

# National Association of Letter Carriers

## Branch 782

### E.A. Baker Union Update



ARVIN  
CALIFORNIA CITY  
McFARLAND  
TAFT

AVENAL  
DELANO  
MOJAVE  
TEHACHAPI

BAKERSFIELD  
EDWARDS AFB  
RIDGECREST  
TRONA

BORON  
LAMONT  
SHAFTER  
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**CHARTERED FEBRUARY 25, 1891**



WEB VERSION @ [WWW.782NALCCOM](http://WWW.782NALCCOM)

OCTOBER 2011

If you're "here", you've gotten to the latest "web" version of the *NALC BRANCH 782 E.A. BAKER UNION UPDATE*. Thank you for taking a look! For context, our web version augments the printed material published in our regular monthly newsletter. And, we build on that to let you explore some additional insights provided by other Letter Carriers around the country. Obviously, this "digest" reflects selections that caught my interest...

Why do I do this? It is prohibitively expensive to publish our newsletter with a bunch of pages. However, ***THERE IS JUST SO MUCH RELEVANT INFORMATION OUT THERE THAT IS AVAILABLE IN THE MANY NALC NEWSLETTERS FROM ALL OVER THIS GREAT COUNTRY OF OURS!!*** This format provides us a great opportunity for sharing pertinent information with any individual Branch 782 member who wants more.

So...what kinds of things can you find as you electronically "flip" through the pages that weren't in the original print version???

This month, there are whol lot of pictures. REALLY! There were 63 pictures in the print version of the newsletter. (And, this is a lot!) ***HOWEVER, THE WEB VERSION PUMPS THAT UP TO 273 PICTURES!!!*** Check them out! Additionally, there is another guest article courtesy of Ernie Carlson from Duluth, MN's Branch 114 on page 29. Pages 30 and 31 presents a concise set of facts about the USPS that was "lifted" from the NALC website. Each of us tends to focus on our own little piece of the pie as we go about our daily duties and we may not realize just how big this organization is that we work for or the impact it has on the entire country's economy.

You recently received a copy of the *THE 2011 NALC LETTER CARRIER RESOURCE GUIDE*. Yes. It cost a lot of money to produce. And, again, **yes**, you should understand the information in the book if you want to be able to survive in these changing times. Finally, with that as a segue to the title of an article written by NALC Branch 2902 President Frank Salazar, "Expect Change", read and understand the information presented in pages 39-41.

