

# National Association of Letter Carriers

## Branch 782

### E.A. Baker Union Update



ARVIN  
DELANO  
MOJAVE

AVENAL  
EDWARDS AFB  
RIDGECREST

TEHACHAPI

BAKERSFIELD  
LAMONT  
SHAFTER

TRONA

BORON  
McFARLAND  
TAFT

WASCO



VOLUME LXXXI NUMBER 5

MAY 2009

at the

# Mike:



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

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

*Continued on page 4...*

## Mail carrier signs, seals and delivers 50 years of service

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

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

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

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

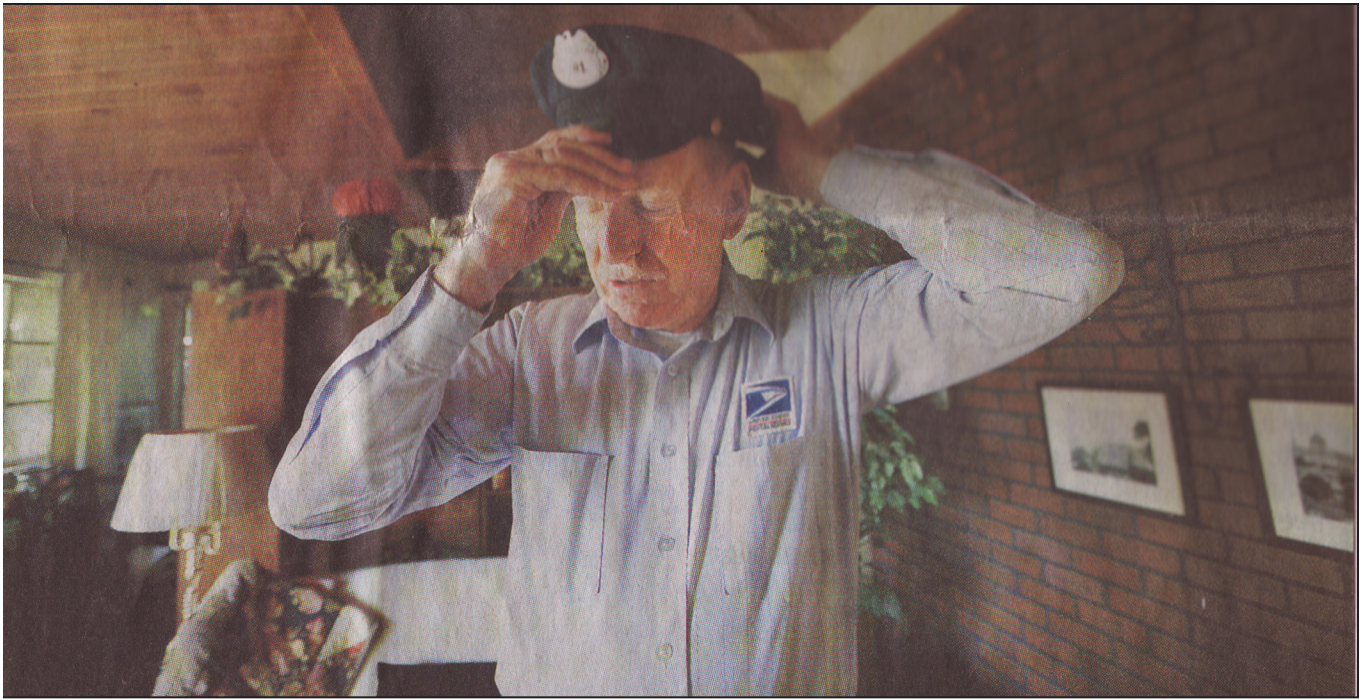
The job requires respect. What's more basic than bringing the mail? Mail delivery constitutes one of life's most reliable routines.

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



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

*Continued on next page...*



**CASEY CHRISTIE/The Californian**

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

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

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

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

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

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

tattoos and a shortage of shoes.

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

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

The people made things interesting, the dogs, exciting.

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

“Fighting a pit bull was nothing com-

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

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

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

Another mailman, a veteran of the



Paul Shaw shows off a hat that he wore out...

