficial option for citizens. The Government Accounting Office released reports on the potential revenue which could be expected. It was an impressive amount. In fact, it would more than pay for the prefunding which Congress has been saddled with.



If Postmaster Donahoe were to be believed, the USPS is losing billions of dollars. He has repeatedly failed to report the truth: ***The USPS would have an operating profit except for the billions of dollars which must be paid into prefunding.***

His strategy is to sell off prime properties (which have long been paid for); look to slash and burn services provided by Postal employees in what amounts to contracting out to a business like Staples; and—in a tactic that would

create a death spiral—going to five day delivery.

Postmaster General Donahoe doesn’t seem to look for ways to promote the USPS as a successful organization. He has, in effect told anyone who will listen, that the USPS can’t handle the business that we have. His solution? Close down more processing plants. That will slow the mail down even more. His “solution” to save the Post Office? Eliminate 6-day delivery.

The second major item that we heard a lot about had to do with City Carrier Assistants (CCAs). There were many resolutions presented during the course of the convention which sought to improve the worklives of this

newest category of postal employees. Despite the efforts of NALC National Officers, many CCAs are frustrated. Some blame the NALC.

I want to educate everyone that the CCA category came out of

the decision of an arbitrator in “binding arbitration”. Although the reward established that there would be a path to a future career status, there was also a serious downside in reduced compensation. However, despite the fact that neither the USPS nor the NALC were happy with the end result, the decision of the arbitrator is “binding” on each party.

In the morning (prior to the start of the convention) training classes were

offered. And, when the convention adjourned for the day, information was presented in additional sessions. I took advantage of this and attended a Health and Safety class, Trustee training, and History of the Postal Strike. There was also a *very* interesting a Steward seminar which was conducted over a series of days. That class presented a real removal case and participants were asked to actively present suggestions on how to establish the best possible case on part of the grievant. (In fact, a decision on the case we reviewed is still pending.

Overall, this was a great convention to attend. Thank you to all who voted for me to be your delegate. My involvement has given me the opportunity to learn more to help make all of our jobs go smoothly.

DARRYL HOLDERMAN
Branch 782 Trustee and
93304 Shop Steward



Putting on this Convention took a Rocky Commitment!

The 69th Biennial NALC National Convention was held in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania from July 21 - 25, 2014. I can't



imagine what goes into planning for such a large event!

This year, the Convention hosted 6,376 Letter Carrier delegates from all 50

states, Washington D.C. and Puerto Rico. 588 Branches from across the country were represented. Branch 782—your branch—sent nine delegates to represent YOU!

The numerous committees and volunteers that are needed for such an event is CRAZY!

Let's start with securing the meeting site (which was the Philadelphia Convention Center) for convention and workshops.

For the workshops, learning materials are needed. This year, there were more than 45 different classes offered! That means

that workbooks and/or handouts had to be compiled.

Each delegate received a "Bag O Goodies" which included workbooks, the Contract, city information, proposed resolutions and amendments and much, much, much more! (By the way...each bag had to weigh at the very least a good fifteen pounds!) A committee member put one of each item in each bag.

Members of the Distribution Committee are needed to hand out material for a class if it was not included in the previously mentioned heavy-weight bag.

Let's talk about the logistics of getting over 6300 delegates housed and transported back and forth from hotel and convention center. There were twenty-five hotels that were utilized in Philadelphia. Full sized busses were used making round trips every 10 to 15 minutes. There were five different routes with several stops (4,5 maybe even 6 hotel stops) per route.

Then, there is getting an agenda in place to cover five days of actual convention. This year, there were numerous speakers such as Congressman Mike Fitzpatrick (R-PA) and Amanda Renteria who is running for

the house seat in the 21st district. (That includes Kern County.)