***MOST IMPORTANTLY: DON'T FORGET TO CHECK OUT FRED ACEDO'S "OUT THERE" CARTOONS! THEY ARE ABSOLUTELY AMAZING!!!***

Electronically Yours,  
Basil Zuniga, Branch 782 Editor-guy

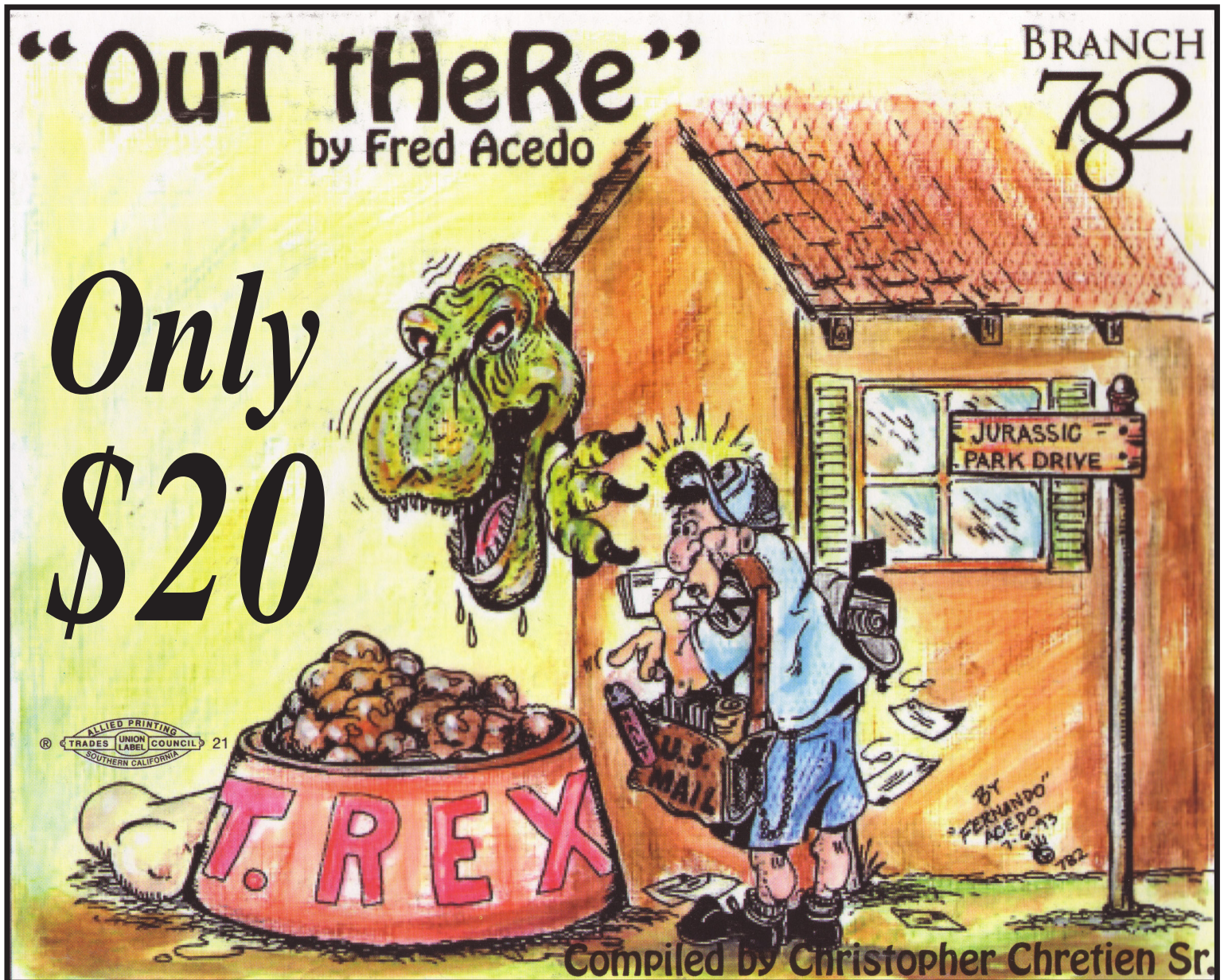
***And now???* An Adversisement for a great, great, **GREAT** book that you can buy...**

# "Out there" by Fred Acedo

BRANCH  
782

Only  
\$20

ALLIED PRINTING  
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SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA



Compiled by Christopher Chretien Sr.

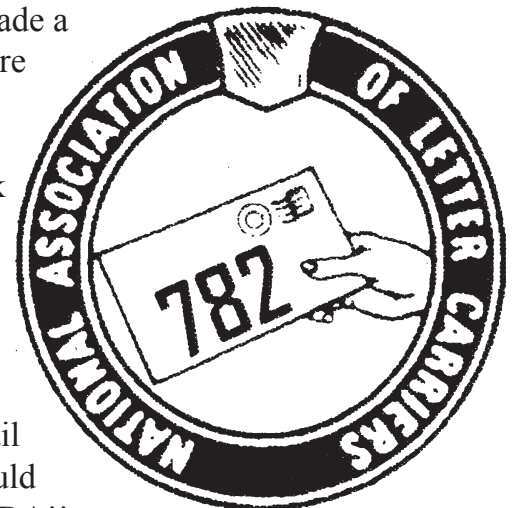
So what is this advertising message about? **THIS IS AN MDA FUNDRAISER.** We need *YOUR* help!!

We envisioned that all 2,500 copies of this book would be sold at the national NALC Convention in Anaheim in 2010. Didn't happen. We still have about 1500 copies of this book waiting to be sold before we can make our anticipated MDA donation. And—to add a little twist—a member made a motion at our general meeting that we had to sell *ALL* of the books before we could make our donation...

The book (about, for and by members of the NALC) chronicles the work of Branch 782 S.A.N.E Fred Acedo through the first nine of his nineteen years producing outstanding glimpses into who we are.