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

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

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

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

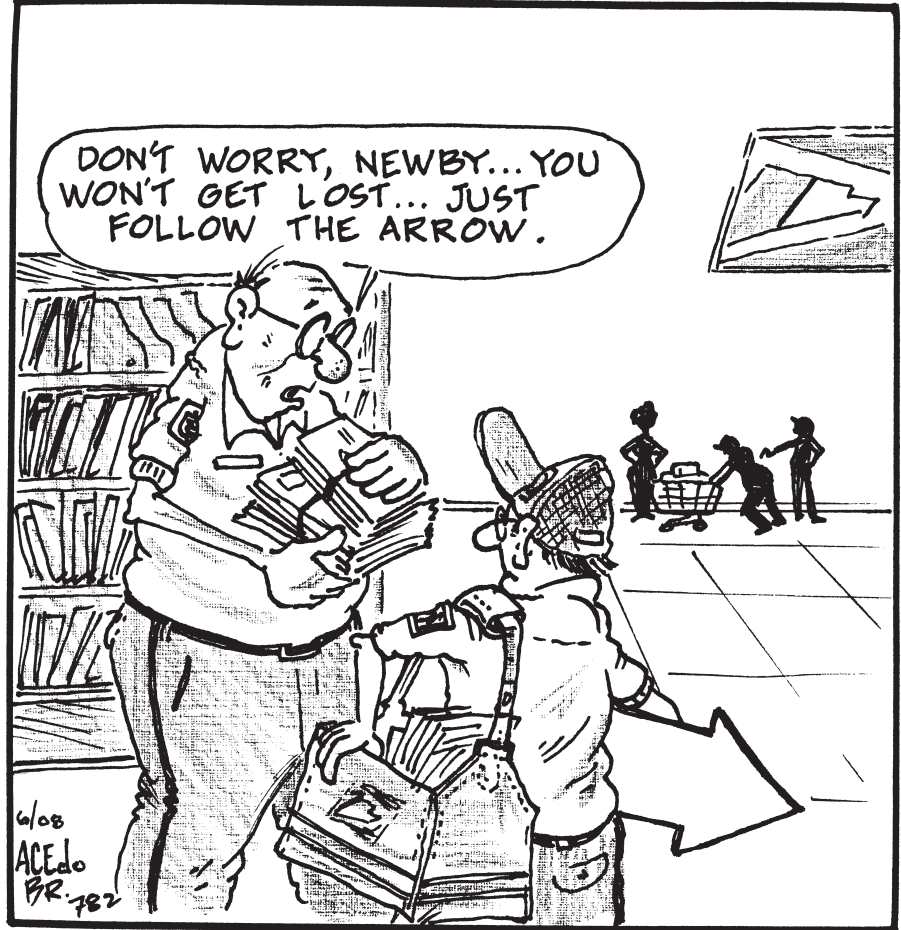
Before Shaw was diagnosed with prostate cancer almost a year ago, he rarely missed a day. He won the Million Mile Safety Award, having never been in an auto accident during his tenure.

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

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

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

## OUT THERE



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

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

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

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

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

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

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

Thank you Paul! Enjoy your retirement!

DANNY BLAIR  
Branch 782 Trustee

## “at the Mike”

*Continued from page 1...*

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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



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

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

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

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



Teresa Garcia, the “Face of the Food Drive” being interviewed by Miles Muzio.

and was a “natural television star” when she was interviewed by Channel 29 news.

I want to thank Carmen Castillo for all her behind the scenes work in organizing and making the Food Drive a success. And thanks also go to Georgette Breedveld for all her help and for doing the barbecuing on Saturday at the GMF. This is just one example of what can be accomplished

Drive Coordinators for all their time and hard work. Teresa, also known as the “Face of the Food Drive”, did an outstanding job as the Branch Coordinator

when everyone manages to work together toward a common goal.

*Continued on next page...*



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



Satchel full, South Station’s Bonita Lewis smiles!



Cindy Flores started out slow and finished strong!



(l-r) Shurie Amick, Mabel Bullis, Rosie Padilla and our helpers.

**O**n a more personal note, I want to thank all those who called; sent cards and flowers; visited the hospital; provided food and gave their support when my wife was in a near fatal automobile accident on March 8th.

She spent 27 days in the hospital, most of the time in intensive care. She then had to have surgery and spend another nine days later on due to complications.

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



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

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

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

**MIKE TOWERY**  
Branch 782 President  
and a grateful husband and father

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



# Proposed By-Laws Changes

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

## ARTICLE V

### ELECTIONS

#### Existing Language

SECTION 1. The provisions of this Article shall govern the election of all delegates to the National and State Association Conventions and the election of Branch Officers.

The elected officers of the Branch shall be: President; Vice President; Recording Secretary; Treasurer; Financial Secretary; Sergeant-at-Arms; Health Benefits and MBA Representative; Three Trustees. By virtue of the position, Branch 782 President shall be a delegate to both the National and State Conventions

