

# National Association of Letter Carriers

## Branch 782

# E.A. Baker Union Update



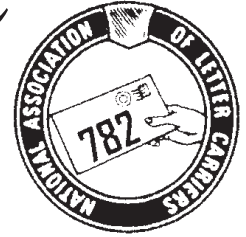
ARVIN  
CALIFORNIA CITY  
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AVENAL  
DELANO  
MOJAVE  
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BAKERSFIELD  
EDWARDS AFB  
RIDGECREST  
TRONA

BORON  
LAMONT  
SHAFTER  
WASCO

**CHARTERED FEBRUARY 25, 1901**



NUMBER 9

WEB VERSION

SEPTEMBER 2017

## OFFICIAL NOTICE OF NOMINATION AND ELECTION OF NALC “GOLDEN EMPIRE” BRANCH 782 DELEGATES TO THE 2018 NATIONAL CONVENTION

### NOMINATIONS

Nominations for the election of NALC Branch 782 delegates to the 2018 National Convention will be held at the regular Branch meeting on September 27, 2017 at 7:00 P.M. at the Branch 782 Union Office located at 2628 “F” Street, Bakersfield, California. Candidates must accept nominations at the time made or, if absent, in writing to the Branch Recording Secretary within three (3) days after the nominations is made. Nominations may be submitted in writing provided that they are received by the Branch Recording Secretary prior to the closing of nominations at the regular branch meeting in September. Upon nomination, every nominee must certify that he or she has not served as a supervisor for the 24 months prior to being nominated.

By virtue of the position, Branch 782 President and Vice President shall be delegates to the National Convention.

### ELECTION

The election will be conducted by secret ballot at the regular meeting on November 15, 2017 at 7:00 P.M. at the Branch 782 Union Office, 2628 “F” Street, Bakersfield, California.

Any member who, for any reason, will be unable to vote on November 15, 2017, may obtain absentee ballots by submitting a signed written request to the Election Committee, Golden Empire Branch 782, 2628 “F” Street, Bakersfield, California 93301-1816, at least two weeks before the election. Absentee ballots must be returned to the election Committee by November 14.

Write-in votes are not permitted.

### ELIGIBILITY FOR BRANCH FUNDS

Of the delegates from the Bakersfield local area selected to the National Convention, the requirements of eligibility for Convention funds will be; attendance at ten (10) of the twelve (12) regular General Meetings just prior to the National Convention.

Of the delegates selected from the outlying Associate Offices (excess of thirty miles from Bakersfield), the requirements of eligibility for convention funds shall be: attendance at least two (2) meetings (any combination of regular General Meetings and/or Quarterly Area Meetings) in the twelve months just prior to National Conventions.

# NALC responds to Hurricane Harvey (updated)

As we're all aware, Hurricanes Harvey and Irma have left a huge area of destruction throughout the Southeastern United States with the extremely high winds at the storms' landfall, the massive flooding that resulted in the days that followed and the potential for tornadoes.

The ongoing news reports on these disasters can be difficult to fully comprehend: the rising death toll, thousands injured, tens of thousands homeless or still without power, and property losses in the billions of dollars.

Untold numbers of Letter Carriers and other members of our postal family are among those hardest hit.

The U.S. Postal Service is a fixture in every community. As a result, whenever disaster strikes, some of us are always in the path of danger. But the fact that we

touch every community is also one of our greatest strengths. When some of us need help, NALC members across the country stand ready to provide assistance in one form or another.

Please commit to reaching out to your co-workers, family members and friends and ask them to make an immediate donation to the Postal Employees' Relief Fund (PERF). PERF is a 501(c)(3) charitable organization operated by the various union and management organizations of the U.S. Postal Service to solely benefit postal employees. Tax-deductible donations can be made in a variety of ways.

You can help postal employees hurt by the two hurricanes right now by making an immediate donation to the Postal Employees' Relief Fund (PERF). Visit [WWW.POSTALRELIEF.COM](http://WWW.POSTALRELIEF.COM) to make an immediate donation with your credit card.

You can also mail a donation check to:

**Postal Employees' Relief Fund  
P.O. Box 7630  
Woodbridge, VA 22195**

PERF helps postal employees and retirees whose homes were significantly damaged by natural disasters or house fires.

As much as you might wish to send items to help your brother and sister Letter Carriers, shipping and distributing goods in the affected areas is nearly impossible for now. (Later donated uniforms will help.) Donating money and allowing the agencies on the ground to spend it as needed is the best immediate thing you can do.

***A harm to one is a harm to all. We always take care of our own.***

Source: NALC Website

## Minutes of the August 2017 General Meeting

The regular meeting of Branch 782 was called to order by President Mike Towery at 7:00 p.m. on the 23rd day of August, 2017 at the branch office, Bakersfield. The flag salute was led by Sgt. at Arms, Frank Martinez. All members of the Executive Board were present. The stewards were present from Arvin, Avenal, Brundage, Camino Media, Dole Ct. Downtown, East Bakersfield, Edwards, Hillcrest, Lamont, McFarland, Shafter, South, Stockdale, Taft and Wasco. Also present was the Newsletter Editor Basil Zuniga; S.A.N.E. Fred Acedo; Webmaster Rick Plummer; Photographer Anita Holderman; Assistant Treasurer Debbie Guillet; Assistant Recording Secretary Norma Hamer; OWCP Representative Rick Gerdes; and, Paul Greenfield and Frank Martinez of the Social and Recreation Committee. The minutes of the July 26, 2017 meeting were read by Asst. Recording Secretary Norma Hamer. The minutes were accepted with no additions or corrections.

**APPLICATION FOR MEMBERSHIP:** An application for membership was received from Yoandra Rayo, Wasco.

### REPORTS OF STANDING AND SPECIAL COMMITTEES:

Teresa Ortega reported that the picnic is October 8, Jastro Park. We will be having a taco truck again this year, the laser tag, face painting and balloons are booked. Basil Zuniga reported that this month was East Bakersfield, it "got done quickly." Next month will be Hillcrest. Basil shared that Mark Ramirez had an article reprinted in the New Hampshire Br. 44 newsletter. He commented that it was good to see Fred Acedo at the meeting. Frank Martinez reported that the meeting for the Social and Recreation Committee was postponed. Norma Hamer reported that she has been in contact with the MDA representative. She asked if anyone would like to volunteer to participate in the "MDA Lockup" to be held on September 14. They hope to raise \$2000. MDA is also hosting a Walk-a-thon on September 30th. Norma will be taking **Out tHeRe** books to sell at the event.

**NEW BUSINESS:** Mike Towery reported that South Station is scheduled for 6 day Inspections beginning on September 16th. If Carriers are interested a Route Inspection class can be held at the branch office. Anita Holderman requested the class for the South Station Carriers.

**GOOD OF THE ASSOCIATION:** Mike Towery thanked Angie Hernandez for all her work at the Alternate Steward at East Bakersfield. She now has a route at Stockdale. He also thanked Marci Rodriguez for being the Alternate Financial Secretary. Mike Towery reminded Carriers that if they received discipline the first thing you should do is CONTACT YOUR STEWARD.

Even if management says they will let the steward know, request to meet with your steward. Basil Zuniga encouraged members to read the article in the web version of the newsletter by Jamie Lumm, NALC Director of Education. It is about a member in Alaska and the steward who refused to be intimidated by a Postal Inspector. Mike Towery reported that the new pay scale is on the NALC website. Tami Foshee discussed the need for more hand trucks with the increase of parcels from Amazon and the Christmas season. Mike Towery reported that South Station report time was changed to 8:00 a.m. beginning Monday. Hermie Encinal reported tha Dole Ct. had a surprise pot luck for Lee Colaso for 50 years of carrying mail.

**IMPROVEMENT OF THE ASSOCIATION:** Mike Towery thanked Darryl and Anita Holderman, Kim Gerdes, Debbie Guillet, Teresa Ortega and Paul Salazar for helping Molly Biggar to go through paperwork for the Audit. Everyone can see what a difficult job Molly has and how much “paper” is involved.

**FINANCIAL SECRETARY’S REPORT:** Anita Holderman reported that \$13,678.89 was collected for the month of August, 2017. Anita then gave amended reports for the following months:

|               |            |           |             |
|---------------|------------|-----------|-------------|
| March 2016    | +\$ 204.15 | New Total | \$12,932.67 |
| April 2016    | +\$ 113.36 |           | \$12,826.81 |
| May 2016      | +\$ 233.96 |           | \$12,938.04 |
| June 2016     | +\$ 26.00  |           | \$12,687.88 |
| August 2016   | +\$ 402.88 |           | \$21,709.13 |
| October 2016  | +\$1293.05 |           | \$14,883.62 |
| November 2016 | +\$ 616.45 |           | \$14,490.02 |
| December 2016 | +\$ 37.80  |           | \$13,730.03 |
| June 2017     | +\$2073.86 |           | \$15,687.25 |

**TREASURER’S REPORT:** Molly Biggar reported for the month of July:

|                   |             |
|-------------------|-------------|
| Beginning Balance | \$80,239.77 |
| Dues and Income   | \$12,672.20 |
| Total Balance     | \$92,911.97 |
| Expenses          | \$19,190.70 |
| Ending Balance    | \$73,721.27 |

The MDA 50/50 Drawing was won by Mike Munoz. (\$17.50/\$17.50)

The Drawing for \$250.00 would have been won by Gina Garcia if she had been present.

There were 44 members present and 1 guest.

The meeting adjourned at 7:53

Respectfully submitted,  
**KIM GERDES**  
 NALC Branch 782 Recording Secretary

# Non-Members September 2017\*

**Downtown Station**  
 Sarah Kirby  
 Javier Cruz

**Edwards AFB**  
*Varline Reeder*

**South Station**  
 100% UNION!!!

**Mojave**  
*Alexander Keller*

**Brundage/East Bakersfield**  
 100% UNION!!!

**Ridgecrest**  
*Georgina D Schatz*

**Hillcrest**  
 100% UNION!!!

**Shafter**  
 M. D. Voights  
 L. M. New

**Dole Court**  
 100% UNION!!!

**Taft**  
 Karen J. Kaczmarek

**Stockdale**  
 James Oh  
 Marty Martinez  
 Daniel Zuniga

**Tehachapi**  
 B. C. Den Beeman

**Camino Media**  
 100% UNION!!!

**Trona**  
 100% UNION!!!

**Arvin**  
 100% UNION!!!

**Wasco**  
 100% UNION!!!

**Avenal**  
 100% UNION!!!

**California City**  
 100% UNION!!!

**Delano**  
 Cynthia V. Quebral  
 Daniela Barreto

**Lamont**  
 100% UNION!!!

\*CCA names are in italics

*There are only 14 non-members in all of the cities we serve... Two of them are CCAs.*

## “Out there”



# Wage increase update

On August 19, career Letter Carriers began earning the first two Cost-Of-Living Adjustments (COLAs)\* payable under the 2016-2019 National Agreement with the United States Postal Service. The COLAs were effective September 3, 2016, and March 4, 2017. There was also a 1.2 percent general wage increase that was effective November 26, 2016. These increases will be reflected in the September 8, 2017, paychecks. Back pay on these increases will be calculated from their effective date through August 18, 2017.

Career Letter Carriers will begin earning the third COLA payable under the new contract, effective on September 2, 2017. This will be reflected in the September 22, 2017, paychecks. Back pay is not applicable for this increase as it will begin being earned on its effective date.

The U.S. Postal Service has informed NALC that — due to the complexity of implementing the new pay scale — City Carrier Assistants (CCAs) will begin earning their pay increases on Sept. 16, 2017. The increases will be reflected in the October 6, 2017 paychecks. Recently retired Letter Carriers also will be eligible for back pay for hours worked after the effective dates of the retroactive wage increases but before their retirement dates. In addition, such retirees will also have their annuities adjusted by the Office of Personnel Management to reflect their slightly higher end-of-career earnings. Our Retirement Department at headquarters stands ready to assist any members who have questions or concerns about that process.

The new CCA pay rates will include the 2.2 percent general wage increase that was effective November 26, 2016, as well as the two step increases that were also effective on that date (\$0.50 per hour for those CCAs with 12 weeks of service and an additional \$0.50 per hour for those CCAs with 52 weeks of service). CCAs will also be placed in their appropriate step based on their weeks of service. Back pay on these increases will be calculated from November 26, 2016, through September 15, 2017.

The Postal Service has indicated that it will take some time to calculate the back pay for the more than 210,000 Letter Carriers, but that all back pay will be processed and paid as soon as practicable.

Source for this information: NALC Website

***\*Without the COLA (which is inflation insurance)  
YOU would not be in the middle class!***

***Don't believe me? Ask a Letter Carrier who worked before the 1970 strike!***



Do not take “for granted” the COLA Benefits won by those who went before us... If **YOU** don't protect the gains they made, they'll be taken away from all of us!

Prior to collective bargaining, there were no COLAs. This meant Letter Carriers of that era either worked two or three jobs to make ends meet *or qualified for food stamps — and had a bleak future.*

To illustrate the importance of COLAs for FERS retirees, consider the following: From 1997 to 2017, accumulated COLAs totaled 37.2 percent. In other words: FERS retirees received a COLA of approximately two percent a year.

You are probably thinking, “I’m not a Retiree. So what?? Two percent doesn’t sound like much, and it won’t make you rich.”