So...you may ask, what can *you* do? **ORDER A BOOK FOR \$20!!!**

Contact Kim Gerdes at (661) 301-9676; or, try her at the following e-mail address: "kgerdes91@hotmail.com". **PLEASE HELP US OUT.** We would really appreciate it...so would all of "Jerry's Kids" who are helped by MDA!!



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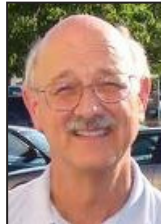
**CHARTERED FEBRUARY 25, 1891**



VOLUME LXXXII NUMBER 10

OCTOBER 2011

at the  
**Mike:**



The last month has been extremely busy. Thank you for helping to support HR-1351!! We rallied at Representative Kevin McCarthy's office in Bakersfield to ask that he support that crucial legislation.

Even though the rally was held at 4:00 on Tuesday, I estimate some seventy-five to one hundred and twenty-five concerned current and former employees from every postal craft attended.

Local APWU President Alfred Paredez, local Mail Handlers Union President Loren Chase and myself hand-delivered office petitions containing over 850 signatures in support of HR 1351 to Representative McCarthy's office. While we were unable to talk to Kevin McCarthy, we did talk to his aide even though it appeared to us that all we said seemed to fall on deaf ears.



I would like to thank all those who attended the rally and in particular Branch 782 members Diana Herrera and Pam Smith for their work organizing the rally. I would like to also thank Branch 782 Vice President John Ortega for "volunteering" to be interviewed on camera. We should all be proud of him!



Not long after the rally, Congressman McCarthy issued a statement that a bailout won't solve the Postal Service financial problems. He seems more interested in partisan politics than representing his

*Continued on next page...*

middle class constituents and doing the right thing for the country.

We are being squeezed from every side and need him to vote for us.

Currently, over 226 Representatives from both parties who understand the reality of why the Postal Service is having financial problems. They have each signed on to co-sponsor HR 1351.



I would like to take this opportunity to thank Stockdale Carrier Gary Hemingway and Frank Thomasy, former Branch 782 President, for their well written articles to the *Bakersfield Californian* concerning the so-called “bailout”. I have directed that those articles be reprinted so that all of our members can realize that it is important that we each make the time to make ourselves heard.



Shafter Shop Steward Norma Hamer volunteered to organize the local “Fill the Satchel” drive for Muscular Dystrophy. I would like to thank Norma, along with Shop Steward Shari Sharp for organizing the fundraiser. They, along with other Branch members (Kim Gerdes, Jerry Patterson, Deven Patterson, Basil Zuniga, Teresa Ortega, and Darryl and



Anita Holderman) who volunteered their time and efforts to collect over \$850 for MD!. It was a real pleasure to have Renee Contreras, Central Valley Chapter MDA Fundraising Coordinator, attend both our general meeting and the site of the fundraising. I look forward to working with her next year.

Our Branch picnic was held over the Columbus Day weekend. The weather was absolutely perfect, unlike the previous picnic. Branch member Teresa Ortega did an outstanding job of organizing the picnic and managing to stay within the budget; and was still able to give away—among other prizes— a bicycle, a ping pong table and a grand prize of a 32 inch flat screen TV. Both Kim Gerdes and Molly Biggar were invaluable, as usual, in making the picnic so amazingly successful.



As if the National Union Officers do not have enough to do with the politics of saving the Postal Service, they are also in the middle of negotiations for the National Agreement which expires on November 20th.

I am confident that National Officers will do everything possible to reach an agreement; but I also know they are prepared to take it to arbitration...if necessary. As you can see, the union is more than just filing grievances or just the Shop Steward or Branch officers. I look forward to seeing all of you at the next general meeting.

As I close, I want to make sure that I mention three other issues. Two of them make me happy to share.

It was really good it was to see Webmaster Rick Plummer at the Branch 782 picnic in spite of all of his health issues. What a remarkable guy! I also want to offer my most sincere congratulations to someone. Ridgecrest Letter Carrier Joe Bua is retiring at the end of the month and I wish him a long and joyful retirement!

Finally, I wish to add my heart-felt condolences to Oscar Salazar and his family. My wife and I personally know how devastating it is to lose a child. There are no words anyone can say to lessen the pain. However, I hope he finds comfort in knowing that we are thinking of him. We offer our prayers and best wishes as he and his family begin to cope and deal with their loss and their grieving.