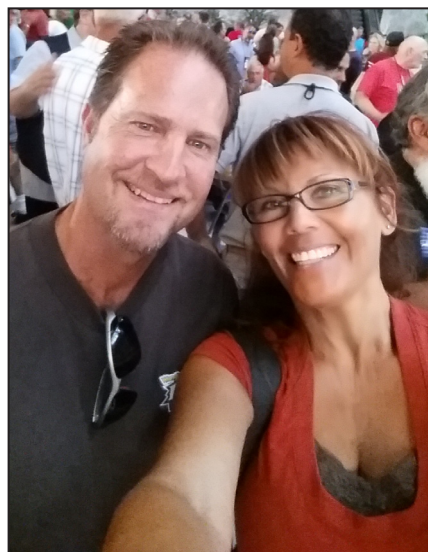
There were also some non-political speakers who addressed us at the convention.

MSNBC's Ed Schultz and MDA Amba-



sador, eight year old Reagan Imhoff, also spoke to us. And, this just names a few of the people we heard.

Awards were given to Branches with the most pounds collected in the annual "Stamp out Hunger Food Drive" as well as awards for best organized totals and most MDA dollar donations.



This is just a small glimpse at what goes into getting all these Letter Carriers together.

The next convention is set for August 15-19, 2016 in Los Angeles, California.

Because this city is so much cloer to us, this is a great opportunity to send many more members from our Branch. I would like to thank all my Brothers and Sisters from this Branch who voted to send me to represent you in Philadelphia.

ANITA HOLDERMAN
Convention Delegate
and

Financial Secretary, Branch 782



It was my honor, privilege *and* responsibility to have been your delegate to the NALC convention.

The biggest investment made by any delegate is time.

We have to wake up early enough to find a place to have some food. (I suppose that having breakfast might not be a priority for some folks, but it is for me!) We then board the earliest possible bus from our hotel to the site of the convention so that we can get a good seat in the room where training will be conducted.

Classes start at 7:30 and end a short time before the convention day begins. Attendance is one sure way to ensure that the Branch receives a “return on investment”. It costs a lot of money to send a delegate to an event like this.

Our national officers, once more, presented a full array of workshops that covered many distinct areas of concern that NALC activists should become proficient in dealing with. At the risk of boring any of you who might not even care, these topics were the object of focus:

MONDAY — Social Security; City Delivery; Effective Branch Communications; Processing Grievances—Start to Finish; NALC Constitution, Elections and By-Laws; NALC and the Muscular Dystrophy Association: Providing Help and Hope; Critical Incident Stress Management; Shop Steward Training School (a class presented over the course of four days); NALC and Capitol Hill; Take 5 for Your Future: Investing in the Thrift Savings Plan; Managing Branch Finance—A Study of Basic Operations; and The Postal Service in 2025.

TUESDAY — The Postal Service in 2025; Trustees Training; FERS, CSRS and CSRS Offset; Mutual Benefit Association: The Fourth Quarter; City Delivery, Building NALC’s Legislative and Political Power; Three Ways to be Appealing—Appealing OWCP Denials; Community and Membership Outreach; and Understanding the LM-3.

WEDNESDAY — NALC Health Benefit Plan - 101; Women and Leadership; Route Adjustments; Safety and Health—We All Must Get Involved; Contract Administration Unit and Q & A; Common Sense Economics; Hard Travelin’ with Woody; Letter Carrier Food Drive; and, Communicating our Message.

THURSDAY — New Fiduciary Officer Training: What you need to know about Finance, Membership and Record-keeping; Filling Full-Time Regular Opportunities—M-01834; Suicide Prevention; How to Influence Congress: An Insiders Panel; Getting In—College Planning for Letter Carriers and their Children; and, The Emerging Trends in International Postal Services

FRIDAY — NALC Activists Deliver the Message; Branch Secretary-Treasurer Training: Do’s and Don’ts; and The Strike at 40.



You can form your own opinions about whether or not this seems as impressive a list as it seemed to be to me.

While it is hard to distill all the things that I came away with from each of the classes that I participated in, I do have a few highlights that I want to share with you.

Many times, attendees bring to the workshop varying levels of familiarity with the material and sometimes have had years and years of experience. During presentations, I’ve often noticed that it’s not uncommon to see a comment spurring a side conversation of a grievance or scenario that might be “playing out” back in their units.