***BUT, WITHOUT THE COLA, YOU ARE ON THE HIGH ROAD TO THE POORHOUSE...***

Curious? Read the Eric Ellis article on page 5. You *really* should.  
***And...\$5 per paycheck to the LCPF will really help!!!***

# Living UNDER President Trump

## COLA Benefits Subject to Change or Disappear

**C**ontrary to what many may think, most federal or postal employees do not enter the public sector to become wealthy!



By Eric Ellis,  
CSALC District 4 Officer

(By way of comparison, roughly forty percent of workers in the public sector are represented by Unions.)

But now it should seem obvious to anyone with half a brain why our political adversaries want to do away with Unions!

Without Unions, it becomes that much easier to eliminate things. Say, “Time on the clock to speak with your Shop Steward”; “The time your Steward needs to process a grievance.”; “On the clock.”; or, even to say the words, “Shop Steward”. Period. Because, **WITHOUT A UNION**, YOU have no Steward and no protections!

Without **YOUR** NALC, there would be **NO** collective bargaining.

That is to say: **YOU** would not have the Right of **YOUR** representatives to sit across the table from management to hammer out agreements concerning **YOUR** pay, benefits, and working conditions.

**And?** Accomplished Union-busting Trump advisors like Wisconsin Governor Scott Walker and former Speaker of the House Newt “Figgy” Gingrich would do away with **YOUR** defined pensions.

What????!!!!??? **YES. YES AND YES!**

**TRUMP AND THEY WOULD!!!**

Without going into all of the present-day budget proposals, I want to talk about two proposals specifically: “**Elimination of the FERS Special Retirement Supplement and FERS COLAs**”.

**FOR EMPLOYEES UNDER THE FEDERAL EMPLOYEES RETIREMENT SYSTEM:** If you were born after 1969, you can retire at age 57 with thirty years of career federal service. Combined with your pension, you would get roughly \$2000 a month in today’s dollars after subtracting for a survivor annuity and health insurance

between the ages of 57 and 62, when Social Security would take the place of the supplement. Again, nothing spectacular. But, one could possibly survive on that.

**Take away the supplement, and that amount is sliced in half...**

## WHAT???

**How many of you could live on just \$1000 a month???** Nowhere in the United States that I am aware of.

## I MUST URGE YOU TO READ THE LAST THREE PARAGRAPHS ONE MORE TIME...

Now, as to the proposal to eliminate COLAs for FERS Retirees, consider the following: **If you are maxed out on the Letter Carrier pay scale (that is to say, you are at step O) approximately 40 percent of your base pay is made up of accumulated COLAs from 1971 to the present. WHAT DOES THAT MEAN?**

Without the COLA (which is inflation insurance) you would not be in the middle class! *Don't believe me?* Ask a Letter Carrier who worked before the 1970 strike! Prior to collective bargaining, there were no COLAs, which meant Letter Carriers of that era either worked two or three jobs to make ends meet...*or were on food stamps.*

To illustrate the importance of COLAs for FERS retirees, consider the following: From 1997 to 2017, accumulated COLAs totaled 37.2 percent. In other words, FERS retirees received a COLA of approximately two percent a year. (Funny, two percent does not sound like much, and it won't make you rich.) **BUT WITHOUT THE COLA, YOU ARE ON THE HIGH ROAD TO THE POORHOUSE.**

Recently someone on Facebook accused me of exaggerating when I stated that elimination of the FERS Special Retirement Supplement and COLA equals the end of our pensions. “**No**,” he said, “**you are making it SEEM worse.** We would *still* have pensions.” Now if **THAT** person reads this article, allow me to retort:

*“If your pension is so small that you can't afford to retire, you have no pension.”*

“**Wealthy**”. As in “**Rich**”. Filthy stinking.

Most government employees I know — whether they work at the city, county, state, or federal level — strive for a middle-class lifestyle. One that pays the bills. *And we can only hope. that it does.*

That is to say, **WE** hope to earn enough to pay the mortgage, other household bills, put enough food on the table; and in, some cases, have sufficient discretionary income to take a vacation once in a while.

We do not live “high on the hog” or belong to “The One Percent Club”! **ON THE CONTRARY!** In California, for instance, if we do not make at least \$60,000 a year, we live “on the margins”.

Now, to hear the Heritage Foundation and other government employee haters tell it, “Federal and postal employees earn **lavish** benefits compared to workers in the private sector.” Without going into comparisons between us and others, **their** arguments boil down to one benefit we have that many don't: A “defined pension” with Cost Of Living Adjustments (COLA).

Problematic for us is — that outside of government — there aren't many workers who **DO** have defined pensions.

**MOST** workers now only have access to “contribution plans” into which they contribute to a 401-(K) set up by their employer and get a match, **IF they're lucky.**

And, why do most non-government workers lack for defined pensions? **ONE REASON. AND ONE REASON ONLY.** Less than 1 in 10 workers in the private sector is represented by a labor Union!

# There was a gun pointed to her face

By Jose Bernal, NALC Branch 4430 President

*I have another issue with the Postmaster. His decisions have been called to question.*

As you all know, we had a Carrier that was robbed at gun point. When she was held up, they took her arrow key. The Carrier did everything she could do which was required of her according to postal policy. She is still recovering from the trauma but she was not physically harmed.

You could say *her* response was by the book. She called 911. Then, she called the office. Then, she called her husband. The problem was that (after the Sheriffs showed up and left) she was left alone with strangers at the location where she had had a gun pointed to her face!

I investigated the issue and discovered that two CCA 204b's had been enroute to the scene. They were a block away when they were called back to the office by the Postmaster. The Postmaster finally showed up *almost an hour after the Carrier made that first call.*

I've discussed this matter with the Postmaster and he stated that the Postal inspectors told him that he needed to be there. My question: "Why not leave one of the supervisors there with the Carrier at least to secure the mail?" The point is that the Carrier could have had a familiar face with her.

Postmaster only stated that they don't know what they are doing and that he needed to be there. I'm not sure why the Sheriffs left so quickly. I tried talking about this in our Safety Meeting and I was told by the Postmaster that I was being confrontational. *The things that could have happened — and the things that did happen — should be at the very top of our Safety Meeting agenda!*

At some point, we — as Carriers — must come up with a better plan so this doesn't happen to anybody else!

This a portion of the President's Report courtesy of the Lancaster, California NALC Branch 4430 *Voice of Branch 4430* published in July 2017

# Save this with your important papers!

## WHEN AN ACTIVE LETTER CARRIER DIES...

- ✓ Notify employee's immediate supervisor, postmaster and personnel section (if any). Give supervisor locker keys and badge as well as information on time and place of memorial services. Check with USPS personnel or postmaster for benefits for spouse and any dependent children.
- ✓ Fill out forms (obtain from USPS personnel section or postmaster): application for death benefits under the retirement system; claim for unpaid compensation; claim for FEGLI death benefits.
- ✓ If the carrier had a TSP account, notify the TSP Death Benefits Processing Unit, Fairfax Post Office, DEDIS—P.O. Box 4450, Fairfax, VA 22038-9998, or call 877-968-3778.
- ✓ Notify the carrier's NALC branch.
- ✓ If veteran, notify the Veterans' Administration local office.
- ✓ Notify banks and other financial institutions.
- ✓ Call the local office of the Social Security Administration or toll-free 800-772-1213.
- ✓ Notify insurance companies (life, health, home, automobile, etc.). If the carrier had a policy with NALC's Mutual Benefit Association, write to 100 Indiana Ave. NW, Room 510, Washington, DC 20001-2144 or call 202-638-4318. If the carrier belonged to the NALC Health Benefit Plan, write to 20547 Waverly Court, Ashburn, VA 20149 or call 703-729-4677. **Note:** Health benefit coverage for a surviving spouse and dependent children continues automatically if carrier had family coverage at time of death *and* if a monthly survivor annuity is payable.
- ✓ Have mortuary officials obtain enough certified death certificates for your needs (they can suggest how many).

## WHEN A RETIRED LETTER CARRIER DIES...

- ✓ Notify U.S. Office of Personnel Management (OPM), Retirement Operations Center, Boyers, PA 16017, or call toll-free 888-767-6738 and provide: full name of deceased; date of birth; date of death; Social Security number; CSA claim number; and survivor's name, address and relationship to the deceased.
- ✓ For quicker action, provide the above information to NALC's Director of Retired Members, 100 Indiana Ave. NW, Washington, DC 20001-2144, 202-393-4695, or call toll-free 800-424-5186 only on **Monday, Wednesday or Thursday, 10 a.m.-noon and 2-4 p.m. (Eastern)**. NALC will alert OPM so that survivor benefits will commence as quickly as possible, and will send you the application for death benefits under the retirement system, and the claim for death benefits under FEGLI.
- ✓ Return any uncashed annuity checks to the address on the accompanying Treasury Department envelope. If payments are being deposited directly to a bank or other financial institution, contact them with the retiree's date of death and advise them to return any future payments to the Treasury Department.
- ✓ Call the local office of the Social Security Administration or toll-free 800-772-1213.
- ✓ If the retired carrier had a TSP account, notify the TSP Death Benefits Processing Unit, Fairfax Post Office, DEDIS—P.O. Box 4450, Fairfax, VA 22038-9998, or call 877-968-3778.
- ✓ Notify the retired carrier's NALC branch.
- ✓ If veteran, notify the Veterans' Administration local office.
- ✓ Notify banks and other financial institutions.
- ✓ Notify insurance companies (life, health, home, automobile, etc.). If the carrier had a policy with NALC's Mutual Benefit Association, write to 100 Indiana Ave. NW, Room 510, Washington, DC 20001-2144 or call 202-638-4318. If the carrier belonged to the NALC Health Benefit Plan, write to 20547 Waverly Court, Ashburn, VA 20149 or call 703-729-4677. **Note:** Health benefit coverage for a surviving spouse and dependent children continues automatically if retiree had family coverage at time of death *and* if a monthly survivor annuity is payable.
- ✓ To request a duplicate 1099R, Statement of Annuity Paid, call 888-767-6738. Callers will need the former carrier's CSA number and the last four digits of their Social Security number.
- ✓ Have mortuary officials obtain enough certified death certificates for your needs (they can suggest how many).

If the spouse of a retired Letter Carrier dies, call the NALC retirement office for instructions on how to restore annuity to full amount, switch health coverage from family to self (unless dependent children, and change beneficiaries).

# A Cautionary Tale of Whoa...

## Stop. Please, Read. Please!

I was in an accident last week. Or, at least, I *think* I was in an accident. Let me explain.

While I was loading my LLV the other day, I was presented with a tub of SPRs which had not been processed before I pulled down. Since it was too late to case them into my route, I put the SPRs into route order and worked them out of a tub. It was irritating, but we do what is necessary to get the mail delivered.

As I was finishing my route, I noticed one of the smaller SPRs had fallen into the bottom of the tub. "Oh, no!!" I had already serviced the address on the SPR. To deliver the wayward SPR, I decided to make a U-turn.

In the midst of the U-turn, a customer began pulling her car out of her drive way. I saw what she was doing and I stopped in the middle of the street and honked my horn repeatedly.

The driver was backing very slowly and she hit me — or so I thought. She returned to her drive way and I completed my U-turn. My first thought: "*How is the Post Office going to blame me for this accident?*"

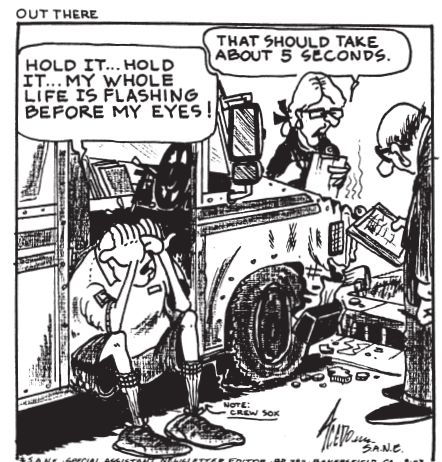
The woman got out of her car and showed a great deal of concern. She asked me if I was okay and I made sure she was okay. She then said she was glad that our vehicles hadn't touched. I told her that she *did* make contact with my LLV. She denied it.

I checked out the LLV's bumper. But, as every Carrier knows, you can't tell anything by looking at an LLV's bumper with all of the scuffs and scratches. Her car, on the other hand, had two black marks on the rear fender. When I pointed them out to her, she said that those marks were already on her car.

What was I to do? I didn't want to call her a liar. That's *never* good.

So, I walked away hoping that the woman would not change her story and glad that I wouldn't have to file a report that would most likely not benefit me.

*Anonymous USPS Letter Carrier somewhere in the United States*



Originally published November 2014

## Stop. Please, Read. Please!

This is a classic "No Win" situation. You are damned if you do and may be damned if you don't. But, as per Dante, there *are* different levels...

That said, there are some things you need to consider. **Seriously, do so!**

**FIRST:** As a postal employee you are **REQUIRED** to report to your supervisor any incident which involves injury to the mail/to yourself or others/to postal property or to the property of a non-postal person.

When you file such a report, there **WILL** be repercussions.

It is obvious that none of us want to be faced with all of the embarrassment, "fact findings", investigations and possible disciplinary action that the reporting of even a minor injury (???) might give rise to.

*However, if you don't file a report, the long-term consequence to you might even be the loss of your job!*

**SECOND:** In this case, the customer was adamant when talking to the Carrier that there was no damage. But? There is no written statement by the customer attesting to that fact. Reporting this incident serves as a protection for both the Postal Service **AND** the employee.