MIKE TOWERY

## What Postal Service bailout?

Once again, Rep. Kevin McCarthy demonstrated that he does not pay attention to his constituents. I participated in the recent rally in front of McCarthy's office. The reason for the rally was to bring to the congressman's attention HR 1351, the U.S. Postal Service's Pension Obligation Recalculation and Restoration Act of 2011.

This piece of legislation addresses billions of dollars of overcharging to the Postal Service's retirement systems. This money could be used to overcome the very difficult challenges facing the Postal Service.

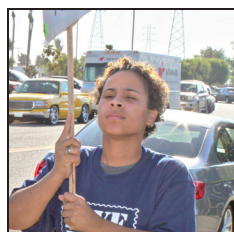
And how did McCarthy respond? In a televised written response, McCarthy stated, in part, "There is no question the U.S. Postal Service is facing severe financial problems, but a taxpayer bailout won't solve them."

Taxpayer bailout? No one is asking for a taxpayer bailout. Is this some kind of a misleading ploy to have his constituents believe this is about the Postal Service wanting a taxpayer bailout? I question whether McCarthy really represents the working middle class. These are middle-class jobs the Postal Service offers and McCarthy should be doing everything he can to secure those jobs.

Rep. McCarthy, are you in Washington to represent your constituents' interests? Then listen to us, meet with us and represent us.



FRANK THOMASY  
Bakersfield



## 'Bailing out' Postal Service

Rep. Kevin McCarthy is in denial or he just hasn't researched the facts pertaining to tough times at the U.S. Postal Service. He claims that he and his party are trying to create jobs, when, in fact, his non-support of HR 1351 will cause tens of thousands of postal employees to lose their jobs, including a lot of veterans who served this country in wartime.

He claims in his news release that help for the Postal Service would be a bailout using taxpayers' money, and that is just not true. The post office does not receive a penny of taxpayers' money; its revenue is generated from postage and services provided to its patrons. HR 1351 will correct overfunding, of 75 years of future retirees' health benefits, that was mandated by Congress in 2006. Congress created this mess and if not for the \$5.5 billion payment each year, the post office would have been profitable over the past four years.

So, Mr. McCarthy, it's time to start telling the truth, and not cause more unemployment that will add to America's tax burden and hurt many of our veterans.

GARY HEMINGWAY  
Bakersfield

# Letting someone else fight your fight?

## Johnny on the Spot



The rally in support of HR1351 held in front of Congressman McCarthy's on Tuesday September 27, 2011 was a huge success! There were workers from all the crafts. Clerks, Mail Handlers, Rural Carriers, NALC Letter Carriers and Retirees all came out to support our very important cause.

My guesstimate would be that there were between 100 to 125 in attendance. Thank you all very much for taking time out of your busy lives to help save jobs. I would like to thank Diana Herrera for the work she put into coordinating this event so it could be successful. We were furnished with T-Shirts, signs and literature supporting our position to hand out at the rally by NALC Headquarters.

Another big thank you goes out to California State Association of Letter Carriers President John Beaumont who

spearheaded this entire event for all 492 rally sites. President Beaumont continues to work tirelessly on our behalf! We had media coverage of the event which also got our message out to the public.

As of the writing of this article there are 225 co-sponsors for HR 1351. Unfortunately, Congressman McCarthy is not one of the 225. On the day of the rally he was not in his office. He was there in the morning but had to leave to do some personal "business".

He did however have a statement ready for press release in response to our rally. His response was that he agrees the Postal Service is in dire straights but that giving us a bailout is not the fix. This leads me to believe that he knew we were coming and the business he had to do was avoid us. Congressman Darrel Issa, who is single handedly trying to destroy the Postal Service did the same thing at a recent rally at his office in Vista California. He was even bold enough to start a website later that afternoon. The site is SavingThePostalService.com. What kind of leaders duck their constituents and then attack from the shadows.

Apparently Congressman McCarthy does not know much about the Postal Service at all. We are not asking for a bailout. We are asking for Postal monies that were overpaid into Postal Pension funds to be returned to the Postal Service so the Postal Service can meet its mandate to prefund its Future Retiree Health Benefits Fund.