#### Proposed Language

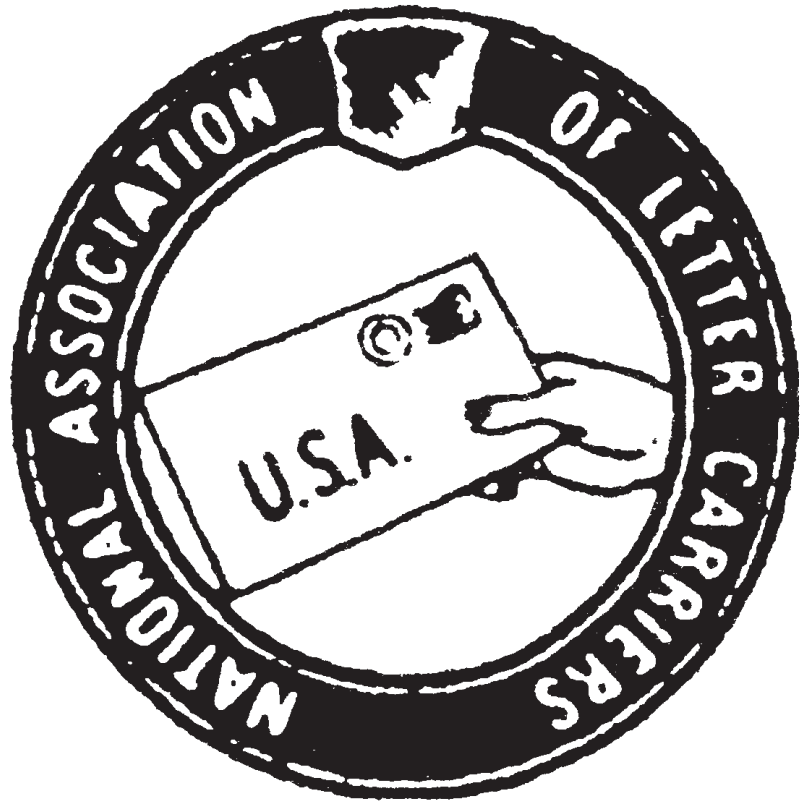
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#### Existing Language

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

#### Proposed Language

SECTION 8. The term of office for all elected officers



of this Branch shall be **three (3)** years or until their successors are duly elected and installed.

## ARTICLE III

### MEETINGS

#### Existing Language

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

#### Proposed Language

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

DARRYL HOLDERMAN  
Branch 782 Vice-President

# Minutes of the April 2009 General Meeting

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

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

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

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

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

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

## May 2009 General Membership Meeting Drawing

# \$500

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



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

**IMPROVEMENT OF THE ASSOCIATION:** Darryl Holderman read the proposed By-Laws changes that will be voted on at the next meeting: Article V Section 1: The provisions of this Article shall govern the election of all delegates to the National and State Association Conventions and the elections of Branch Officers. The elected officers of the Branch shall be: President; Vice President; Recording Secretary; Treasurer; Financial Secretary; Sergeant at Arms; Health Benefits and MBA Representative; Three Trustees. By virtue of their positions, Branch 782 President and Vice President shall be delegates to both the National and State Conventions. Article V Section 8: The term of office for all elected officer of this Branch shall be three (3) years or until their successors are duly elected and installed. Article III Section 1: The regular meeting of this Branch shall be held on the fourth Tuesday of each month, excluding December, at 7:00 p.m. at the Branch 782 Union Office, 2628 F Street, Bakersfield, California. The December meeting will be held on the third Tuesday of the month.

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

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

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

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

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

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

There were 51 members present.

The meeting adjourned at 8:52 p.m.

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

**DOWNTOWN STATION**

Dale Pearce  
 Javier Cruz

## NON-MEMBER LIST February 2009

**SOUTH STATION**

*100% Union!!!*

**CAMINO MEDIA**

F. Medina, Jr.

**EDWARDS**

*100% Union!!!*

**SHAFTER**

L. M. New  
 M. D. Voights

**EAST BAKERSFIELD**

*100% Union!!!*

**ARVIN**

*100% Union!!!*

**LAMONT**

*100% Union!!!*

**TAFT**

B. W. Krier  
 K. J. Hughes

**HILLCREST**

M. M. Henry

**AVENAL**

J. T. Howery

**McFARLAND**

*100% Union!!!*

**TEHACHAPI**

V. L. Johnson

**BRUNDAGE**

David Kinglee

**BORON**

*100% Union!!!*

**MOJAVE**

*100% Union!!!*

**TRONA**

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

**DOLE COURT**

Alice Schultz

**CALIFORNIA CITY**

*100% Union!!!*

**RIDGECREST**

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

**WASCO**

*100% Union!!!*

**STOCKDALE**

Ron Huston  
 G.S. Saran

**DELANO**

C. V. Quebral

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

# 2009 Food Drive

## was a Success!!!



Letter Carriers of Branch 782 really did a great job in helping promote our 17th annual Food Drive. They were joined by members of other Postal Crafts, management personnel, and family members as they passed out Food Drive cards in the evening at different local grocery stores.

Carriers from all over Bakersfield were posted at grocery stores on Thursday evening May 7. More than thirty Letter Carriers and a few Rural Carriers—along with plant and customer service managers and



supersupers—volunteered that night.