Be aware that this isn't the first time that something like this has occurred. Unfortunately, people have even gone to the USPS when they were involved in a real accident *subsequent to the "non-accident"*. Witnesses may testify they saw you and the customer checking out "damage". Absent report, there is no proof that you were not at fault.

Additionally, the USPS can claim you willfully disregarded regulations and are, therefore, so "untrustworthy" as to merit termination. It could get real ugly real fast!



TACOS

TACOS

TACOS

# N.A.L.C. BRANCH 782'S

## ANNUAL PICNIC

*Sunday October 8, 2017*

*Jastro Park (section 1)*

*11am - 3pm*

*Serving from 11am - 1pm*

**MEMBERS BRING YOUR \$\$ TO PURCHASE TICKETS**

**50/50 DRAWING (OUR LOCAL MAKE A WISH)**

**GIFT BASKET RAFFLE FOR MDA (MUSCULAR DYSTROPHY)**

**&**

**IF YOU SIGN UP AT THE PICNIC OR ALREADY CONTRIBUTE BI-WEEKLY TO:**

**LCPF (THE LETTER CARRIER POLITICAL FUND)**

**YOU WILL BE ENTERED TO WIN A \$100.00**

*Must have your Postal Record Magazine, Employee ID and USPS Pin/Password*

- **LASER TAG**
- **FACE PAINTING/BALLOONS**
- **JUMPERS**
- **GAMES**
- **MEMBER RAFFLE**

|   |                |
|---|----------------|
| <b>MEMBERS &amp; HOUSEHOLD</b>                        | <b>\$FREE</b>  |
| <b>GUESTS</b>   | <b>\$10.00</b> |
| <b>QUESTIONS? CONTACT TERESA ORTEGA @ 661-2013086</b> |                |

# 2018 Carl J. Saxsenmeier Scholarship Program

The California State Association of Letter Carriers (CSALC) is now accepting applications for the 2017 Carl J. Saxsenmeier Scholarship Program. **All applications must be received by the Scholarship Chair by January 5, 2018.** The Chair will send scholarship packets to all applicants by the end of January 2017. The scholarships are available to the children or grandchildren of members of NALC Branches within the State of California who have not served in a supervisory capacity in the previous two (2) years from the date of 2017 award announcement. Applicant's parent / grandparent must be a member in good standing of the NALC for at least one year prior to applying. Applicant must be a high school senior when applying. Saxsenmeier Scholarship awards are issued in the year of graduation and are not renewable.

**Jeff Parr  
Saxsenmeier Scholarship Chair  
1177 Levine Dr-Santa Rosa, Ca 95401  
707-523-1818**

## **Saxsenmeier Scholarship Application (Please Print)**

Student's Name \_\_\_\_\_

NALC Member's Name \_\_\_\_\_

Home Address \_\_\_\_\_

City / State / Zip \_\_\_\_\_

Home Telephone \_\_\_\_\_

Cell / Fax \_\_\_\_\_

Email Address \_\_\_\_\_

Applicant's Signature \_\_\_\_\_

NALC Member Signature \_\_\_\_\_ Relationship to Applicant \_\_\_\_\_

**Local NALC Branch Officer Signature required for verification of member in good standing:**

NALC Branch Officer Signature \_\_\_\_\_ Title \_\_\_\_\_

Branch Officer Printed Name & Branch Number \_\_\_\_\_

# DOHERTY & DONELON SCHOLARSHIPS

**Deadline: This form must be returned to NALC Headquarters no later than December 31, 2017.**

## Eligibility

- Applicant must be the son, daughter or legally adopted child of a letter carrier NALC member in good standing—active, retired or deceased. Stepchildren and grandchildren are eligible if they live with the letter carrier in a regular parent-child relationship.
- Applicant's parent must be a member in good standing of NALC for at least one year prior to making application.
- Applicant must be a high school senior when making application and must submit the form provided at right, signed by the NALC member and an officer of the member's NALC branch. This form must be returned to NALC Headquarters by December 31, 2017.

## Requirements

- All applicants must take the Scholastic Assessment Test (SAT) or the American College Test (ACT) in either their junior or senior year. A copy of the official scores from the administering organization must be received at NALC Headquarters by midnight, March 31, 2018. (Computer-generated printouts of test scores will not be accepted.)
- All biographical questionnaires and secondary school reports must be received at NALC Headquarters by midnight, March 31, 2018.

## Regulations

- Scholarship is to be used toward pursuing undergradu-

ate degree at an accredited college of recipient's choice.

- Winners may accept other college scholarship assistance in addition to the NALC award.
- Any change of schools or course of study must be done only with the permission of the NALC Scholarship Committee.
- A transcript of grades must be forwarded to the committee at the end of each school year.
- If winner suffers certified serious illness, scholarship will be held in abeyance for not more than one year.
- If unusual conditions are going to require an interruption in schooling, recipient must state reason(s) in writing to the Scholarship Committee and request that the scholarship be held in abeyance. Request(s) will be reviewed by the Committee and a decision rendered.
- If the NALC member is suspended by his/her local NALC branch or enters supervision, scholarship will be cancelled.

## Terms of awards

- The official scholarship judges will award one William C. Doherty Scholarship in each of the five USPS Regions and one John T. Donelon Scholarship. Winners are judged on the basis of secondary school records, personal qualifications and test scores. As in the past, the scholarship judges will consist of experienced persons in the educational field. Decisions of the judges will be final.

- Doherty Scholarship awards will be \$4,000 per year and the Donelon Scholarship award will be \$1,000 per year. Each scholarship is renewable for three consecutive years thereafter providing the winner maintains satisfactory grades. Award money will be deposited annually with the college. It will be credited to the winner's account to be drawn upon under the rules and regulations which the college has established for handling scholarship funds. Award money is to be used for required college fees, including room and board and transportation fees.
- Children of NALC national officers are not eligible.

In honor of NALC's president from 1941 to 1962, the **William C. Doherty Scholarship Fund** will again award five \$4,000 scholarships to children of members in good standing. The **John T. Donelon Scholarship Fund** will award one scholarship in honor of Donelon, longtime NALC assistant to the president. Applicants must be high school seniors and must meet all of the following eligibility criteria to be considered.

## SCHOLARSHIP APPLICATION

Date \_\_\_\_\_ (PLEASE PRINT CLEARLY)

Please send instructions as to how I can compete for a scholarship award. I am a senior in the 2017-18 school year.

I am the  daughter  son  active  
 \*stepdaughter  \*stepson of  retired  
 \*granddaughter  \*grandson  deceased

letter carrier \_\_\_\_\_

of Branch No. 782 City Bakersfield State CA

My name is \_\_\_\_\_

My address is \_\_\_\_\_

City \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ ZIP \_\_\_\_\_

Phone No. \_\_\_\_\_

Signature of branch officer

Signature of NALC parent member  
(or spouse if deceased)

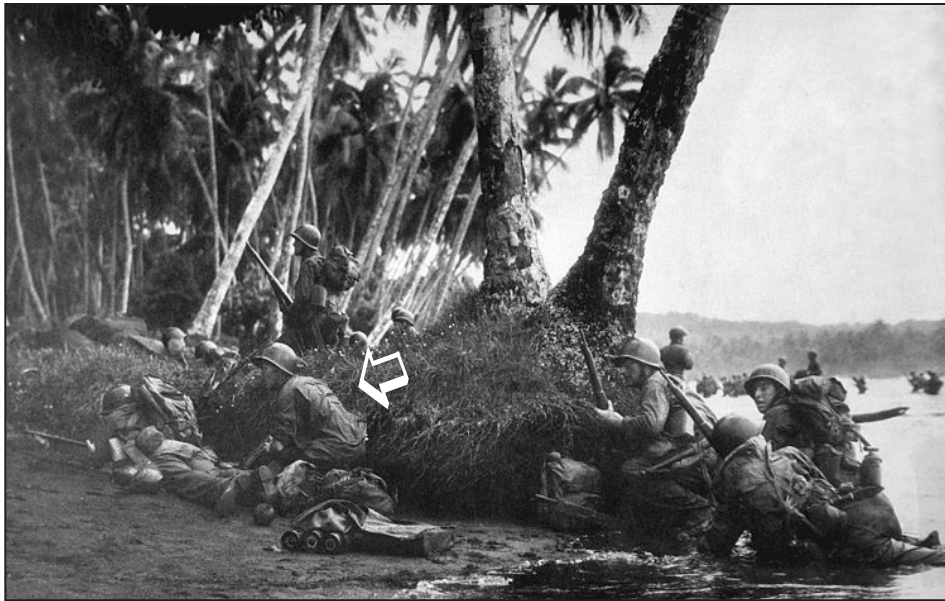
Printed name of branch officer

Last 4 digits of Social Security No. \_\_\_\_\_

Title \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

This form must be returned no later than December 31, 2017, to the NALC Scholarship Committee, in care of the National Association of Letter Carriers, 100 Indiana Ave. NW, Washington, DC 20001-2144.

\* *Stepchildren and grandchildren are eligible if they live with the letter carrier in a regular parent-child relationship.*



A picture of Marine Corpsman PO3 Forrest L. Clark on Rendova Island with a USMC Raider Battalion on 30 June 1943. If you look closely at the picture, Forrest is the guy **NOT** carrying a weapon. His med bag is in the foreground. The picture was originally featured in "Look" magazine.

**O**n December 9, 1941, seventeen year Forrest Clark old lied about how old he was and enlisted in the U.S. Navy. Trained as a Corpsman, he was assigned to duty with the Marine Corps.

He then found himself "island hopping" in the Solomons. (Think of Guadalcanal!) He became a *very* experienced corpsman. (Those with military combat background will, no doubt, value *THAT* last sentence with a sense of personal appreciation!!)

Forrest saw *so* much death and destruction. But, in many senses, he was no different than any other young men of his generation. ***It is no wonder that they are referred to as members of the "Greatest Generation!"***

On April 22, 1945, he and Pauline Dolores Maggard were married. At the end of his War, he was discharged and returned to Bakersfield.



Wedding picture of Forrest and Pauline "Dee" Clark

There were things about civilian life that were good. He got to stay home with his beautiful wife and family. But, he felt that there was more that he should be doing with his life.

Forrest reenlisted, as a Medic, in the U.S. Army in 1946 and had many more adventures. Really! He **REALLY** did!!!

He was assigned to a Mobile Army Surgical Hospital in Korea. (If you overlook the humor in the television show M.A.S.H., you get a glimpse into the extent of the injuries and death that Forrest dealt with.)

He was then "voluntold" to apply for a new duty. His extensive experience in jungle warfare helped him to become a graduate of the very first official U.S. Army Green Beret training course. He then went on to become an instructor.

Assignment to the US Army 3rd Field Hospital, Saigon, (in conjunction with two and-a-half more Vietnam tours of duty) provided additional "experience" for him.

Although Forest would probably have stayed in the Army longer, he didn't care for the changes it was going through; and — after 24 years of creditable service — he retired on September 30, 1966.

When he returned home, he had an opportunity to apply for a job at the Post Office. He became a 93306 Letter Carrier.

Over the course of the next 20 years, he never talked about the extensive and inspiring personal

things that he'd accomplished. It wasn't his way. And then? Forrest quietly hung up his satchel and retired in 1986.

Forrest had problems with his hearing. The years and years of gunfire and explosions had taken their toll. Because of that, he didn't talk a lot at work. Most who worked with him remember him as a quiet guy who just came to work, did what he had to do and then left.

They probably didn't know how much he **LOVED** to fish. Almost every long weekend found him taking his entire family with him to fish at Balch Park and other locations. Family vacations were centered on fishing. Yes, his family confirms Huntington Lake and other spots held a special place in the heart of Forrest Clark!

Forrest's son, John, provided a number of different memories including, "Dad hated, **WITH A PASSION!!!**, casing mail."