One class was different. I even found myself going to a microphone to share something along these lines with Manny Peralta who was facilitating the training. I think that I said, “I did something today that I don’t normally do. I sat in the back of the class. Usually, I see different conversations breaking out all over the place as the training is being conducted. I haven’t seen any of that during *this* class. I want to commend you for looking for a way to deal with a very difficult topic.”

What was being explored? Over the course of the last four years, seventy-two Letter Carriers have committed suicide...

President Rolando has determined that this is unacceptable and is trying to explore ways to keep another suicide from ever happening again.



There is a definite pace to the way that business is conducted by President Rolando. It is fast. Numerous reports are presented. Votes are taken. Awards are conferred. Any number of delegates

— representing different locations and regions around the United States — arise to make statements/ask questions/raise issues/seek clarification. Guest speakers speak. Nominations are made. Cheers erupt. The bands play music.



And, over the course of the five days, delegates have the opportunity to visit with old friends and form new friendships. Those new to the convention meet and establish relationships with Letter Carriers from all over the country.



One of my personal favorite memories in the convention hall was seeing Dale Hart. He is a long time NALC activist who was ultimately a long-serving National Business Agent and then an NALC National Officer as the Director of City Delivery. After his retirement, Dale's life was seriously impacted by an accident which has left him in a wheelchair.

Despite obvious hurdles, Dale addressed the convention floor and evoked some of that old fire in making his remarks.

I have another memory that makes me grin. To provide some context, I have to tell you that each month after we prepare the newsletters for mailing, there are always newsletters left over. Instead of throwing them away, I box them up month after month and store them. At the end of two years, there are quite a lot of old newsletters...and quite a lot of



Fred Acedo cartoons, too. The old newsletters are shipped to the convention city and they are passed out to the delegates.

But, I don't do this by myself. I enlist the help of the other Branch 782 delegates. Together, we placed them in a somewhat systematic way on as many of the 6,300 seats that folks would be sitting in. Fellow Branch delegates don't whine. Much.

It's really fun for me to see NALC members from all over the country poring over some of the pages and laughing at the humor in Fred's work.

Before I get carried away with more "convention" things, I need to share with you that one of the best things that delegates can make time to do after our duties are fulfilled has to do with getting around and checking out the convention city. Philadelphia was an amazing place to explore!!! (Thank you Anita Holderman!!! Without you, there would not have been such a pictorial record of places seen or things that were experienced!!!)



In closing, I do have to report that for me (personally) travel to and from this convention was memorable.

For some reason, I had it in my head that we were all leaving for LAX on Saturday evening and I had planned to finish up my packing and preparation on Friday evening. Late Friday, I got a phone call asking where I was because John and Annette Ortega were sitting outside my house waiting to pick me up. I was in Wasco visiting with some folks. I raced back and we all eventually made our flight. Embarrassing to say the least!

And, then? On the way home, I slept with John and Annette Ortega...in the Phoenix airport. We missed a connection.

BASIL R. ZUNIGA

A Focus on Our Future: CCA Jason Boutwell.....

Jason has been a City Carrier Assistant since February 2013. He worked as a Casual employee for a long time. His dad told him about the CCA position opening up, so he applied. He knew the job was going to be hard going into it. Last year was harder for him since he had medical issues with his leg. With those medical issues resolved, he loves the job now. He considers this is a long term career for him.

Before working for the USPS, Jason worked in the oilfields for close to ten years. He worked on oil platforms in the ocean and eventually was a Casual employee at the Bakersfield Plant for about 4 years. Jason shares that, "This job is a whole lot harder than any oilfield job I've done."

He hopes it will be rewarding in the long run. Just knowing that, when he wakes up in the morning, he has a job and not going to get laid off is a very important thing that he really appreciates!

The training when he was hired was very good. He got trained in Delano. He does notice that some of the things in Delano are different here in Bakersfield than how things are done compared to a smaller AO.

Jason usually comes in after his assignment that he has to do for the day has been cased and pulled down. It would be easier for him to get through the day if he knew who cased his flats, if they cased the accountables, or if there is anything else that he might need to know...like problems with dogs!