Over \$732.00 in monetary donations and food

donations came in to the Bakersfield Food Bank. Miles Muzio's weather report was live via remote from the Vons on Coffee Road. Thank you to all who showed up.

Without the Promo night we would not have gotten as much air time on Channel 29.

And, without all the station coordinators there is no way that we could have achieved such outstanding results. Special thank you to all of the following coordinators: Downtown - Steve Friedle; South Station - Devon Patterson and Andrew "Hurricane" Garcia; East Bakersfield - Frank Martinez and Paul Salazar; Hillcrest - Alan Smith; Brundage - Mabel Bullis; Dole Court - Hermie Encinas; Stockdale - John Ortega and Randy Courson; Camino Media - Gina Garcia; Shafter - Norma Hamer; Ridgecrest - Lynnell Howell; and, Delano - Grace Silva.

A special thank you to what I like to call the Food Drive Committee: Mike Towery - Branch 782 President; Jim Broulliard - Postmaster; Carmen Castillo - Customer Relations; Gary Romriell - Food Bank; Abby Tomlinson - Food Bank; and, Griselda Romero - Food Bank.





I also have to remember to thank two people who took the many pictures featured in this month's newsletter: South Station's Anita Holderman is the official Branch 782 photographer. She did a great job! A surprise contributor this month was NALC National Business Agent "Manny" Peralta. Not only does he do a great job of representing Letter Carriers in Region 1 (California, Hawaii, Nevada and Guam), he did an outstanding as a photographer and taking care of business in Bakersfield.

Without these volunteers, I don't know what would have happened. Only other Food Drive Coordinators know just how time and energy consuming a project like this can be. Something like the Food Drive takes on a life of its own until you are so tired you can't sleep. And, the only time your kids see you is on the TV.

I look forward to making a final report on how much food was generated in this year's Food Drive. Exact numbers are going to have to wait until next month.

In the end, a Big "THANK YOU" to everyone who stepped up once again to help feed the less fortunate. I hope the Food Drive continues to have great success in the years to come..

TERESA GARCIA  
2009 Food Drive Coordinator



*Continued on next page...*



NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF LETTER CARRIERS

# Stamp Out Hunger

FOOD DRIVE™

**SATURDAY, MAY 9TH**

**It's Easy to Help:**

- 1 Put some non-perishable food items in a bag and place it by your mailbox.
- 2 Your letter carrier will pick it up and deliver to local food banks!

PROUD SUPPORTERS:

U.S. MAIL

Saturday, May 9, 2009



# Brundage Bulldogs Did It Again!!!! RUFF!!!!

We limited the Food Drive Challenge this year to the Brundage station....  
Because—let's face it—no one can out do us.



Actually, the other stations this year didn't respond with any interest. They tried, but it never got off the ground. I guess everyone is happy having the Brundage station shining on top above them... (chuckle-chuckle, hehehe!!)



Station Manager Mike Bettes, along with our supervisors (Crystal Southwood and Kerry Kendrick), offered to do a CAR WASH if we won the competition.

The wager is to contribute over 10,000 pounds of food. In return, each manager/supervisor will wash 5 cars, picked randomly by the employee's name out of a jar.

The Food Drive Challenge last year yielded a GREAT turn out. Our station raised over 24,000 pounds of food from employee donations. As a result, Mike Bettes and Crystal Southwood delivered a route for a day. Their motivation to participate in these activities is appreciated and should be commended. In the face of the declined economy, and the knowledge of tent cities springing up all across our nation, this is the time for everyone everywhere to give, give, give!!!

We didn't exceed our previous amount this year but we came so close by contributing 21,600 pounds of food which is good enough for the win, therefore the CAR WASH is on. There will be hotdogs and chips for everyone to munch on. We are opening the idea of a potluck and drinks, so bring some goodies to share and bask in the sun while we watch our manager/supervisors hard at work.

The car wash will be hosted at Brundage station on May 23, 2009 beginning at 3pm.

Here are the results from today's pick :

Mike Bettes will be washing the following cars: Lisa Wescott (Rural Route), Rosie Padilla (Carrier), Elroy Miller (Carrier), Emma Gonzales (Carrier), and Dhaliwant Dhaliwal (Carrier).

Crystal Southwood will be washing the following cars: Kim Pumphrey (T-6), Jennifer Shumway (PTF), Darlene Haskins (Carrier), Mabel Bullis (T-6), and Kimmi Gardea (Rural Route).

Carrie Underwood will be washing the following cars: Vicki Guerrero (T.E.), Jasveer Kaur (T.E.), Barbara Wilde (PTF), Ruby Torres (T.E.), and Veronica Anaya (Carrier).

Thank you to everyone who contributed! And of course Mike, Crystal, and Carrie for sparking the drive.