Also: ***Picture a "Kentucky Fried Chicken" having an "All You Can Eat" day...***

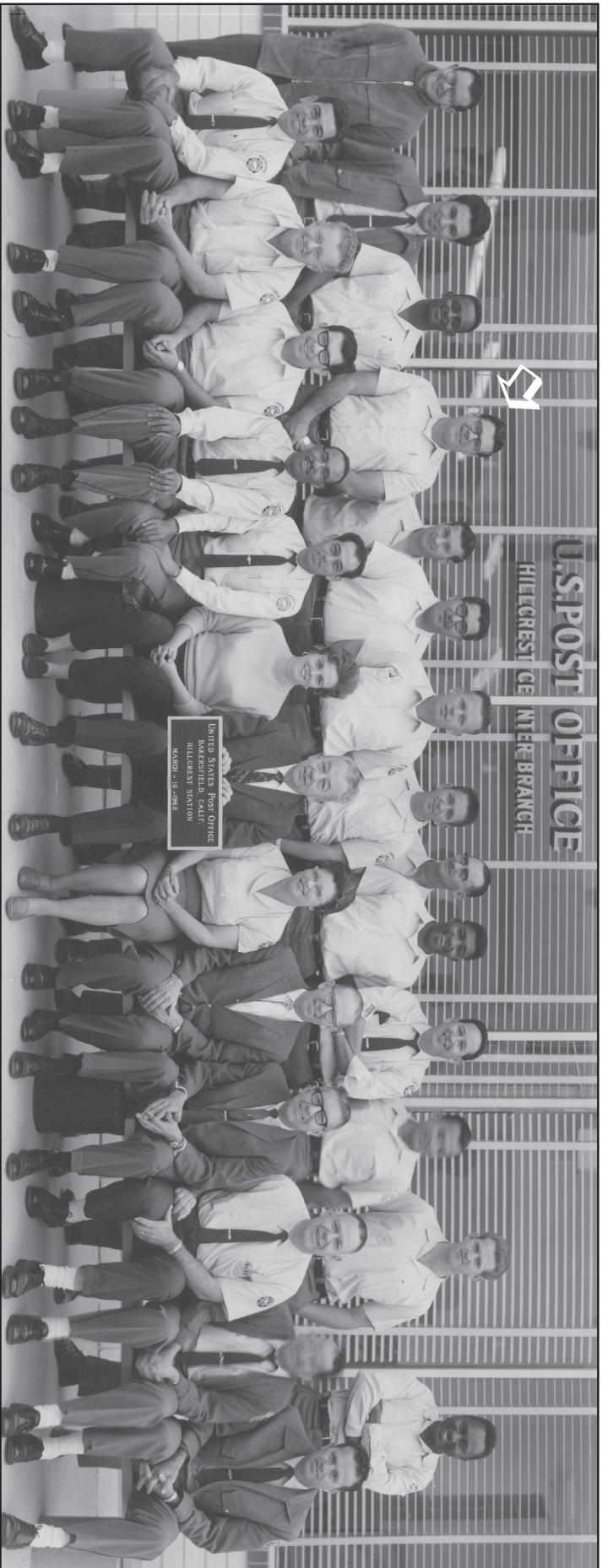
John remembers that Forrest, "Kool-Aid", and a number of postal employees went to the KFC on Niles. The second time that they went, they were told that "Kool-Aid" was **NOT** allowed into the building!!!

His son went on to recount that there were many times that Forrest would join his family for lunch at Rosa's on Columbus Street because it was so close to his route.

The sources for much of this info were John Clark and his wife, Kathy. They left no doubt of the impact that "Dad" had on their lives. It is evident that the man, Forrest, has left quite a legacy!!!

John matched Forrest with a six year hitch in the USMC. Like "Dad", he then retired from the U.S. Army. *But, he has no intentions of becoming a USPS Letter Carrier...*

— *In Memorium* —  
**Forrest L. Clark**  
 February 12, 1924 — August 20, 2017  
 Laid to rest at Bakersfield National Cemetery 9/1/2017



**BAKERSFIELD'S HILLCREST STATION — MARCH 18, 1968**  
 (Individuals are named left to right)

**FRONT ROW:** Mike Gonzales, Oscar Maclin, Homer Ruiz, Ray Pettus, Melly Villagomez, Unknown, Postmaster Johnny Loustalot, Virginia Walsh, Les Darling, Art Wiens, Marion Ross, Harold "Brownie" Brown, Larry Winn

**BACK ROW:** Unknown, Mario Salazar, Joe McKinley, Forrest Clark, Unknown, Tony Chavez, Ray Brady, "Yummy", S.L. Surber, Joe Lewis, Sal Esalante, Benny Aguilan, "Red" Combs, Jim Perkins



*"Forrest was not a loner, but he pretty much just came to work and did what he had to do. We all gave him a lot of respect because we knew that he'd been in 'The War'."*  
**Mike Gonzales 1958 - 1990**

*"What I remember is that, when Forest did talk to us on the workroom floor, his voice was always pretty loud. Kinda like when you sing, wearing ear buds..."*  
**Fred Acedo 1967 - 2004**

*"One thing I remember about Forest is that he once had to deal with kidney stones. Despite all of the pain he was in, he kept working. Then, we called him "Superman!"*  
**"Red" Combs 1961 - 2000**

## Views of two Presidents

# Route Counts...

By Richard Najera,  
NALC Branch 231 President

**B**y the time this article goes to print, it's very likely that those of you who are having route counts in your zones will have been told when you are being walked with – that is, when you will be accompanied by an inspector for the full day of delivery.

Bear in mind, that management can schedule *as many as three street sessions with you during the week of count*; but, they may only count your mail in the office once. If you encounter management attempting to do more than what they are allowed, request Shop Steward time immediately!

Also in the office, you'll be seeing a lot of members of management (probably some you've never seen before) pacing around the office watching the ongoing inspections. You may even have one or more of them walk up to you during the office portion of the count (and they may choose to stop you on the street later on) and ask you something or other about the route or perhaps even why you are performing a certain function that they may see as time-wasting.

You will be told to put yourself on what's called "22 time". Understand that this is time solely used for when management may question you about things or can issue instructions to you if they feel they need to correct something you are doing.

Once more, bear in mind that **EACH** time they stop you and put you on 22 time — *even if what time they take with you is mere seconds* — **EACH 22 entry will cost you ONE FULL minute subtracted from your office time...**

I've heard of route counts where management thinks that they are being slick when they hold multiple standups during the week or short ones even on one single day, and loads of time stopping Carriers to ask of them what amounted to plenty of

asinine reasons. All of this in the attempt to save minutes. Minutes? Of course! Because if they can "save" minutes on each route, imagine five minutes times fifty routes and you've got a sizable chunk of ill-gotten goods at your disposal.

Whatever you may decide to do with this information, I would consider carefully that *that minute* of 22 time, once you are placed on it, should really have a **full** minute's worth of conversation to it, don't you think? Wear a watch the week of inspection. It'll help a lot and doesn't draw near as much attention as a smartphone would.

You may also notice a lot of changes in the office – well, hopefully this was prior to the dry run that management is required to give to each and every Carrier serving in the zone being inspected.

If you see things such as more clerks than you've ever seen before being scheduled to work the mail, *that* is something to let your Steward know. Or if there are other operational changes being made during the week (such as changes in starting times, or curtailing of mail that normally would not have happened during a regular work week), once again, let your Steward know of anything you've observed. Watch out for each other because, once on the street, a different set of games begin.

You've made it out of the pressure cooker that was the office part of your inspection. It's not your date to be walked with so you figure now it's just like any other day, right? You can no relax... **WRONG!** You can expect that management will saddle up their horses and make a run at you on the street as well.

How can they do this? Because the handbooks say they can – and the week of inspection is high-stakes gamble for them. They will spend tons of money to inspect the routes, and if they cannot get what they want through the mistakes and screw-ups that Letter Carriers typically hand to them on a silver platter, they will exert pressure on the street as well. Everyone at one time or another has been on the bad side of the boss, and when the boss has a hair up his/her you know what, they get that itch to go out and dispense some frontier justice. Yee-haw!

So they ride up alongside wherever you may be at that time on the street, sneer at you from the air-conditioned car window, and proceed to tell you how you aren't working hard enough, aren't walking fast enough, aren't carrying your weight in the unit, and sometimes they'll even flat out say that you're stealing from the post-office with the way you work each day.

OUT THERE



Originally published April 2008

Now, unless you've been completely brain-washed into believing that hogwash, most Letter Carriers know enough that this is just the boss on a tear, throwing a tantrum about the numbers and hoping beyond hope that you'll buy into their BS. The truth is, as I've said many a time before now, there are **NO** street standards, **NO** requirement that you run a route, **NO** age-related or years of service-related stipulations that automatically make you faster than everyone else just because you're the new kid in town.

So, then why does the boss choose to go to the street to embarrass him/herself just to try and get a Carrier to move quicker? ***They do it because, unfortunately, these tactics still work on a significant part of the workforce.***

And the reason I bring it up here is that, during the week of inspection, and most likely the week after (*route evaluations continue until the week after the official counts are completed!*), there will very likely be so many members of management out there doing 4584s and watching what you are doing from the comfort of their climate controlled vehicles. You'll have your very own paparazzi!

The best way that I dealt with this kind of nonsense was to remember this: “During Counts, it’s management who has the most to lose. Remember who does the real work for the Service!”

In the end, to achieve their goals, we may find out how they skewed the numbers; how they cut allied time inappropriately and with notations; or how they inexpertly, and without consideration of the employee, moved territory in such a way that the zone no longer makes any sense.

If that happens, just carry the route and let them figure out how to fix it. They get paid well to do so. If they had wanted your help, they should’ve been asking for it from the beginning!

And — even in the future — when the boss tries to tell you that your route is now an eight hour assignment, the truth is they really have NO idea if this true.

So.....start up again with your knowledge, your skillset, and make the new route your

own once more! Take the time it takes to get it done safely and professionally. The numbers, even after full counts, still don’t really matter if the process was used incorrectly or if they cheated to achieve specific numbers.

It is still YOU who will determine how long it takes to your duty assignment based on how much mail you have!

Article courtesy of the Fresno, California Branch 231 *POSTMAN’S VIEW* published in September 2017

## ...and Inspections

By Jerry Andersen,  
NALC Branch 183 President

**A** “Surprise” 6-day Route Count and Inspection began at the Santa Rosa Carrier Anex on May 20th of this year. The union and the Carriers were each given 4 days of notice before the counts were to commence.

Apparently, the Pacific Area failed to recognize that we have an agreement with the San Francisco District regarding route counts. (WHAT AGREEMENT?) Why not wait so that the unit could follow the preliminary procedures set forth in the M-39 and the M-41? Why not give the Carriers an opportunity to correct their lines of travel?

Miraculously, the parcels were actually ready during the week of the count and they have continued to be ready since the Count. This is one of the positive things that happened. Why not fix what was broken and then count in the Fall?

The Area obviously thought that they were going to get big savings — that the Annex was going to lose routes.

It is still not finalized because of an ongoing dispute about the adjustment process, but (based on what was observed there with the route adjustment team’s own numbers) *there should be 5 routes and a T-6 position added.*

**The entire process certainly brings up questions about the Postal Service’s reported “terrible financial position”.**

Why did they bring in Postmasters and supervisors from Hawaii, from the District, and from the Area to oversee this operation?

They paid for 7 nights (at the government rate) to stay at the Round Barn Hilton. The Round Barn Hilton web site reports that rate as \$314 per night. They each get a per diem of \$64 a day X 7 days = \$448. Round trip air fare from Hawaii is about \$600, plus rental car (s) or a borrowed staff car to drive to Santa Rosa.

None of this includes the management staff who had to replace the ones being used as inspectors, or the local support staff (union and management) that is required to conduct a Count.

Just for this Count, the approximate cost is about \$5000 - \$6000 air fare; \$12,000 - \$20,000 (depending on the number of rooms ) in the lodging for ten; and, almost \$5000 per diem. Conservative estimate...well, do the math.

Needless to say, this was the Postal Service, at best, ignoring the processes required by their own manuals prior to any full-unit Counts. There are still data integrity issues which the union and local management are trying to resolve.

One of these is that we are finding Carriers clocked to Codes 739, 733, 719, or 079 when “delivering parcels”. The problem? ***These codes don’t exist in the computerized adjustment process.*** This means that the time used to accomplish that function “disappears” and the Carrier gets no credit for the time.

If a manager is telling you to clock to to these codes, it is an improper instruction. Please inform your Shop Steward!

Had the Area not blown the Union off, they could have corrected some bad processes and this could have gone smoother.

*We hope you’ve attended Route Count Schools so that you know how to fill out the paperwork and get credit for proper line items.*

Article courtesy of the Santa Rosa, California NALC Branch 183 *UPDATE* published in July/August 2017

**DON’T touch your parcels unless you are swiped to street time. This is where most Carriers lose credit for time. DON’T WORK OFF THE CLOCK! I know it seems silly to even say that, but — in every office, every day — someone is working off the clock. It’s improper, unsafe, and you will get no credit in your data for anything you do off the clock.**



# Health Prescription: Humor from Mark Ramirez

## A GENUINE DOSE OF "REALITY" AND "COMMON SENSE" COULDN'T HURT!

“When a society is stressed, and it comes up against things that are hard to understand, you get a lot of delusional thinking.”

**James Howard Kunstler**

“You cannot change the people around you. BUT, you can change the people you CHOOSE to be around.”

“Fake people have an image to maintain. Real People, just don’t care.”

“Every person makes mistakes, but only a fool persists in his delusions.”

**Marcus Tullius Cicero**

“I think that, the stupid people were put on this planet to test our Anger Management Skills.”

“The stubborn man listens to nobody’s advice — and becomes a victim of his own delusions.”

**Aesop**

“Your problem is not knowing *YOU'RE* the Problem !”

“I m patient with stupidity. But, NOT with those who are proud of it!”

**Edith Sitwell**

“Hey, I found your nose. It was in my business again!”

“When one person suffers from delusions, we call it mental illness. When society suffers from them, we call it normal!”

“In what delusional mind is Democracy made “better” by allowing wealthy people to control more of it.”

**Jon Stewart**

“Better a cruel truth than a comfortable delusion.”

**Edward Abbey**

“Never argue with a person who believes their own lies.”

“You cannot alter or omit details of an experience to satisfy your own personal needs, and label it “TRUTH.”

“You are weak when you lie, because you aren’t strong enough to face the truth.”

“It’s easier to fool people than to convince them that they have been fooled.”

**Mark Twain**

“When a person tells you that you hurt them, you don’t get to decide that you didn’t.”

**Louis C.K.**

“I don’t insult people. I accurately describe them.”

“Many people have Delusions of Grandeur, but are deluded by Triviality.”

**Eugene Lonesco**

“Surround yourself with Peace and Positivity.”

“A clear rejection is always better than a Fake Promise.”

“Sometimes people don’t want to hear the truth because they don’t want their illusions destroyed.”