We will continue to try and educate Mr. McCarthy on our issues because that's all we can do for now. He ran unopposed for his seat in the last election. It really puzzles me why he would run from a group of his constituents who are looking to educate him on our concerns and ask for his support. I don't think turning a deaf ear on his people was part of his oath when he took office.

We will continue to fight the fight and once again a very big thanks to all of you for your time and support!

Respectfully,

JOHN ORTEGA  
Vice President Branch 782





All NALC Members: Recently, Diana Herrera Branch 782's Legislative Liaison spoke at our general meeting, requesting all members of our Branch, neighbors and relatives join her at Congressman Kevin McCarthy's office, located at 4100 Empire Drive, suite 150 to voice our support on legislation HR 1351, and collect signatures on a petition garnishing support of this Bill.

It was a well attended support rally, and Branch President 782 Mike Towery, and Vice President John Ortega spoke to the media, "STATING THE FACTS" that surround HR 1351.

It was "CLEAR" that Congressman McCarthy was unaware of "THE REAL FACTS" on this Bill, as a statement released by his aid, that he would not support a BAIL-OUT of the Postal Service.

To further shy away from his civic duties, and talk face to face with "HIS" constituents, Mr McCarthy had scurried out the back door prior to the start of this informational picket. "SHAME ON YOU MR. McCarthy", having been elected to an office, as a "Government" public servant, and refuses to face "YOUR PUBLIC".

MARK RAMIREZ

Branch 782 Health Benefit Plan Representative.

## You've Heard about HR 1351... So, What is it about???

On September 27, 2011, we had a rally in front of Congressman McCarthy's office to ask him to co-sponsor H.R. 1351. This is basically what H.R. 1351 is;

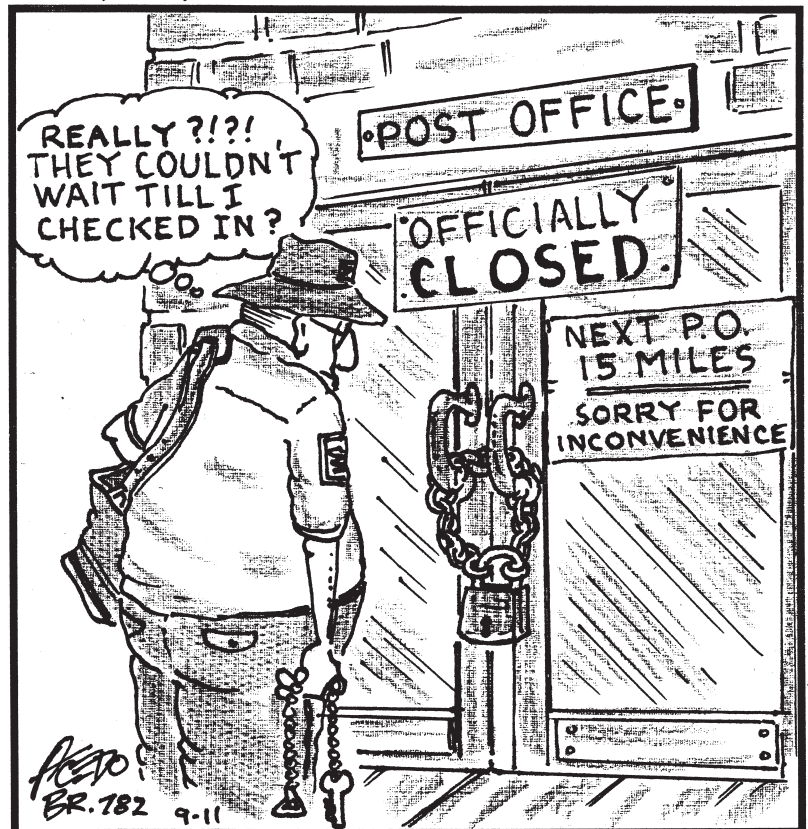
1. It calls on the OPM to recalculate the USPS surplus in the Civil Service Retirement System within six months of enactment, using a methodology that fairly allocates the cost of pensions between the Post Office Department and the U.S. Postal Service as proposed by the Segal Report.
2. Then, once the accurate "postal surplus" is determined by the OPM, the agency would have 15 days to transfer the surplus to the PSRHBF.
3. Direct the OPM to permit the USPS to use most of its \$6.9 billion surplus in the FERS system to satisfy two obligations in FY 2011: a \$5.5 billion payment due to the PSRHBF, and a \$1.2 billion estimated payment to the Department of Labor for Federal Employees Compensation Act (workers comp.) expenses. Any remaining funds would be used to reduce the Postal Service's normal cost-percentage for FERS in future years.