He shares that his family supports him in his decision to become a Postal employee. His dad, John Boutwell, has worked at the GMF for about twenty-five years and is still there. His grandfather, Jack Boutwell, worked there for a long time and retired a long time ago. Sadly, Jack passed away two years ago.

He has never gotten bitten by a dog—BUT dogs have ripped his pants and shoes!

Jason shares that the best part of the job would be the gratitude from customers! A "Thank You" goes a long way when he hands them a their package. The worst part would be moving around from station to station or route to route. It is *really* difficult.

Jason states, "Honestly, I don't like this Sunday delivery thing. Ask *any* Carrier. They will agree. The day should be spent with family."

As a final comment, Jason would like to say to all the CCAs that are having a hard time, "Stick with it. It does get easier." He knows that NALC is here for him and would like to get more involved and knowledgeable about his future.

As reported by:

MABEL BULLIS
East Brundage Carrier

OUT THERE





Not just CCAs should know this info~

Discipline Procedure

CCAs have access to the grievance procedure when disciplined or removed. If you are disciplined or removed, let your

Shop Steward or a Branch Officer know as soon as possible. The Union can file a grievance on your behalf, but it must be filed within 14 days of the date you receive discipline. In order to give your Shop Steward the most time possible to investigate and prepare a grievance, it is always best to let them know as soon as possible.

Section 3. OTHER PROVISIONS E. Article 16 – Discipline Procedure found on pages 143-144 of the National Agreement states: E. Article 16 – Discipline Procedure CCAs may be separated for lack of work at any time before the end of their term. Separations for lack of work shall be by inverse relative standing in the installation. Such separation of the CCA(s) with the lowest relative standing is not grievable except where it is alleged that the separation is pretextual. CCAs separated for lack of work before the end of their term will be given preference for reappointment ahead of other CCAs with less relative standing in the installation, provided the need for hiring arises within 18 months of their separation.

CCAs may be disciplined or removed within the term of their appointment for just cause and any such discipline or removal will be subject to the grievance arbitration procedure, provided that within the immediately preceding six months, the employee has completed ninety (90) work days, or has been employed for 120 calendar days (whichever comes first) of their initial appointment. A CCA who has previously satisfied the 90/120 day requirement either as a CCA or transitional employee (with an appointment made after September 29, 2007), will have access to the grievance procedure without regard to his/her length of service as a CCA.

Further, while in any such grievance the concept of progressive discipline will not apply, discipline should be corrective in nature. In the case of removal for cause within the term of an appointment, a CCA shall be entitled to advance written notice of the charges against him/her in accordance with the provisions of Article 16 of the National Agreement.

Weingarten Rights

If called to a meeting with management, postal inspectors, or an Office of Inspector General (OIG) agent, read the following state-

ment to the person you are meeting with before the meeting starts: “If this discussion could in any way lead to my being disciplined or terminated, or affect my personal working conditions, I respectfully request that my union representative, Officer, or Steward be present at this meeting. Without my Union representation present, I respectfully choose not to answer any questions or participate in this discussion.”

Federal labor law gives each employee “the right to representation during any investigative interview which he or she has reason to believe may lead to discipline.” These rights are known as Weingarten rights.

Many Letter Carriers do not know about their Weingarten rights. If you do not know about this right, please read this carefully. It is simple, yet many fail to exercise this powerful right.

An employee has Weingarten representation rights only where he or she reasonably believes that discipline could result from the investigative interview. It is important to remember that it is the employee who must reasonably believe that discipline could result, not the manager.

Whether or not an employee’s belief is “reasonable” depends on the circumstances. Some cases are obvious, such as when a supervisor asks an employee if they discarded deliverable mail. Generally, if you are asked a question concerning something you allegedly did wrong, you should reasonably believe that discipline could result.

Management is not obligated to inform you of your right to representation. The Steward cannot exercise your Weingarten rights for you. **YOU** must ask for representation. If **YOU** do not ask for a Steward, you have given up your right to have representation present.

No matter how smart you think you are, no matter how innocent you are, you should never under any circumstances participate in an investigative interview without a Steward present.