**Nietzsche**

“Should you ever find yourself the victim of other peoples’ Bitterness, Smallness, or Insecurities, remember, things could be worse.....You Could Be Them !”

**MARK (“POST-MARK”) RAMIREZ**  
Retired Letter Carrier  
NALC HBP/MBA Representative  
NALC Golden Empire Branch 782



# 2017 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  
 Prescription Drug Program 1-800-933-6252  
 CVS/Caremark Specialty Pharmacy 1-800-237-2767  
 Durable Medical Equipment 1-855-511-1893  
 "24/7 Nurse Hotline" 1-877-220-6252  
 CVS/CareMark Pharmacist 1-888-636-6252  
 Solutions for Caregivers (24/7) 1-877-468-1016  
 CIGNA PPO Locator Line 1-877-220-6252  
 CIGNA Organ Transplant Approval 1-800-668-9682  
 Quit for Life (Tobacco Cessation) 1-866-784-8454  
 CIGNA Health Rewards (Discounts) 1-800-558-9443  
**CIGNA Plus (Dental Discount)** 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 Bakersfield (661) 631-9258  
 Shared Services Option 5 live person 1-877-477-3273

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

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

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

**OptumHealth 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

### OUT THERE



S.A.N.E. \*SPECIAL ASSISTANT NEWSLETTER EDITOR\* P.O. Box 6532 - BAKERSFIELD, CA. 93386

**Preferred Provider (PPO)**  
 Cost: \$20.00 Co-pay per office visit  
**PPO Deductible: Per Calendar Year**  
 \$300 "Individual"  
 \$600 "Self & Family" or "Self Plus One"

Many immunizations are Free (Adult/Child) when administered at a PPO pharmacy/facility. Some will require a prescription from the Doctor.

### URGENT CARE

**Sendas Urgent Care:** 9450 Ming Ave., Bakersfield (661) 587-2500  
 M-S 8 a.m. - 9 p.m. Saturday/Sunday 8 a.m. - 8 p.m.  
 ASK FOR OTHER LOCATIONS

**Accelerated Urgent Care:** 9710 Brimhall, (661) 829-6747  
 9500 Stockdale Hwy, (661) 735-3943 8 a.m. - 9:30 p.m. daily  
 ASK FOR OTHER LOCATIONS

Our PPO doctors and facilities—through (OPA Network) CIGNA—save us and the Plan thousands of (OAP) dollars and it is top notch care at a discount rate. You don't lose anything. You are saving money for the best care!!!

The NALC Consumer Driven HP and the Value Option HP can utilize this **CIGNA PPO/OAP NETWORK** or by calling 1-855-511-1893.

**OPTUMHEALTH BEHAVIORIAL SOLUTIONS** is also available to the Consumer Driven/Value Option. You must pre-certify. Call 1-877-468-1016.

**MARK RAMIREZ**  
 NALC Branch 782 Health Benefit Plan Representative  
**(661) 398-6075**

# Hello, Norma Hamer, Branch 782 MDA Person!

It was a pleasure connecting with you today, and I look forward to strengthening our relationship with your branch! As promised, here is a summary of a few ways that I think you folks can really engage all of your union members in having a great time raising funds to send our local children affected by muscle disease to our wheelchair accessible summer camp. I hope the attachments will provide plenty of reading material to hold you over for the evening!!

I think the best event that might fit your schedule and time frame to get your entire branch involved will be joining our annual Muscle Walk as an NALC Branch 782 team! This way, anyone who comes to our Walk can see a ton of MDA families, and you all can get a big bite of the passion and mission behind why MDA is so important to our communities.... Plus, those that can't make it up to Fresno for our Walk can contribute through fundraisers, and meeting families at your locally hosted events, like your picnic or at union meetings! I'd be happy to have myself or one of my team members to make a presentation at a union meeting as well!

**Here's a look at some of the upcoming events:**

## 1. Lock Up: Sept 14th, 10am – 2pm, Bakersfield

- Send any union member of your branch to MDA jail for committing the crime of being Kind! Their bail is set at \$2,000 *which will send one child to summer camp for a week ALL expenses paid.* Our staff will equip your *JAILBIRD* with a fundraising webpage, and tools to help raise as much bail as possible. **Everyone** from your branch can contribute to your *JAILBIRD'S* success! Our "Bakersfield Lock Up" will be hosted at BJ's (10750 Stockdale Highway in Bakersfield, CA 93311). See event webpage with details ([www.mdalockup.org/Bakersfield2017](http://www.mdalockup.org/Bakersfield2017)). *This event is just getting started so there is plenty of time to get a JAILBIRD started!*
- *JAILBIRDS* raise bail leading up to the event — and sometimes during the event too. They sentenced to one hour "behind bars" where we introduce them to local campers, and provide a tasty lunch, and chances to win prizes for every donation they get!
- Simply provide me with a name, number, and email address, and I'll have one of my staff reach out to them to get your nominated jailbird ready to go!
- Any events can help raise funds toward bail like 50/50 raffles, bake sales, donations for doughnuts at a union meeting, and even a fill the satchel event! We're open minded about this one! These are all good ideas for a Walk team as well!!



Fighting Muscle Disease

## 2. Muscle Walk: September 30th, 9am – Noon, Clovis East High School

- This is our biggest event of the year (next to MDA summer camp!). Over 300-500 friends and families of our clients of all ages unite at our annual Walk event to raise funds for summer camp, research, and medical equipment, and to rally together to celebrate all our families have overcome, and to fight for all of the progress left for us to make!
- Your branch can register a Walk team, and raise funds leading up to the event. Any amount of people can register to join you, (ideally anyone who will physically attend the walk should register, or anyone who wants to have their own fundraising page should also register on your team), and we just need one or two people to sign up as a team captain (and co-captain, if desired).
- You mentioned cartoon books, and I can easily set space aside for your branch to have a Booth-like space at our event to sell your books! Especially if those are benefitting MDA!
- If you field a Walk team, any fundraisers you folks do leading up to our event can be allocated towards your team fundraising so you all can get oodles of recognition at the event, have chances to earn fundraising prizes like our 2017 Team Shirts, tumblers, duffle bags, bracelets, ect! We host weekly fundraising challenges as well, where we give out gift cards and baskets that were donated to

us by local businesses. We get some cool items donated to us from the Kern County area, and we might be able to help provide a great raffle gift or two for any events you host to help raise funds for your Walk Team.

- You can either register your team on our event page, or I can register your team with you as our captain, and I can send over your log in info if that's easier for you.

- [www.mdamusclewalk.org/CentralValley](http://www.mdamusclewalk.org/CentralValley)

### 3. NALC Branch 782 Picnic: October 8th, Bakersfield, Jastro Park 11am - 3 pm

- I have a few families that might want to attend your picnic. If you send over more details (time, location, etc.) and I'll see who I can get to attend!

- See a general donation letter for the picnic attached.

- If you ever need anything — even just bouncing some ideas off me — reach out to me at any time! (For example, I've been dying to host a Bowl-a-Thon or a Golf Tournament in Bakersfield!! Just to plant a seed if your members like bowling/golf and have the people power to fill up teams... I'll run the entire event!)

### 4. Holiday Party: 2pm-5pm, December 11th, Valley Children's Hospital, Fresno

- Save the date! This is a good ole fashioned holiday meal with Santa, gifts, and a dance party for the kids! NO fundraising here — just a great time!! If anyone from your branch is interested in volunteering for set-up or simply to have a fun time with around 100 families from all over Central California, you are ALL welcome to come!

- This is potluck style, and we host it at Valley Children's Hospital every year!



### 5. 2018 MDA Summer Camp: June 11th - 16th; Camp Tuolumne Trails, Groveland, California

We anticipate that 40 children who reside in the Central California area will have another amazing adventure in 2018. And, they can because of all of the help and involvement by great people like the Letter Carriers of NALC Branch 782!

I am so excited to get contacted by your branch, so forgive my excess of information!! Feel free to pick apart all of my info and reach out to me where you think your members, and you, would like to join us!!!

Candice Burns  
Executive Director  
Muscular Dystrophy Association – Central California Chapter  
1943 N. Gateway Blvd. #101  
Fresno, California 93727  
(559) 453-9822 | f: (559) 453-9829



*In 1952, the NALC became the **FIRST** national sponsor of the Muscular Dystrophy Association. Letter Carriers are among MDA's top fund-raisers, collecting more than \$20 million in the past 15 years alone to finance research and provide care and services for children and adults with muscular dystrophies.*

# We want you to work safe, *just scan this first*

I'M SURE that most letter carriers have received a stand up concerning a new "safety" initiative put forth by senior management here in Portland. You are to be required to scan a barcode on the back of your postal vehicle prior to backing up, whenever you back up. What does this mean, you ask? Branch 82 is hearing conflicting stories.

One story comes from the carrier. All over Portland, and associate offices, carriers are being instructed to scan a bar code on the back of their vehicles before they back. And this isn't the only wacky instruction that is being given. We have even heard some offices say that carriers are being required, before making a U-turn, that they first have to call management and get permission. I realize that backing accidents are a huge percentage of the overall accidents that are occurring across the district. I understand that carriers should avoid backing throughout their day. Carriers should think about their park points, parking lots, and parking spaces and make good decisions on where they are parking so that they avoid backing. But making a scan before they back?

As a letter carrier I avoided backing, but I still backed up all the time. Depending on the route I was doing, sometimes I would backup dozens of times a day. Some mounted routes I carried were set up so that I would have to perform multiple U-turns a day. I can't see making a scan before every backing instance. Does that mean that a carrier should stop in traffic, throw their hazards on, and scan a barcode on the back of their vehicle before parallel parking? That certainly isn't safe. But that is the instructions that many

carriers received.

When talking to Portland management senior staff, they assured us that this is not the case. Their goal with this instruction is to merely reduce backing accidents and identify park points at which a carrier is forced to back. That sounds great, but why doesn't management just identify unsafe park points and correct them during the 3999 process? Maybe ask the carrier about park points in which they are required to back up.? These seems safer than a

vague instruction that tells carriers to scan another barcode for something that they may need to do multiple times a day. So, I'm going to parallel park on Hawthorne Street before making a delivery, I am going to have to park in the middle of the street, throw on my hazards, then walk around into traffic and scan a barcode, then get back into my vehicle and perform my parking maneuver.

Does that sound safe or efficient? It doesn't to me.

Management is going to have to clarify their instructions. We haven't seen barcodes to scan on the backs of vehicles in every unit yet. In order to safely execute an instruction properly we are going to have to have clear direction on how to proceed. Until then, carriers should use basic judgement when backing. We are required to avoid backing. That is a good idea. Backing accidents should be minimized at all costs. Let's not try to do it at the expense of common sense.

by David Norton,  
Chief Steward  
NALC Branch 82



Article courtesy of the Portland, OR September 2017 *B Mike* published by NALC Branch 82. Thank you, Editor Tom Richardson!!

# Auxiliary Assistance

by John Syascure, Vice President  
NALC Branch 4374

Here is some advice on how to handle your request for auxiliary assistance and/or authorized overtime. The purpose of this article is to clarify the issues of the dispute and identify the correct action to be taken by Letter Carriers.

Disagreements occur when a Carrier estimates that he or she will be unable to complete their assignment within 8 hours and management feels otherwise. The differing position of management is usually based on DOIS. Neither Branch 4374, the NALC, nor the Contract recognize DOIS as the final mediator of whether a Carrier needs auxiliary assistance. Carriers are advised to not engage in any discussions involving DOIS numbers as a basis for denial of a request for auxiliary assistance. The only factor that has relevance is the Carrier's determination that help is required and his or her estimate of how much. DOIS is a measurement program, which is solely for managements use. The programs calculations are not binding on any Carrier with respect to performance or estimating the need or amount of auxiliary assistance.

When a Carrier believes, or determines that they will be unable to complete the assignment within 8 hours, he or she is to follow the requirements as spelled out in Handbook M -41.

## M-41 City Delivery Carriers Duties and Responsibilities

*131.41 It is your responsibility to verbally inform management when you are of the opinion that you will be unable to case all mail distributed to the route, perform other required duties, and leave on schedule or when you will be unable to complete delivery of all mail.*

*131.42 Inform management of this well in advance of the scheduled leaving time and not later than immediately following the final receipt of mail. Management will instruct you what to do.*

*131.43 Complete applicable items on Form 3996, Carrier-Auxiliary Control, if overtime or auxiliary assistance is authorized in the office or on the street.*

The key point is that the Carrier must notify management as soon as it is realized that overtime or aux help will be necessary to complete the assignment. Management must be given the opportunity to decide what is to be done. Possible action may include or be a combination of: router help, auxiliary assistance, authorized overtime, curtailment, pivoting, etc. The decision as to what to do rests solely with management and their instructions are to be followed as given.

In situations where the request for auxiliary assistance is questioned, challenged or disputed by supervision, the Carrier is to refrain from any conflict whatsoever.

Under those circumstances, it is imperative that the Carrier obtain clear and concise instruction as to what he or she is to do. After a Carrier has followed the requirements of M-41, Section 131.4,

management is then obligated to decide following the requirements of M-39, Section 122.33 that identifies numerous options available to management.

Refusing to provide a Carrier with PS Form 3996 is not one of them.