**GO BRUNDAGE BULLDOGS!!!!**

MABEL BULLIS  
Brundage Steward

# A Little Bit of Shafter...



Roger Lynch, City Route 1

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

Our office in Shafter is small and cozy. There are five city routes and two rural routes that fit inside this brick box not much bigger than a store at the mall and we have a total of 15 employees. Carriers are Roger Lynch, City Route 1; Jorge Vaquera, City 2; Diana Mills, City 3; Mae Voigts, City 4; I am City 5; Lori New is our T-6; Israel Cedillos and Arnie Reyes-Rios are our PTF Carriers; Melanie Davis is Rural 1; Fred Doll is Rural 2; Mande Brooks is our only Regular clerk; Annette Espinoza, Carmen Vizzard, and Terry Mills are our PTF clerks. Last, but not least, our OIC is Manual Davis.



Norma Hamer, Shafter Shop Steward

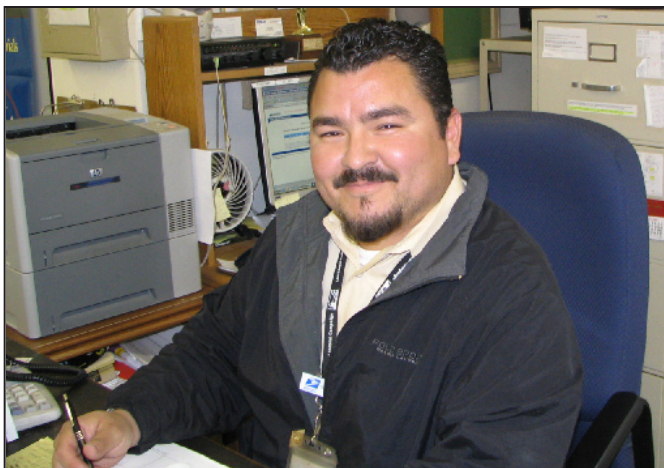
We are all snugged in tight and, on most days, we feel like we are in an obstacle course.

Between the supplies for the customers and our rolling coffins there's little room for anything else. But, we have managed to section off an area for a table, fridge, and microwave. Food is another obstacle that we have in our office. We do like to eat and love to share new recipes with each other. On most days, you can always count on food being in the back. Whether it is leftovers from someone's dinner the night before because the cook didn't know that the rest of the family decided to eat out elsewhere; or, if it was just a kind act; or, if the craving for something in particular was mentioned the day before...there is sure to be something there to nibble.

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



Israel Cedillos, living the PTF life!



Jorge Vaquera, City Route 2

I have included photos of the ones who let me take their snapshot for this article..

NORMA HAMER  
Shafter Shop Steward



# 2009 NALC HBP Info

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

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



**Branch 782  
Health Benefit  
Representative**



**Mark  
Ramirez**  
(661) 834-5011

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

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

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

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

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

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

## Contact Information

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



# Death Benefits

The Federal Employees Compensation Act (FECA) provides a full range of benefits for the survivors of Federal employees who die as a result of job-related injury.

Widows and widowers of deceased employees are eligible for wage-loss compensation equal to 50 percent of the deceased employee's regular pay. A widow or widower with an eligible child is eligible for compensation equal to 45 percent of the employee's regular pay, plus an additional 15 percent for each child, to a maximum not to exceed 75 percent of the deceased employee's regular pay.

In cases where an employee dies as a result of employment, monthly payments for all beneficiaries cannot exceed 75 percent of the highest salary permissible under 5 U.S.C. 8133.

After one year, beneficiaries still receiving death benefits become eligible for cost-of-living increases, which are awarded to FECA beneficiaries effective March 1 of each year. The amount of the increase is determined by the Consumer Price Index (CPI) adjustment for the calendar year prior to March 1, and that amount is added to the compensation payable.

The CPI adjustment is computed by OWCP and the increase is sent directly to the recipient with notification. If a recipient should call about not receiving a CPI, the recipient should be told to write to OWCP. The Compensation Specialist may help write the letter, or the Compensation Specialist may call OWCP.

If the deceased employee leaves no spouse, or the spouse is no longer entitled to Survivor's Benefits, dependent children are eligible for compensation equal to 40 percent of the deceased employee's regular pay, plus 15 percent for each additional dependent child, to a maximum of 75 percent of the employee's regular pay. Compensation may exceed the regular pay if such excess is created by cost-of-living adjustments; however, it may not exceed 75 percent of the highest step.

If a deceased employee leaves no widow, widower, or child, benefits will be paid to the surviving legal dependents of the employee as specified in the Act.

Benefits are paid to widows and widowers until death or remarriage if the beneficiary is under age 55. If a widow or widower under age 55 remarries, OWCP makes a lump-sum payment equal to 24 times the monthly compensation he or she is receiving at the time of remarriage. If marriage is at or after the age of 55, no change in monthly benefits will occur.