If called to a meeting with management, postal inspectors, or an OIG agent, remain respectful and calm and read the paragraph in italics at the beginning of this section to the person you are meeting with before the meeting starts. **The manager, inspector, or OIG agent conducting the interview is then required by law to provide you with your Steward.**

Please remember to take advantage of this right.

Note: If you are interrogated on a matter that could possibly lead to criminal charges, you should immediately seek the advice of an attorney in addition to requesting your shop steward.

Source: *NALC City Carrier Assistant — Rights and Benefits*
published in April 2014

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
NURSE ASSISTANT (24/7)	1-877-220-6252
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
CIGNA Dental Discount Program	1-877-521-0244
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
Shared Services (Retirees Info!!!)	1-877-477-3273

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

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

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

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

CVS MinuteClinic

MinuteClinic walk-in medical clinics are staffed by nurse practitioners and physician assistants who provide treatment for common family illnesses and injuries, administer vaccinations, conduct physicals and wellness screenings, and offer monitoring for chronic conditions.

Practitioners can diagnose, treat and write prescriptions for common family illnesses as strep throat, bladder infections, pink eye and infections of the ears, nose and throat; provide common vaccinations for flu, pneumonia, pertussis and hepatitis among others; treat minor wounds, abrasions, joint sprains and skin conditions such as poison ivy, ringworm and acne; provide a range of wellness services, including sports and camp physicals, smoking cessation and TB testing; offer routine lab tests, instant results and education for those with diabetes, high cholesterol, high blood pressure or asthma.

Contact Mark Ramirez for more specific answers to questions that you may have about the CVS MinuteClinic services.

Laughter is Good for the Soul!

Just because someone doesn't love you the way you want them to, doesn't mean they don't love you with all they have.

Ralph and Edna were both patients in a mental hospital. One day while they were walking past the hospital swimming pool, Ralph suddenly jumped into the deep end. He sank to the bottom of the pool and stayed there.

Edna promptly jumped in to save him. She swam to the bottom and pulled him out. When the Head Nurse Director became aware of Edna's heroic act, she immediately ordered her to be discharged from the hospital, as she now considered Edna to be mentally stable.

In her office, the Head Nurse Director said, "Edna, I have good news and bad news. The good news is you're being discharged, since you were able to rationally respond to a crisis by jumping in and saving the life of the person you love... I have concluded that your act displays sound mindedness. The bad news is: Ralph hung himself in the bathroom with his bathrobe belt right after you saved him. I am so sorry, but he's dead."

Edna replied, "He didn't hang himself, I put him there to dry. How soon can I go home?"

You think you have pressure?

An older gentleman was on the operating table awaiting surgery and he insisted that his son, a renowned surgeon, perform the operation. As he was about to get the anesthesia, he asked to speak to his son.

"Yes, Dad, what is it?"

"Don't be nervous, son. Do your best, and just remember, if it doesn't go well—if something happens to me—your mother is going to come and live with you and your wife..."

Wives missing in Walmart!

Two guys, one old, one young, are pushing their carts around Wal-Mart when they collide. The old guy says to the young guy, "Sorry about that. I'm

looking for my wife, and I guess I wasn't paying attention to where I was going."

The young guy says, "That's OK. I guess it's a coincidence. I'm looking for my wife, too. I can't find her and I'm getting a little desperate."

The old guy says, "Well, maybe I can help you find her. What does she look like?"

The young guy says, "Well, she is 27 years old, tall, with red hair, blue eyes, is buxom wearing no bra, long legs, and is wearing short shorts. What does your wife look like?"

To which the old guy says, "Doesn't matter. Let's look for yours."

An Extraordinary Palate!!

At a wine merchant's warehouse the regular taster died, and the director started looking for a new one to hire.

A retired Coast Guard Chief Petty Officer—drunk and with a ragged dirty look—came to apply for the position. The director wondered how to send him away and decided that he would go through the motions of letting him try out for the job.

They gave him a glass of wine to taste.

The old Chief tried it and said, "It's a Muscat three years old, grown on a north slope, matured in steel containers. Low grade but acceptable."