## M-39 Management of Delivery Services

*122.33 The employee, upon request, will be provided a Form 3996, Carrier - Auxiliary Control, after the supervisor has been verbally informed as to the reason for the request. The employee shall not be denied the form and, upon request, a duplicate of the completed form will be provided the employee.*

The instruction "Complete the assignment and be back in 8 hours" is not uncommon on the Postal work floor. However, when a Carrier has verbally stated or given a Form 3996 informing that he or she cannot follow that instruction, management must decide. The instruction contains two directives. The Carriers has informed that he or she can do one or the other. It is management's responsibility to decide which one it wants complied with.

When a manager refuses to clearly instruct as to whether the Carrier should complete the assignment or return within 8 hours, the Carrier will call from the street no later than 3 P.M, or your office policy. At that time, the Carrier is to inform the supervisor where he or she is, what work is left and an estimate of what time they will return to the office. The manager will then have a second opportunity to give clear instructions that can be followed. If none are given, then the Carrier is to complete as much as possible without going into overtime. If instructed to go back out to complete the route he or she must follow the instruction. No Carrier has the authority to curtail mail; only management may make that decision.

The scenario depicted above arises when the Carrier and Supervisor fail to agree on the need for auxiliary assistance or the amount of assistance required to complete the assignment and the manager inappropriately refuses to address the situation. In that situation, it is important that the Carrier conduct his or her self professionally.

***Do not be baited into arguing, swearing or making sarcastic comments. Maintain self-control and simply request clear concise instructions. Do so calmly and with a smile.***

Ask for your Union Steward if necessary, make note of witnesses. Remember to stay calm and follow all instructions that are understandable and able to be complied with. No Carrier can be disciplined for professionally seeking clarification or explanation of an instruction.

In summary: Verbally inform your manager when you believe you can't complete your assignment in eight hours. Request PS Form 3996. Fill out the form completely. Keep your cool. Don't argue. Don't make any decisions. Put the ball back in the manager's court.

Managers get paid to make decisions. We get paid to deliver the mail.

Article courtesy of the April 2017 NALC Branch 4374  
*Front Lines* published in April 2017

# NALCREST? I know what the NALC is. What in the heck is NALCREST?

Dennis Crenshaw is a member of NALC Branch 782. He has been a Letter Carrier since 11/17/2001 and is contemplating a possible retirement date in 2019 when he will be 68 years old.

He remembers reading and learning a little bit about NALCREST and decided that he wanted to see if it might be a good fit. With his wife, Sharon, he made a stop at NALCREST part of a planned excursion to Florida in May.

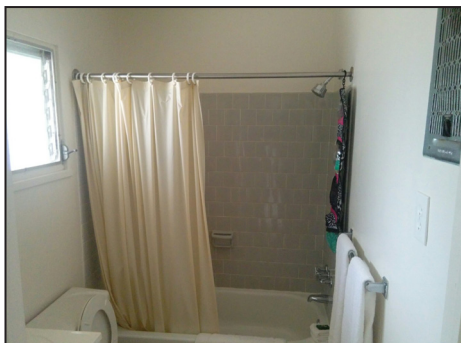
Some of his observations are going to be shared with you. (They may not be in chronological order. They are responses to a variety of questions.)

For context, Dennis and Sharon's journey to Florida was made in conjunction with a planned cruise to the Bahamas. Their ship, *The Majesty of the Seas*, was scheduled to leave out of Cape Canaveral and the Crenshaws were going to try and get as much "bang for their buck" as possible.

They flew into Orlando and, in a rental car, drove to Daytona Beach where they spent their first night in a room which cost a little over \$110. They did "the tourist thing" and took a drive around the International Speedway and enjoyed the coastal atmosphere.

Day Two began with a three day stay at NALCREST. (That time period was matched by the three day cruise to Nassau and some other scenic destinations.)

For the Crenshaws, visiting NALCREST was kind of a "fishing expediton". Dennis wanted to use his time to explore options that he and Sharon might have as retirees when they got to that point.



Dennis initially heard about NALCREST through an article he'd read in *The Postal Record* about four or five years ago. He remembers being intrigued by the description of the location, amenities and the cost.

This is information which appears in the NALC website: "*Nalcrest features 500 garden-style apartments, arranged in clusters of four to 10 apartments—and all are on ground level. Efficiency, one-bedroom and two-bedroom apartments are available, starting from \$374 per month. All are leased unfurnished on a yearly basis. Rental fee includes water, sewage, trash removal, basic cable TV, interior and exterior maintenance and use of all recreational facilities.*"

Speaking of cost, his charge to stay in the furnished apartment at NALCREST was \$68 a day. It was the lowest amount he paid for lodging at one place during the trip. [If you read this and have some questions about how you might be able to replicate the experience that the Crenshaws had, you can call NALCREST at the following number: (863) 696-1121.]

Sharon's first day at NALCREST was not that much fun. She was really sick. So, Dennis spent some time just getting out and about. (Ask him about the eagle...)

While those of us who work in the different cities which make up NALC Branch 782 know about heat and being "out in it", it is a different kind of heat that you encounter there.

There is one thing that should be obvious. It is humid in Florida. Moreover, it is definitely humid at NALCREST! And, as reported by Dennis, "It rained each of



the three days that we were there. The rain would come down really hard for about twenty minutes and then it would stop and there would be sunshine."

For any who have travelled to Florida, you may already realize this.

The rain has provided for part of the scenery that you might see if you go to NALCREST. Lake Weohyakapka adjoins the site and there are two large lagoons popular with residents who fish and boat.

There are also other "residents" who share the waterways. Dennis took a picture of what he thought was a statue in the lake... until a mouth suddenly opened and he realized that what he'd been looking at was an alligator!



Dennis shared that, to the best of his recollection, of the 500 units which are available for rent, twenty are studio/efficiency apartments and twenty are two-bedroom. The remainder are all one-bedroom.

This is a factor which might knock a residence at NALCREST off of the Crenshaw's list of possible future landing spots. Downsizing from the home that they have now with all of their possessions might be something that they would be unwilling to do.

However, during their time in Florida they also did some price comparisons and have found — due to the housing costs that we have in California — they might be able to even afford waterfront property.

Dennis did point out that, for someone who was used to living in an apartment or

was not having to fit an entire house into a smaller place, NALCREST might be about as perfect a place as possible.

For the record, he pointed out that the kitchen is pretty much “postage stamp size”. But, he says that it *does* have everything that you would need. He also leaves this advice: “You can contact NALCREST if you want a diagram of the apartments which shows the layout and square footage.”

Dennis also wonders what the electricity costs might be like at NALCREST. He has the feeling that if he and Sharon lived there, the air conditioner might be running all the time! But, for us, he did take a photo of the screened in porch that let breezes in.

As noted on the NALC website, there is an active community of retirees who live at NALCREST. Dennis spoke with one gentleman who told him, “Although a lot of folks have already left NALCREST to go back home during the warm months, we do have many who stay here year round.” He shared that there was going to be bingo later that evening and that there would be dinner for \$10. He said, “When everybody is here, there is *always* something going on that we can get involved in!”

One of the best things that Dennis feels that NALCREST provides is proximity. Lake Wales is a community of 40,000 to 50,000 which is about a ten minute drive from NALCREST. Dennis and Sharon were able to find more than enough grocery stores and restaurants there.

It only took about 45 minutes to get to Sebring with its Spanish Moss. Lake Okeechobee, which is close by, is the second largest freshwater lake contained entirely within the contiguous 48 states. (The largest is Lake Michigan.) And, there’s Disney World and many other great spots, too!

Like anything else, if you are curious about NALCREST, go check it out for yourself. Start at the NALC website.

## *NALCREST is a unique retirement community designed specifically for the retired members of the National Association of Letter Carriers and their spouses*



**W**illiam Doherty, NALC President from 1941 to 1962, pushed an initiative near the end of his presidency. In 1963, 253 acres were bought near Lake Weohyakapka in Central Florida to create an affordable retirement housing option for retired NALC Letter Carriers. Because of Housing & Urban Development laws (and the fact that the land was mortgaged) anyone — including non-NALC members — could live on the grounds. That changed in 2002 when the mortgage was paid off and NALCREST began to serve its intended community: The Retired members of the NALC.

***IT IS CURRENTLY STILL ONLY AVAILABLE TO RETIRED NALC MEMBERS IN GOOD STANDING.***

NALCREST has 500 apartments in 66 one-story buildings across its 253 acres. It is a mix of studio and one-bedroom apartments available to retired NALC members who are able to care for themselves, especially important because NALCREST is a good length’s drive from any other town or hospital. **Most members only live at NALCREST about seven months of the year, escaping back north during Florida’s hottest months.**

There are several quirks that show this is absolutely a Letter Carrier’s heaven. *Probably most revealingly, there are NO dogs allowed!* NALCREST even has its own ZIP Code: 33856. Paradoxically, there is also no home delivery of the mail. Residents must visit NALCREST’s post office every morning to pick it up themselves. Thus, the post office has become the morning gathering place to socialize, mirroring the Letter Carriers’ lives before retirement as —in every single town and city in the the United States where there was city delivery — they all socialized with co-workers as they cased the daily mail on the workroom floor before they left to “hit the street”.

Residents also have a large variety of activities they can participate in during their time at NALCREST. Many of the activities and clubs: Pool & hot tub, Driving Range, Shuffleboard, Horseshoes, Basketball, Bocce, Mini golf, Tennis, Softball, Art classes, Aquarobics, Duplicates Bridge, Bingo Clubs, Newspaper Recycling Club, Palette Pals, Travel Club, Photography Club, American Legion Auxiliary, Bowling League, and the \*NALCREST LITERARY SOCIETY (\*Amusingly, the NALCREST LITERARY SOCIETY does not discuss literature. Instead it is an all-male club that gathers to drink, sing, and enjoy each other’s company: As one member, Charles Opitz confided...“Sometimes we celebrate *four* birthdays. And it doesn’t exactly have to be **YOUR** birthday.” (Members are expected to bring Scotch or rye.)

The newspaper-recycling club is also in charge of special events happening around NALCREST, such as milestone birthdays and anniversaries and welcoming new members. There have even been several weddings. One resident remarked that the best part about NALCREST is that, “***No one’s left alone or even left out during the holiday season. This means a lot as the years pass.***”

Similar sentiments of gratitude and affection for NALCREST were equally telling of the strength of community created by a wide variety of types of people who come together because of only one thing: the fact that they were Letter Carriers. “There is a saying: ‘We’re all in the same boat.’ Here in Nalcrest, ‘We’re all in the same union.’”

This is an edited/modified article. The original article can be found at: <https://postalmuseum.si.edu/postalemployeesafterhours/retirement.html>

# Woody's World

by John Wood, Trustee  
NALC Branch 2008



## Amazon Come Back!

I was delivering my route a couple of weeks ago, and I found a few parcels in mailboxes.

As a FTR city letter carrier, you already know what this is all about: **AMAZON IS DELIVERING PARCELS WITH THEIR OWN WORKERS AND FLEET OF VEHICLES.**

I thought the regular UPS driver was off, and his sub was too lazy to take them to the door. I didn't know it then, but Amazon had started delivering some of their own packages. Highpoint management learned about this and instructed us that if we found them in mailboxes, we were to bring them back and the customer would be charged postage due on the packages.

Apparently, Amazon has hired alternative delivery personnel at \$15.00 an hour to deliver their merchandise. A postal clerk who recently retired from my station saw the writing on the wall. His opinion was that Amazon was just using the Postal Service for deliveries until they built their own fleet.

He was right! Instead of two full hampers on a Monday, you now only have one. "Amazon Sunday" for our CCAs has also been downsizing. My station used to send all of our CCAs each Sunday. Now, they are being called and told not to come in. There isn't enough to keep them gainfully employed for four plus hours.

I witnessed an Amazon driver on my route recently. He had a brand new van, and he was wearing a reflective vest. He dashed up to the customer's address and delivered the package. (Or, maybe it was somebody else's package, who knows?)

All I know is, that Amazon is taking away our business, package by package. I told my wife about this and told her not to order on Amazon anymore. They are dead to me, as they should be to all of you. Thank God for eBay and the rest!

Info on this page courtesy of the Tarpon Springs, Florida August 2017  
*Suncoast Letter Carrier's Update* published by NALC Branch 2008.  
Thank you to Woody and Editor Mike Leishman in the midst of "Irma"...

## *I Need a Supervisor*

sung to the  
tune of

## *I Need a Lover*

by



## John Mellencamp

I need a supervisor that won't drive me crazy  
(I need a supervisor that won't drive me crazy)  
I need a supervisor that won't drive me crazy  
Some boss that knows the meaning of,  
Hey hit the highway!

Well I've been delivering my route in the heat  
Racin' to get back before five  
I'm so tired, my body is sweaty  
Hey I'm so beat, and you're sending me back out?

My DPS is missequenced  
And I've got marriage mail  
And at District they're watching my RIMs

And I got the members callin' me today on my cell

I need a supervisor who won't drive me crazy  
Some boss who approves my overtime and then goes  
away  
I need a supervisor who won't drive me crazy  
Some boss that knows the meaning of  
Hey hit the highway!

Well I'm not wiped out by all the grievances I'm filin'  
I'm gonna retire and play golf and sing karaoke  
(sing karaoke)  
Now I'm not asking to be loved or promoted  
Hey—I just can't face another I.I.  
In the bamboo room

I need a supervisor that won't drive me crazy  
Some boss that knows the meaning of  
Hey hit the highway!