H.R. 1351 does not address the legally mandated pre-funding payments into the PSRHBF beyond the FY2011 payment, which costs the USPS \$5.5 billion annually. Rather, it simply fixes the massive over-funding to the postal CSRS and FERS accounts. Additional legislation would be neces-

sary to repeal the future scheduled pre-funding payments to the PSRHBF.

Additionally, the date of the transfer for the overcharge is less important than the acknowledgment by Congress and the OPM that the USPS has sufficient assets to cover all its retirement obligations—for both pensions and health benefits. Since the PSRHBF

### OUT THERE





already has more than \$42 billion in it, and since the surplus transfer from the CSRS pension fund would likely leave the PSRHBP fully funded, passage of H.R. 1351 makes an irrefutable case for the repeal of the pre-funding payments called for by current law.

The Lynch bill would transfer surplus CSRS and FERS assets paid for by ratepayer and employee contributions—not taxpayer funds—to the Postal Service’s retirement health fund, and it would have absolutely no effect on any current or future federal retiree’s annuity.

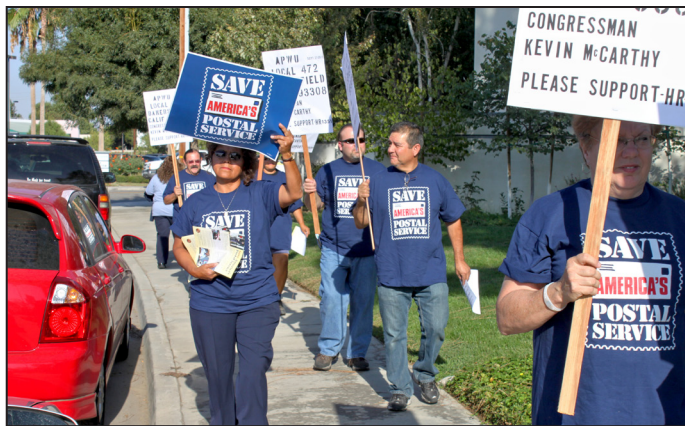
McCarthy issued a statement to the press calling this a tax payer bailout, which it is not.

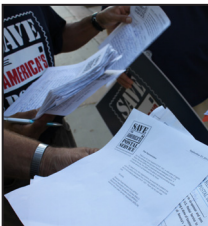
Along with APWU clerk Ramona De Montes, I stood out in front of the K.C. Fair to collect signatures on the petition. I was amazed at how many younger people didn’t care if they lost a day of delivery and the closing of offices. The older generation wouldn’t like the change. All in all, we turned in about a 1000 signatures.

We had a good turnout of about 100 people from the NALC, APWU, and the Mail handlers Union. We also had a good turnout out of retirees. Thank you so much for coming out. I would also like to thank Sylvia Long, Alyce Nelson, Alan Smith, and John Vasquez and his family, from the Hillcrest Station, and all the others who came out after a long day at work.

PAM SMITH  
Hillcrest Station Shop Steward







Pictures by Branch 782 Photographer Anita Holderman

And, guess what? There is one more picture! Where? Electronically "flip" the page and see for yourself!



## A portion of the keynote address given by my NALC President Rolando at the recently held National Rap Session

“We’ve met with President Obama, Vice President Biden, Senate Majority Leader Reid, Labor Secretary Hilda Solis, leaders in the House and Senate Democratic caucuses and White House staff,” he said. “We rallied in every congressional district on Sept. 27.

“We’ve been on TV, the radio, in newspapers—and we’ve even made a commercial,” he said, pausing to show the 30-second ad on the screens in the auditorium. “And we’ll be doing more than that.”