"That's correct," said the boss. "Another glass, please."

"It's a cabernet, eight years old, southwestern slope, oak barrels, matured at eight degrees. Requires three more years for finest results."

"Absolutely correct. A third glass."

"It's a pinot blanc champagne, high grade and exclusive," said the old drunk calmly.

The director was astonished and winked at

his secretary to suggest something. She left the room and came back in with a glass of urine.

The old Chief tasted it.

"It's a blonde, 26 years old and three months pregnant. And? If I don't get the job, I'll name the father."

Humor is in the car of the beholder...

A doctor addressing a large audience in Oxford :

"The material we put into our stomachs should have killed most of us sitting here, years ago. Red meat is full of steroids and dye. Soft drinks corrode your stomach lining. Chinese food is loaded with MSG. High trans-fat diets can be disastrous and none of us realizes the long-term harm caused by germs in our drinking water. But, there is one thing that is the most dangerous of all and most of us have, or will eat it. Can anyone



here tell me what food it is that causes the most grief and suffering for years after eating it?"

After several seconds of quiet, a 70-year-old man in the front row raised his hand, and softly asked...

"Wedding Cake"?



Through the Lens of David Lomas



**Robert Nicholas
3rd Annual Tournament
June 22, 2014
Patriot's Park**





What does this picture mean to you?

If you say (but most importantly, actually do a) STOP, then you are a rare breed! More and more there are people doing “California Rolls” through these things called STOP signs. As stated in the California Gov California Handbook Manual, the following information is stated: “The shape and color of a sign offers you a clue about the information contained on the sign. Here are the common shapes used: An eight-sided red sTOP sign indicates that you must make a full “STOP” when- ever you see this sign. Stop at the white limit line (a wide white line

painted on the street) or before en- tering the crosswalk. If a limit line or crosswalk is not painted on the street, stop before entering the in- tersection. Check traffic in all di- rections before proceeding

For those of you who didn’t know, “California Rolls” are delicious sushi made of avocado, crab meat, and cucumber wrapped in seaweed BUT the one I’m referring to means, “To fail to make a COMPLETE stop at a red light or stop sign, especially when turning”. (<http://www.urbandictionary.com/define.php?term=California+roll>)

Even other states refer this action as a “California Roll”... hm-mm I wonder why? Are we that famous for such a thing?

What’s even better is driving up to a 4 ways STOP sign and seeing an accident, Cottonwood Road and Feliz Drive happens. Hmmm if 2 people were suppose to have stopped, how are their cars banged up enough NOT to drive?

Take a moment next time you are driving or just sit in a parking lot in front of a STOP sign and see exactly how many people still make those complete stops!

MABEL BULLIS

OUT THERE



OUT THERE



Have an Idea for Fred?*

Fred Acedo
 Br. 782 S.A.N.E.
 P.O. Box 6532
 Bakersfield, CA
 93386-6532

** You never know what you might get...*

Guest Editorial

by Jerry Fitzsimmons,
NALC Branch 82 Vice-President

This year marks my 30th year as a Letter Carrier. I have seen many changes to the Letter Carrier job in those thirty years. But, the core of the City Carrier job hasn't changed that much in all that time. In fact, it really hasn't changed much in over 100 years! The first and last mile of the service is—and has always been—the core of the job that we *ALL* do.

I came to an amazing realization about the Letter Carrier job one day in the year 2001. I was delivering mail on the route that I had been delivering for the previous twelve years. This means that I had delivered that route *at least* two thousand times. I walked up on the porch of a home that had the date the home was built. That date was etched in the cement.

This particular home had been built in 1901. And I realized that—**FOR ONE HUNDRED YEARS!!!**—a Letter Carrier has been walking up on this porch for six days of the week to deliver the mail. It made my twelve years on the route seem small.

I realized at that point that this job is like a relay. Not a relay race, just a relay. I carried the mail to that house for twelve of the one hundred years that house had been there. There were many Carriers who delivered the mail there before me and there were Carriers that delivered mail to that house after I moved to another route. And, my point is? There will be Carriers who will keep delivering mail to that house as long as the house still stands and as long as the Postal Service continues to exist!