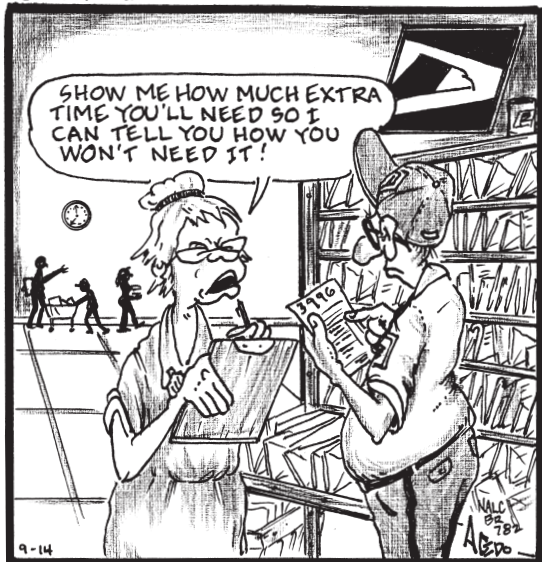
I need a supervisor that won't drive me crazy  
Some boss to approve my overtime and then go away  
I need a supervisor that won't drive me crazy  
Some boss that knows the meaning of  
Hey hit the highway!



# Get it in Writing? YES!

The delivery supervisor made a verbal agreement with a Regular Carrier.

## OUT THERE



Originally published October 2014

The Carrier informed his supervisor that the route had a lot of mail and was told to keep the overtime low on the route.

The supervisor took a piece off the route. The Carrier used one half hour of overtime. The supervisor did NOT tell the Carrier to have an 8-hour day.

The Carrier did not fill out the 3996 for the estimated time to complete his assignment. The next day the supervisor was upset at the Carrier for using unauthorized overtime. The Carrier did fail to fill out a 3996 for the overtime needed to complete the assignment. AND THE POINT?

**The 3996 is a very effective source of information. By filling out the 3996 it puts the responsibility for the overtime in the hands of the supervisor.**

In the situation above, the Carrier claims the supervisor didn't tell him to have an 8-hour day. The supervisor said, "Well, I took a piece off your assignment. I thought by taking a piece of your route you would only work an 8-hour day."

The 3996 prevents" "He said. She said." "But, I thought you meant..." **YOU should fill out a 3996 every day if your assignment is going to take more than 8 hours to complete.**

A 3996 should be filled out by the Carrier who is asking for assistance. The 3996 should ALSO be completed by the assisting Carrier who reports time utilized in the auxiliary assistance for the route.

The 3996 is a source of information used to track many things. It could help to prove a route is overburdened. By proving route is overburdened, it can show that the piece that the supervisor claims was one hour was actually two hours. But, if the Carrier who provides assistance doesn't fill out the 3996 indicating how long it took on the street, you may have a problem.

Understand? Hopefully, you do.

For your own protection fill out the 3996 every day for your assignment or for the piece you are assigned!

Article courtesy of the Branch 3126 Madison Heights, MI August 2017 *NEW VISION*



When you think of summer the first thing that comes to mind; kids are out playing and so are their dogs! Unfortunately, the chances of a carrier getting bitten during this time are high. Carriers must always be aware of their surroundings!

People always have the perception that their family pet won't bite! We all know if the dog has teeth it bites. In many cases when a carrier gets bit no matter the severity, it is serious and can be very traumatic.

Carriers should always carry their pouch. Your pouch will be the only thing between you, and the dog. You should also make sure you have plenty of (HALT) dog repellent on hand. It won't do you any good if it's at the bottom of your pouch. Always make sure it is securely clipped on the side of your pouch, and placed for you to grab it easily in that intense moment!

When you knock on your customers door and you hear a dog barking nine times out of ten your customer will open the door without realizing Fido just might bit. A rule of thumb; when you knock on a door and you hear a dog on the other end, place your foot on the bottom of the screen door so the dog is not able to push it open.

In cases where there is no screen door, and you hear a dog when

you knock; walk back to your vehicle until you know you are not in any danger.

There are some carriers who feed the dogs on their routes. This is NOT permitted!! No carrier should be feeding any dogs on their routes. Fido may eat out of your hand but when your fellow brother or sister comes around and they have no food it could cause problems. Dogs sense fear, and if the carrier feels uncomfortably with the presents of the dog it could cause the dog to attack.

All stations should have **DOG AWARE** cards. These cards are to be cased up in-order to alert the carrier of a dog problem. It is very important that carriers follow protocol to assure our brothers and sisters are aware of any danger that potentially could arise on their routes.

Article courtesy of the Houston, Texas August 2017 *Houston Letter Carrier* published by NALC Branch 283. Thank you to Tina MCGee (et. al.) in the midst of "Harvey"...

## OUT THERE



This Fred Acedo cartoon was originally published by NALC Branch 782 in 2000.

# CCA Health Benefits

There is going to be a Special Enrollment Period for the USPS Health Benefit Plan for all CCAs, September 4th to October 19th. Each CCA will get a letter from the USPS outlining the details of this enrollment period with the new contractual increases. The letter will read like this:

**THERE IS A DEADLINE TO MAKE THIS DECISION** – you can enroll or change enrollment during the Special Enrollment Period from September 4, 2017 - October 19, 2017, 11:59 PM Eastern Time. Your coverage will be effective on October 28, 2017.

If you do not enroll or change enrollment during this Special Enrollment Period, your next opportunity is Open Season, which is November 13, 2017 - December 11, 2017. Elections made during Open Season take effect January 6, 2018.

You may also enroll or change your enrollment if you have a qualifying life event (for example, marriage or birth of a child).

## How to Enroll

During the Special Enrollment Period, you may use [PostalEASE](#) employee self-service to enroll in the USPSHB Plan or change your enrollment September 4, 2017 - October 19, 2017, 11:59 PM Eastern Time. Your coverage will be effective October 28, 2017.

Before enrolling, you should read the *Guide to USPS Health Benefits Plan* on [LiteBlue](#) at [HTTPS://LITEBLUE.USPS.GOV/USPSHP](https://LITEBLUE.USPS.GOV/USPSHP). On the website, you will find important rules, premium rates for the plan, and the [PostalEASE](#) Worksheet, which should be completed prior to entering your election in [PostalEASE](#) so that you have all of the required information ready to enter.

Once you have decided to enroll, access [PostalEASE](#) via the web at [HTTPS://LITEBLUE.USPS.GOV](https://LITEBLUE.USPS.GOV), an Employee Self-Service Kiosk (available at some facilities), or by calling the Employee Service Line at 1-877-477-3273, option 1; TTY 866-260-7507. We strongly recommend that if you are enrolling in Self Plus One or Self and Family that you use the web version of [PostalEASE](#) and not use the phone. Use your USPS Employee ID number (EIN) found at the top of your earnings statement and USPS Self-Service password to access [LiteBlue](#) and [PostalEASE](#) via the web. Use your USPS EIN and current 4-digit USPS PIN to conduct self-service telephone transactions on the telephone using IVR. If you don't know your USPS Self-Service Password, you can reset your USPS Self-Service Password (and USPS PIN) using the Self-Service Profile 9SSP) Application at [WWW.SSP.USPS.GOV](http://WWW.SSP.USPS.GOV) or via links provided on the [LiteBlue](#) and Blue logon pages.

The quickest way for your election to be processed is for you to use [PostalEASE](#). However, if you are unable to use [PostalEASE](#), you may also complete the [PostalEASE](#) Worksheet (available at [LiteBlue](#)) and mail it to the HR Shared Service Center at: HRSSC, Compensation/Benefits, P.O. Box 970400, Greensboro, North Carolina 27497-0400.

## FURTHER INFORMATION AVAILABLE AT [LiteBlue](#)

Plan information for the USPS Health Benefits Plan is available at [LiteBlue](#) at [HTTPS://LITEBLUE/USPS.GOV/USPSHP](https://LITEBLUE/USPS.GOV/USPSHP). Before you decide to enroll, read the *Summary of Benefits and Coverage* which provides a helpful overview of what the USPS Health Benefits Plan covers and your share of health care costs.

Questions relating to your benefits? Please contact the HRSSC at 1-877-477-3273, option 5; TTY 1-866-260-7507.

**THERE IS A DEADLINE TO MAKE THIS DECISION**

### Per Pay Period Premium Contributions for USPSHB Plan

#### First CCA Appointment

|                 | Total Premium | What USPS Pays | What YOU Pay |
|-----------------|---------------|----------------|--------------|
| Self Only       | \$165.00      | \$125.00       | \$40.00      |
| Self Plus One   | \$330.00      | \$214.50       | \$115.50     |
| Self and Family | \$495.00      | \$321.75       | \$173.25     |

#### All Subsequent CCA Appointments\*

|                 | Total Premium | What USPS Pays | What YOU Pay |
|-----------------|---------------|----------------|--------------|
| Self Only       | \$165.00      | \$125.00       | \$40.00      |
| Self Plus One   | \$330.00      | \$247.50       | \$82.50      |
| Self and Family | \$495.00      | \$371.25       | \$123.75     |

\*After initial appointment of a 360-day term and upon reappointment to another 360-day term

The NALC has released a statement indicating that the organization has taken a bold new direction — **MOVIE PRODUCTION!** The NALC has the following movies in production as we speak:

**POSTAL APOCALYPSE**

**NOW:** A group of 204b's are held within the trance of a deranged postmaster. The 204bs look upon the postmaster as some sort of god. A young business agent and several Carriers load up in an LLV and have



many adventures while driving up a river road on the way to the deranged postmaster's lair. Along the route the group sees some wild raspberries and gets out of the LLV to run into the woods to collect them. While in the woods the Carriers are met by a skunk. One of the carriers yells, "Never get out of the LLV..." The group continues up the river road and then are met outside the station of the deranged postmaster by a reporter who looks a lot like Dennis Hopper. The business agent terminates the postmaster's reign of terror. (With an arbitrated settlement)

**BACK TO THE POSTAL FUTURE:** The post office finds a time machine and goes back to when the price of a stamp was 47 cents and then gets back into the time machine and the price of a stamp returns to 49 cents.

**INDIANA CCA AND THE MAILBOX OF DOOM:** Opening scene where a CCA is slowly walking up a shaky, dark stairway towards an old rusty mailbox at the top. Once there the CCA gently opens the box and places some letters inside. Suddenly all hell breaks out as a dog comes bolting out of the door at the top of the stairs. The dog is going so fast that it looks like a ball. The ball chases the CCA down the stairs and across the street. The CCA is able to avoid the dog by diving into her LLV.

**THE HUNGER GAMES:** Several CCAs are sent out on routes they have never seen before and are confronted with challenges. Only two of the CCAs will make it back by five. In the second movie, the CCAs will be sent out on the same challenges. This time the CCAs will be rescued by an OTDL carrier. In the third movie, the CCAs become Regulars and then union Stewards. These union Stewards then take on the postal bureaucracy.

**ONE FLEW OVER THE CUCKOOS NEST:** A Carrier gets a letter of warning and thinks that a good way to get out of it is to become a 204b. He pretends that he fits in with his management coworkers. The only problem is, he gets along with the Carriers he is supposed to be supervising. He is then sent to a "training facility" where he receives a "Management lobotomy". Upon his return he walks around in a catatonic state just mumbling numbers off of a clipboard.

**RAINMAN:** The story of a supervisor who has no social skills but is very good with numbers. The supervisor, of course, has a meteoric rise within the management ranks.

**TITANIC:** A postal station is led by a manager who drives the station right into an iceberg labeled "Lack of Customer Service". The station sinks, taking the majority of the employees down with it.

**GONE WITH THE WIND:** The story of a Carrier, some advos and a very windy day.

**IT'S A WONDERFUL LIFE:** The story of a retired Letter Carrier.

**2001: A SPACE ODYSSEY:** A Carrier is seen yelling at his scanner after the scanner requests a sampling request, "What the heck...I can't sample anything right now... it's snowing like crazy and my hands are full of mail. Why don't you sample your own mail?" The scanner replies: "I'm sorry Dave, I'm afraid I can't do that."

**GROUNDHOG DAY:** The story of a Carrier who goes in to work, day after day, and it always seems exactly the same as the day before...

**SPIES LIKE US:** The story of a young Russian Carrier who becomes the President of a local branch. (Just kidding...there's no indication Tanya was a spy!)

**THE DARK KNIGHT:** Some joker causes a CCA to deliver in the night.

Finally, some of the movies are no more than titles on the drawing board:

**BLAZING SATCHELS**  
**THE 40 YEAR-OLD CCA**  
**PLANES, TRAINS AND LLVS**  
**MONTY PYTHON'S LIFE OF BRIAN THE LETTER CARRIER**

**CROUCHING TIGER, HIDDEN SUPERVISOR**

Article courtesy of the Duluth, MI ZENITH BRANCH NEWS published as "View from the Country Club" by NALC Branch 114 in August 2017

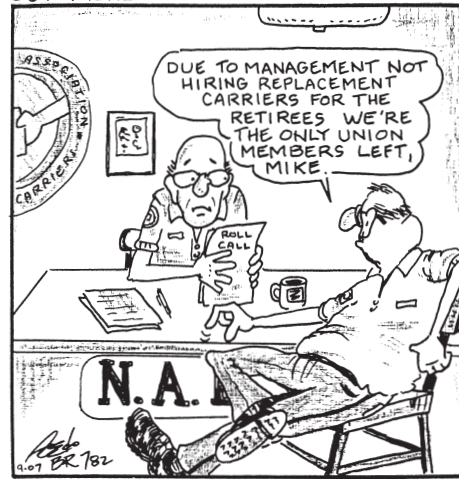
This is a sample. You are looking at page 74 in the *NALC Editor Resource Book*. There are 176 pages in this book that explore glimpses into our lives as Letter Carriers from January 2003 to July 2016 ...