Surviving children receive benefits until they die, marry, or reach the age of 18. Beyond the age of 18, if a surviving child elects to pursue higher education on a full-time basis (generally 12 semester units), payments will continue until he or she has completed four years of study beyond the high school level, or until he or she is 23 years of age. Payments will in no event extend beyond the semester or enrollment period in which the beneficiary reaches the age of 23, or completes the fourth year of higher education (whichever occurs first). When medical evidence shows that a dependent over the age of 18 is incapable of self-support, benefits continue until the dependent becomes capable of self-support.

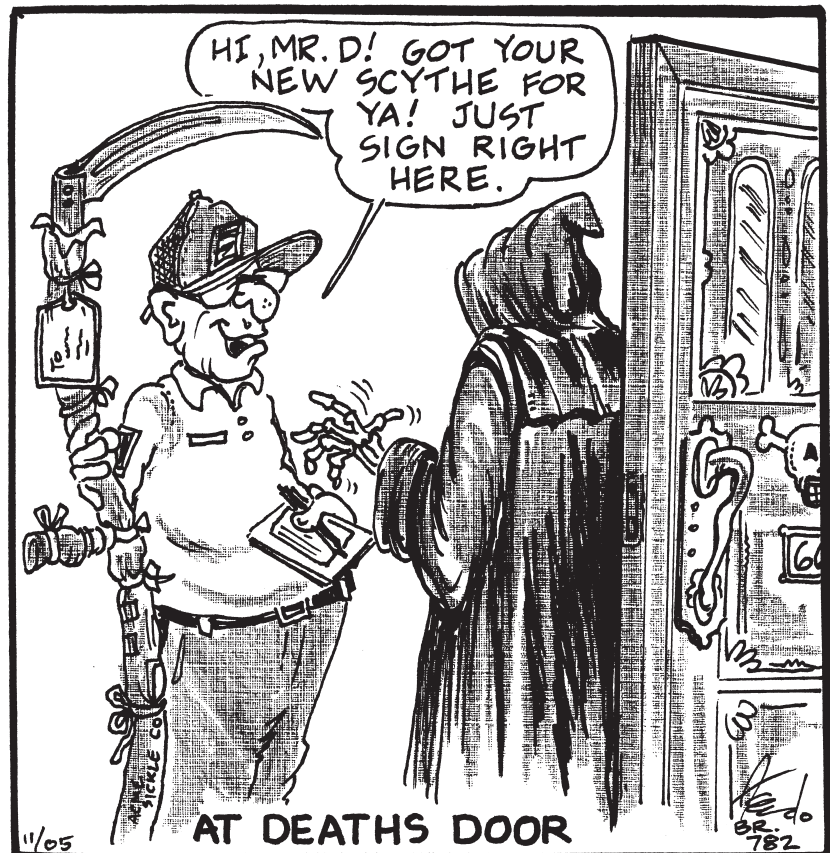
Funeral expenses are also provided to survivors under the provisions of the Act. Up to \$800 will be paid for funeral expenses. If the employee dies away from his or her home, the cost of transporting the remains to the place of burial will be paid in full. In addition, a \$200 allowance will be paid in consideration of the expense of terminating the Federal employment status of the deceased.

RON NOVIELLO

Massachusetts Northeast Merged Branch 25

Article courtesy of the April 2009  
NALC Branch 25 *Wake Up*

## OUT THERE



# Goodbye, Paul Shaw!

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

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

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

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

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

I have never seen him scowl or complain after any numerous stand-ups given by uncounted numbers of previous incompetent O.I.C.'s or Postmasters with any number of hare-brained

OUT THERE



tactics on how to “fix” our office. He always kept his cool, like he knew something we didn't. And he did. He knew, after all these years in the profession, that Managers come and go. Styles differ, as do competence levels, but you aren't going to get anywhere by butting heads.

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

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

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

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

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

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

JASON MUNOZ  
Assistant to the Editor

# ROAD SAFETY....DRIVING THE POINT HOME

## Learning from First Hand Knowledge

Brothers and Sisters,

Since the time you've received the last newsletter, we've had three accidents with bicyclists in Southwest Florida and others in the district. The local ones were in Naples and Punta Gorda. I'll fill you in on what happened.

The first occurred in Naples on a wide residential street with a curbed median and a 4ft. bicycle lane. The Carrier has 38 years with the Postal Service, 35+ driving. As he was doing his curbsides, he said a piece of mail flew out the window on the driver's side. He stopped the vehicle, put it in reverse and **backed up** 10-15 feet to pick up the letter.

Just as he was **backing**, he heard a thud on the back of his FFV and stopped. At that point, he noticed the bicyclist that he had just **backed** into. Thank goodness, the bicyclist wasn't severely hurt or worse.