“Our message is this: That the truth is the Postal Service’s cash crisis is a manufactured crisis, an excuse for our critics who would rather dismantle our business than grow it.”

Rolando briefly outlined the 2006 postal reform mandate that has brought the Postal Service to its knees. “Pre-funding future retiree health benefits is a good idea—that is, if you have a surplus to work with,” he said. “But we’ve only shown a \$611 million profit over the last four years while we’ve depleted \$8 billion in savings and \$13 billion in our line of credit with the Treasury to make \$21 billion in payments to pre-fund an account that now has \$45 billion in it—none of it from taxes.

“No other federal agency or company is required to do this,” he said. “And among the companies that voluntarily do it,

their average account balance is much lower than ours. The sensible things to do, he said, would be to stop making the pre-funding payments, replenish our borrowing authority with the Treasury, replenish our savings and allow the current \$45 billion in pre-funding to stand.

“Once the USPS is profitable again,” Rolando said, “we can resume a more reasonable pre-funding schedule.”

The president noted how several independent actuaries agree that the Postal Service’s account within the Civil Service Retirement Fund is fully funded with a surplus of \$50 to \$75 billion.

“And everyone agrees that the [Federal Employees Retirement System account] is fully funded and has a \$6.9 billion surplus,” Rolando said, drawing loud laughs when he added that House Oversight and Government Reform Committee Chairman Darrell Issa (R-CA) agrees.

“Further pre-funding of our future retiree health benefits is fiscally irresponsible,” he said.

Source: NALC Website

# Tell Congress: “Reject USPS’ Plan!”

- B J Hansen -

A few days before contract negotiations began with the NALC, the Postal Service presented two “White Papers” to congress: 1) Workforce Optimization; 2) Postal Service Health Benefits and Retirement Programs. Each White Paper acknowledges that, “The United States Postal Service is the cornerstone of an industry that employs over seven million Americans.” The mailing industry.

Both papers refer to needed legislative changes that would return USPS to solvency. These are the same changes that we, the union, have been lobbying for. Right now we absolutely need to be contacting our Senators and Congressional Representatives to tell them that the only right thing to do is to take positive action to allow the transfer of USPS money from the overfunded pension and retiree health benefit accounts to operating accounts. Don’t interfere with our collective bargaining agreements!

The Postal Service states that it “needs the ability to right size its workforce without being limited by the layoff protections in the collective bargaining agreements.” They’re asking Congress to negate portions of our National Agreement so they can lay off 120,000 craft employees.

The Postal Service believes that “the simplest and fairest method to the establishment of a Postal Service Health Benefits Plan is to withdraw our existing 480,000 annuitants and our 600,000 active employees from FEHB and place them in a new, Postal Service-administered Health Benefits Program. The Postal Service would have three distinct categories of participants in the Health Benefits Program.” From underinsured to barely insured, if you can afford it.

The Postal Service believes that “the simplest and fairest method to the establishment of a Postal Service Retirement Plan is to withdraw our existing 480,000 annuitants and our 600,000 active employees [it was actually down to 572,982 in April] from CSRS and FERS and place them in a new Postal Service Retirement Program.” There would be “four distinct categories of participants in the retirement plan.” They want a four tiered retirement “program.” From something “similar” to present benefits to “a defined contribution plan only” with “portability.”

Want to know why we need a union? The USPS actually says, “This tiered approach reflects the Postal Service’s sensitivity and fairness...” Don’t be mislead. This outrageous request from the Postal Service came mere days before contract talks began with the NALC. In the White Papers management admits that “arbitrators are unlikely to eliminate layoff protections entirely.” And that “while the Postal Service has the theoretical ability to replace FEHB [health benefits] with a substitute plan, that ability is constrained by legal requirements, and a change of such magnitude would be unlikely to survive the interest arbitration process.”

This is a blatant attempt by the Postal Service to circumvent good faith bargaining with us. Make sure Congress hears from you today. Don’t let them undermine our bargaining rights! Don’t let them reduce our health and retirement benefits! Tell them to reject USPS’ request. All they need to do to bring the Service back to solvency is eliminate the requirement currently mandated by Congress that the Postal Service aggressively pre-fund its future retiree health benefits, and refund the money overpaid to the federal pension system due to incorrect OPM calculations.