OUT THERE



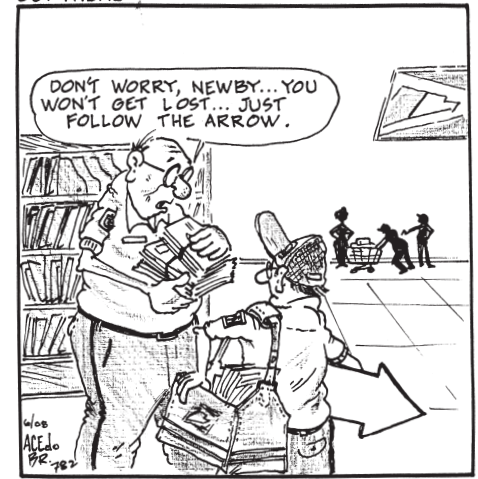
Originally published April 2009

OUT THERE



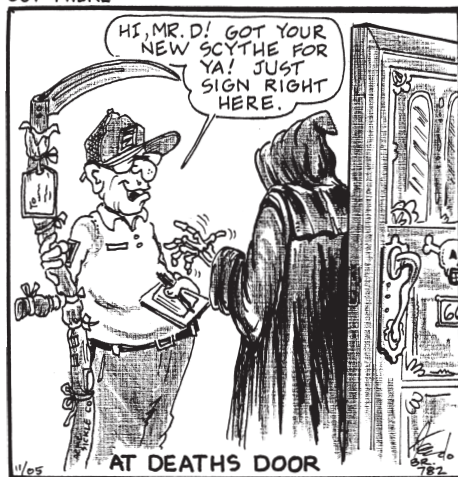
Originally published April 2009

OUT THERE



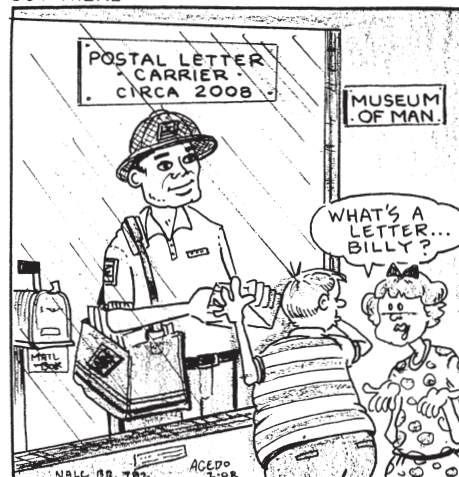
Originally published May 2009

OUT THERE



Originally published May 2009

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Originally published May 2009

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Originally published May 2009

OUT THERE



Originally published May 2009



# from the editor-guy

The *NALC Editor Resource Book* is Volume II of Fred Acedo cartoons. It presents almost 1100 of Fred Acedo's cartoons published in our newsletter from 2003 - 2016. This book builds on the almost 500 cartoons in the original **Out tHeRe** book which featured his work from 1993 through 2002. *Welcome to Volume II!*

You may have questions about how this book can be used or whether or not it will be a good investment. You can call me at the phone number listed below. You can write to me, or you can e-mail me at BRZIII@AOLCOM. I would be glad to answer your questions or give you an idea of how this product can be a creative tool for your current or future NALC editor in presenting information to NALC members. *(Please follow this trail \*\*\* )*

This book is an excellent book of clip art designed specifically for, by and about NALC members and our world. (Yes. I am biased. I believe that this **IS** an excellent book of clip art! I hope that you agree...)

Additionally, an index is provided that links ALL of the cartoons in both the original **Out tHeRe** and in Volume II to assist editors in searching out cartoons by topic (e.g. dogs, injuries, supervisors, etc.).

BASIL ZUNIGA

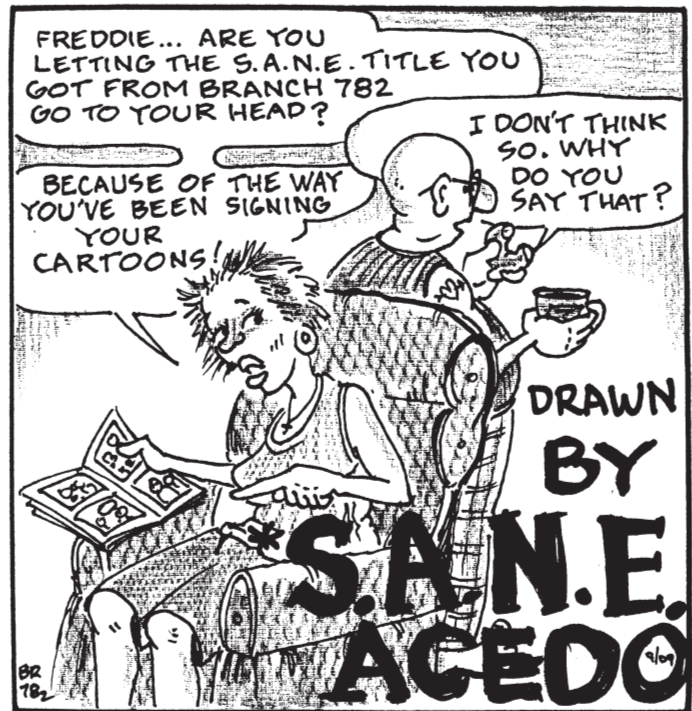
**Please send me one or more NALC Editor Resource Books! I want Fred's cartoons!**

Base cost is **\$30** but you can donate more. (Cost covers wear & tear, paper, toner, etc.)

**\*\*\* SPECIAL OFFER:** I will include a copy of **Out tHeRe** with this order. **500 more cartoons!**

**When you order, please indicate if you are an NALC Editor!**

NALC Branch 782 ● 2628 F Street ● Bakersfield, California ● 93301 ● (661) 205-1603



\* SPECIAL ASSISTANT NEWSLETTER EDITOR

Curious about what you might be getting? Check out the sample featured on the preceding page.

# from the editor-guy

Occasionally, my wife will ask me if anyone said anything about the newsletter. Usually, I tell her that I haven't heard anything except from P. Berton.

So, I'm not sure if anybody will read this or not; but, I do want to share a few things just in case somebody does.

Mark Ramirez got a really nice letter from Pete Prunier in New Hampshire. It was pretty cool! (Hmmm...*I guess somebody does read the newsletter...*)

Also, I was in contact with Branch 782 Retiree Alex Dang recently. *For those of you who haven't heard, Alex now has a new hip!*

To thumbnail what I know: Alex has been in pain for quite some time. At Paul Skinner's wedding in 2016, it was a struggle to keep a smile on his face. (If you know Alex, you know how unusual *that* was. **ALEX WAS IN PAIN!**)

A chiropractor x-ray revealed an issue. Alex's wife, Maureen Buscher-Dang, took Alex to Orthopedic Surgeon Dr. Coppola on August 8th. (Before his retirement, Alex used to deliver mail to Dr. Coppola.) The Doctor diagnosed the problem and determined that Alex needed a hip replacement. After a three day hospital stay, Alex was discharged on August 31st to begin his rehab.

Alex now has a goal. He wants to be able to walk his daughter, Morgen, down the aisle on October 14th and do the "Father-Daughter Dance" thing.

*Then, Alex WILL be smiling!*

BASIL ZUNIGA



## New Hampshire Merged Branch 44 NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF LETTER CARRIERS

P.O. BOX 4662  
MANCHESTER, NEW HAMPSHIRE 03108

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Derry  
Durham  
Exeter  
Goffstown  
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Laconia



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Bristol  
Hooksett  
Dover  
Newmarket  
Tilton  
Berlin

Serving  
21  
New Hampshire  
Offices 0

Hi Mark,

I want to take this opportunity to thank you for the great articles you put together for Branch 782. I am a personal friend of Basil's and we correspond on a regular basis. He has helped me to bring my 44 Magnum up to readership level.

I need to say thank you, to you, for your great articles. You combine outstanding information and a level of humor that is needed for every newsletter. I hope you do not mind if I reprint your articles once and awhile. It really helps our newsletter and most importantly, letter carriers.

Thank you, Mark, for your great articles. I have included 2 copies of our June newsletter and if you would like to receive our newsletter at your home or "In Care" of your union office, please let me know at [planmap@comcast.net](mailto:planmap@comcast.net). I will be sure to add you to our mailing list. Keep up the great work!

Peter Prunier

Editor, "The 44 Magnum"

165 Morse Road

Manchester NH 03104

Thanks  
MARK

"Leading The Way In New Hampshire"

### "Out tHeRe"

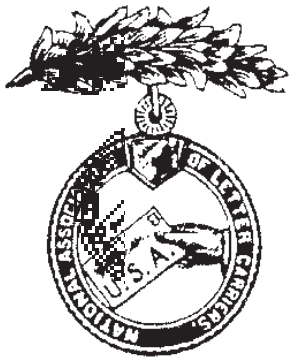


Fred Acedo's cartoons are pretty amazing. If you look at page 6, you'll see one which fits the topic on the page perfectly. And? Fred originally drew that cartoon in September 2003...

Does that make him a prophet? Nope. He just knows our world!

If you like his cartoons — and you want to see some in all of their glory, check them out in color on the Branch 782 website.

Moreover, if you really like his cartoons, I have a suggestion: There are *two* **Out tHeRe** cartoon books for sale. Some 1600 cartoons which span from 1993 - 2016 are available. For more information, contact Basil Zuniga, Branch 782 Editor-guy, at (661) 205-1603.



# Branch Officers

|                            |                         |                       |
|----------------------------|-------------------------|-----------------------|
| <b>President</b>           | <b>Mike Towery</b>      | <b>(661) 331-9171</b> |
| <b>Vice-President</b>      | <b>John Ortega</b>      | <b>(661) 809-8140</b> |
| <b>Recording Secretary</b> | <b>Kim Gerdes</b>       | <b>(661) 834-2059</b> |
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| <b>Sargeant-at-Arms</b>    | <b>Frank Martinez</b>   | <b>(661) 703-4212</b> |
| <b>Chief Trustee</b>       | <b>Teresa Ortega</b>    | <b>(661) 391-8026</b> |
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*E.A. BAKER UNION UPDATE* is published monthly by Merged Branch 782 of the National Association of Letter Carriers, AFL-CIO.

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. E-mails are preferred...

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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Dholderman@bak.r.com

## NALC Branch 782 Shop Stewards

|                              |                  |                |
|------------------------------|------------------|----------------|
| Arvin (93203)                | Mike Munoz       | (661) 304-5516 |
| Avenal (93204)               | John Ortega      | (661) 809-8140 |
| Delano (93215)               | Blanca Ibarra    | (661) 725-1526 |
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| McFarland (93250)            | Bonnie Whitbey   | (661) 302-7354 |
| Shafter (93263)              | Norma Hamer      | (661) 619-1465 |
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| South Station (93304)        | Judy Kiyoshi     | (661) 817-5529 |
| South Station Alternate      | Darryl Holderman | (661) 487-5353 |
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| East Bakersfield (Alternate) | Angie Hernandez  | (661) 322-4813 |
| Hillcrest Station (93306)    | Pam Smith        | (661) 979-5854 |
| Brundage Station (93307)     | John Ortega      | (661) 809-8140 |
| Dole Court (93308)           | Shari Sharp      | (661) 364-5544 |
| Stockdale Station (93309)    | Randy Courson    | (661) 345-0256 |
| Stockdale Station (93309)    | Maria Valenzuela | (661) 496-5929 |
| Camino Media (93311/13)      | Mike Meza        | (805) 625-4541 |
| Mojave (93501)               | Delga Loza       | (661) 824-8332 |
| California City (93504)      | Ryan Gerstl      | (761) 373-4180 |
| Boron (93516)                | Paula Hogg       | (760) 373-8963 |
| Edwards AF Base (93523)      | Mike Meza        | (805) 625-4541 |
| Ridgecrest (93555)           | Lynnel Howell    | (760) 382-3030 |
| Tehachapi (93561)            | Paula Hogg       | (760) 373-8963 |
| Trona (93562)                | Lynnel Howell    | (760) 382-3030 |

|                            |                   |                |
|----------------------------|-------------------|----------------|
| OWCP Representative        | Rick Gerdes       | (661) 301-9675 |
| CCA Representative         | Gilroy Manglicmot | (661) 301-2156 |
| USPS Social Recreation Rep | Paul Greenfield   | (661) 203-7802 |
| USPS Social Recreation Rep | Frank Martinez    | (661) 703-4212 |

**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) 331-9171

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## General Meeting Wednesday September 27, 2017 7:00 p.m.

Branch 782 Office  
2628 "F" Street  
Bakersfield, California

**FORWARDING SERVICE REQUESTED**

at the

# Mike:



*Save The Date!!*

**October 8, 2017**

**Branch Picnic**

More details on page 9

Contact Teresa Ortega  
for answers to questions  
**(661) 201-3086**

**"OuT tHeRe"**



Each and EVERY month, Branch 782 sponsors a drawing to encourage *YOU* to come to our Meeting\*

***This month YOU could win \$300!***

\*THE FINE PRINT: To win the money *YOU* have to be present when *YOUR* name is drawn...just like Art Mooney was in March!!