Now, let's talk about the Carrier. This fine Brother of yours is suffering some emotional trauma. He wasn't having a bad day. He was having a normal day. He did nothing different that day than any of his other days during his 38 years. That was his problem—he got away with 38 years of things not happening and was just plain lucky. That's what he told me and would tell you the same thing.

The other incident happened in Punta Gorda. One of your Brothers was doing a curbside and handing mail to one of his handicapped customers in a wheel chair when he also heard a thud on the back of his FFV. When he got out of the vehicle, he noticed a bicyclist had run into the back of the FFV.

This bicyclist wasn't so fortunate. He hit the vehicle face first on the handle that's on the back of the truck. He hit it so hard he was hardly coherent while lying on the ground. His lip was cut in half almost to the chin. He couldn't speak because of his injuries. Once the bicyclist was able, he had to write down the contact number for his wife. There was blood splattered on a large area on the back of the truck.

This Letter Carrier is also experiencing some emotional trauma. The difference with this account is that this Carrier did nothing wrong. Thank goodness there were witnesses to back up his account of what happened.



"I THINK I JUST HIT A MAILMAN."

Lastly (this just in), a City Carrier in St. Pete (with 7.5 years of service) **backed up** to a missed delivery and hit a six year old child on a bike. The child needed to be taken to the hospital with injuries. Unfortunately, I don't have any more information about the child at this time.

If there's a silver lining to these stories, these Carriers now have first-hand knowledge and realize that when you don't pay attention to what's going on around you, accidents happen... and they happen fast!

When you look down for a second, your chance of hitting something greatly increases whether you're on a bike or in a delivery vehicle. Don't let an accident happen to you. It could easily be you or a member of your family injured out there.

**Please don't back up unless it's absolutely necessary!!!**

KEITH BALDWIN  
Driver Safety Instructor

Abridged article courtesy of the March 2009 *News & Views*  
published by Southwest Florida NALC Branch 2072

# BRUNDAGE BULLDOGS “BIGGEST LOSER” COMPETITION—PART II

I am delighted to say that we have a total of 24 competitors in this new challenge. They are (in no particular order):

Stacy Castillo (Brundage Clerk), Jeff Harrington (East Bakersfield), Maria Gutierrez (Brundage T-6) Joanne Layton (Wasco), Marilyn Cacal (Wasco), Crystal Southwood (Brundage Supervisor), Emma Gonzalez (Brundage), Enoch Moya (Brundage PTF), Beatriz Munoz (Brundage PTF), Rosie Padilla (Brundage), Mabel Bullis (Brundage T-6), Kimmi Gardea (Brundage Rural Route), Maria Castro (Brundage Rural Route), Lisa Wescott (Brundage Rural Route), Mike Bettles (Brundage Manager), Yvonne Esquivel (Brundage T-6), Ruben Gonzalez (Brundage PTF), Ruby Torres (Brundage TE), Devon Patterson (South Station), Laura Gordon (Dole), George Vaquera (Shafter), Serena Ornelas (Arvin), Hermi Encinas (Dole), Carmen Castillo (Customer Connect)

That’s a total of \$600 for payouts during the competition!

OUT THERE



OUT THERE



The rules are the same as the previous competition. As a recap:

- 1) First and second month winners: \$25 each.
- 2) 75% 1st place winner (\$412.50). 25% 2nd place winner (\$137.50).

I want to wish the best of luck to everyone who is participating, especially those outside our station. It is a hard achievement to accomplish but the benefits are well worth it. Remember, keep it healthy and watch the heat.

Mabel Bullis  
Brundage Steward



Celebrating  
Ron  
Happy Retirement  
and  
Good Luck!!!



*This really is when Ron joined "The Last Punch Bunch"!!!*



Thanks for the pictures go to Mike Meza, Camino Media Shop Steward.

## from the editor-guy

It's Sunday afternoon. I've spent a few hours at my oldest son's home. Kids are in the pool. Food smells great. Laughter and smiles seem to be on the menu for today, too. Tomorrow is my day off. Tuesday, I'll be at work. Wednesday, too. And so on...

In short, it's pretty much the life that I've led for some thirty years with the Postal Service.

This newsletter has highlighted all of the involvement and activities which went into the Food Drive. Quite an accomplishment. Paul Shaw has retired after almost fifty years as a Letter Carrier! (Something that I probably won't accomplish.) There are pictures of Ron Klinchuch's retirement, too. All this has added to quite a wonderful sense of events.

However.

The Postal Service has developed something called the National Reassessment Process (NRP). It is designed to

allegedly follow all applicable laws, rules, regulations and contractual provisions which protect injured postal employees. Ostensibly, NRP seeks to match injured employees with work within their medical limitations. Under the auspices of NRP, injured postal employees who have been deemed "permanent and stationary" (this means that they have reached their maximum medical improvement), were to be sent a letter detailing a series of assessments and have meetings with USPS personnel with Union representation as a cornerstone.