Basically, I took my part of the relay that started a very long time ago. And, I will be handing over the job to the next generation of Letter Carriers. It makes me proud to be a part of that relay.

I had always enjoyed delivering the people's mail who lived in that house. However, I just had a much wider appreciation for the history and future of the job.

Those who carried the mail and supported our Union before us made the job what it is today—as in good wages and good benefits. They supported the Union and stayed together through the tough times; and, we are *all* definitely in a better place because of *their* efforts.

WE must maintain what they worked so hard to give us and we must continue to work to make it better so the next generation of Letter Carriers will have the kind of career that hard working people deserve.

The next generation of Letter Carriers will come from the

CCAs who are working in your office right now. There are no more TEs, and the PTFs must all be gone by the end of this Contract. So, the CCAs will take the next relay! Let's make sure the job we hand over to them is as good or better than the job that was handed to us!

HOW DO WE DO THAT?

We make them feel welcome! We appreciate the job that they do every day! (Because management sure won't.) We help them become better Letter Carriers! And? We make sure they get involved in the Union! Encourage them to attend Union meetings so they learn about their Rights and Responsibilities and what our Union is all about! CCAs can be Shop Stewards and be elected to Officer positions to carry on our traditions! I was an alternate steward when I was still a PTF (that was a while back).

Remember—as Letter Carriers—we are all in this together, and the CCAs *are* the future.

I will be retiring soon and will be proud to join the ranks of retired Letter Carriers. I am confident that *with your help* we can ensure that our Union will be strong well into the future. Remember and encourage *ALL* Letter Carriers to remember where we came from.

As we go forward, always remember and never forget: **Work Smart and Work Safely so that YOU can Retire Healthy!!!**

Article courtesy of the Portland, Oregon
August 2014 NALC Branch 82 "B" Mike.

OUT THERE





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President	Mike Towery	(661) 331-9171
Vice-President	John Ortega	(661) 809-8140
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Treasurer	Molly Biggar	(661) 832-0393
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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.

Information in this publication may not be used for illegal purposes.

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 here-in 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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McFarland (93250)	Bonnie Whitbey	(661) 302-7354
Shafter (93263)	Norma Hamer	(661) 619-1465
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Wasco (93280)	Joanne Layton	(661) 204-4928
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South Station Alternate	Judy Kiyoshi	(661) 817-5529
East Bakersfield (93305)	Paul Salazar	(661) 327-7637
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Brundage Station (93307)	John Ortega	(661) 809-8140
Dole Court (93308)	Mike Towery	(661) 331-9171
Dole Court (93308)	Shari Sharp	(661) 364-5544
Stockdale Station (93309)	Randy Courson	(661) 345-0256
Camino Media (93311/13)	Mike Meza	(805) 625-4541
Mojave (93501)	Vacant	
California City (93504)	Russell Day	(760) 373-8963
Boron (93516)	Paula Hogg	(760) 373-8963
Edwards AF Base (93523)	Mike Meza	(805) 625-4541
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Trona (93562)	Lynnel Howell	(760) 382-3030

**Branch 782
Website
www.782nalc.com**

Rick Plummer, Webmaster



National Association of Letter Carriers
 "Golden Empire Branch 782"
 2628 "F" Street
 Bakersfield, California 93301
 (661) 325-5526

Non-Profit Organization
 U.S. Postage
 PAID
 Bakersfield, California
 Permit Number 32

General Meeting

Tuesday

August 26, 2014

7:00 p.m.

Branch 782 Office
 2628 "F" Street
 Bakersfield, California

FORWARDING SERVICE REQUESTED

OUT + HERE



Norma Hamer couldn't believe where the door slot was at this address in Philadelphia!!! For more convention reports, open up the newsletter...

Win \$500?

Each and every month Branch 782 sponsors a drawing to encourage **YOU** to come to our Meeting*. There was no winner in July. So? Do **YOU** have a chance to win the \$500? Yup. Be there...

*The fine print: To win the money you have to be present at the meeting when the names are drawn.