However, due to circumstances triggered by the economic crisis, the USPS has unilaterally sought to modify NRP and has launched the "Limited Duty Pilot Program". NRP was not accomplishing what they wanted quickly enough. Four USPS Districts are part of this "pilot" program. Quickly, one of the major differences between the pilot and NRP came to light: Injured employees requested Union representation in their meeting with management and their requests were denied. Many were offered no work at all and were told that they needed to go home. Others were offered only two or three hours of work each day. Subsequently, many employees were figuratively—and even literally—marched off the workroom floor, escorted to their vehicles and off postal premises.

So, why does this bother me? Well, in case you haven't thought about things like this, let me enlighten you about a very basic fact: ***This could happen to you or to me.***

My friend, Dave Carlyon isn't at work. He hasn't been at work for a few weeks now.

He is/was considered a Rehab employee. And, in case you haven't noticed, quite a few of the "rehab" haven't been at work recently. In fact, there are many, many of them all over the Sierra-Coastal District who have—in a very real sense—been kicked to the curb...

Dave Carlyon was delivering mail one day. In March 1998, he was attacked by a Wolf-Malmute-Chow mixed breed dog. The dog weighed about 100 pounds. It was a vicious attack which left Dave lying on the ground trying to fend off the bites with his right arm. He knew that he was in trouble and did everything he could just to survive.

Now, Dave is not a little guy. He stands about 6' 4" and is no lightweight. The dog took him down in an instant. And, in that instant, his life changed. Dave wasn't doing anything wrong. He was performing his assigned duties.

He used to be a mechanic. Permanent nerve damage in his arm has led to atrophy and loss of motion and of strength. He can no longer do the things that he loved to do. He can no longer pick up his grandchildren easily. Other problems related to that dog attack have caused his mantra to be "Better Living Through Chemistry" because he is in constant pain.

Based on his medical limitations, the Postal Service has for the past 11 years—as they are required to do under the Law—provided work within those limitations. He has copies of all of the documents signed by his doctor and the USPS on what work he can do. He delivered Express Mail. He delivered swings to Carriers. He kept busy and productive as management had him do the things that they needed done.

There is more than a little irony here. On the one hand, the Postal Service wants to take advantage of the tremendous publicity generated by something like the NALC Food Drive. Great pains are also taken to speak eloquently about how postal employees, like Paul Shaw, are such an asset to the the USPS. Until we're not needed...

And then the USPS, on the other hand, creates programs like NRP; COR route adjustments; and, excessing to create more potential for harm to postal employees. What's next?





# Branch Officers

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.

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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## NALC Branch 782 Shop Stewards

|                            |                                 |
|----------------------------|---------------------------------|
| Avenal (93203)             | Vacant                          |
| Arvin (93209)              | John Ortega (661) 809-8140      |
| Delano (93215)             | Jerry Patterson (661) 599-6859  |
| Lamont (93241)             | Darryl Holderman (661) 589-1683 |
| McFarland (93250)          | Robert Campos (661) 805-1034    |
| Shafter (93263)            | Norma Hamer (661) 619-1465      |
| Taft (93268)               | Mike Meza (805) 625-4541        |
| Alternate                  | Debra McClain                   |
| Wasco (93280)              | Mabel Lyons (661) 900-8892      |
| Downtown Station (93301)   | Kim Gerdes (661) 834-2059       |
| South Station (93304)      | Darryl Holderman (661) 589-1683 |
| South Station Alternate    | Bonita Lewis (661) 589-1683     |
| East Bakersfield (93305)   | Paul Salazar (661) 327-7637     |
| Hillcrest Station (93306)  | Pam Smith (661) 979-5854        |
| Brundage Station (93307)   | Mabel Bullis (661) 496-5679     |
| Brundage Station Alternate | Emma Gonzalez (661) 834-8658    |
| Dole Court (93308)         | Mike Towery (661) 862-8033      |
| Dole Court Alternate       | Teresa Ortega (661) 201-3086    |
| Stockdale Station (93309)  | Randy Courson (661) 345-0256    |
| Stockdale Station (93309)  | John Ortega (661) 809-8140      |
| Camino Media (93311/13)    | Mike Meza (805) 625-4541        |
| Camino Media Alternate     | Gina Garcia (661) 809-8016      |
| Mojave (93501)             | Vacant                          |
| California City (93504)    | Paula Hogg (760) 373-8963       |
| Edwards AF Base (93526)    | Larry Beem (661) 949-2280       |
| Tehachapi (93561)          | Mary Morphis (661) 822-6614     |
| Trona (93562)              | Vacant                          |
| Boron (93516)              | Paula Hogg (760) 373-8963       |
| Ridgecrest (93555)         | Lynnell Howell (760) 371-1039   |

## Branch 782 Website

www.782nalc.com

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**General Meeting  
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counting!!!***