This timely and excellent article is courtesy of the Seattle, WA September 2011 *Seventy-Niner* published by NALC Branch 79. Author B.J. Hansen is currently the Branch 79 Vice-President and has been an NALC activist for many years in many different roles. On behalf of all Branch 782 members, thank you very much!! (This note from Basil Zuniga.)

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*You might think that—at some point—we can all  
just take it easy because there are no  
more fights to fight. Well... guess what???*

***AIN’T GONNA HAPPEN.***

# Hey, PMG Donahoe...Fresno's got money!!!!

by Ken Nunn, President  
NALC Branch 231

Headline after headline, radio show after radio show and television news show after television news show all across this country constantly discusses the current financial status of the USPS.

How many times have you heard recently at a stand-up about how broke we are and how we will not be able to meet payroll by the end of next year nor will we be able to make our \$5.5 billion payment to the required pre-funding of the retirees health benefit plan?

Well, it can't be all that bad if you look at what is happening in Fresno. Apparently our postmaster has found a pot of gold that no one else in the USPS was aware of. She found so much money she conducted full blown route inspections on 35 of the 42 routes at Clinter Station. Management has claimed for years it costs \$5,000.00 per route to conduct route inspections. Now we have heard this for years, so it would be safe to say with inflation it now costs even more than that, but using their \$5,000.00 per route number this would equate to approximately \$175,000.00...

For the past few years we have been in various joint route adjustment programs, IRAP, MIARAP and JARAP. The purpose was to save the USPS money and adjust the routes. Well apparently there is money available to conduct these expensive route inspections even if it's only in Fresno. This speaks to the leadership, or lack of it, in Fresno and our postmaster.

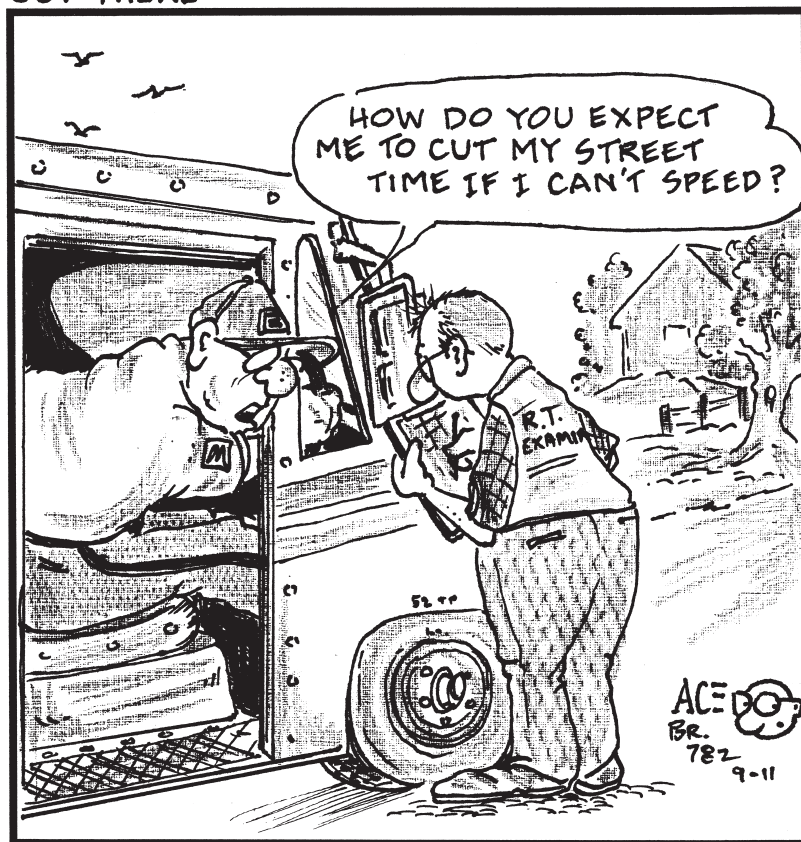
Without even speaking with me prior to the start of the inspections at Clinter, the postmaster unilaterally made the decision to inspect the routes. No conversation with the Union needed; and, all this time I thought we were in a joint process. Now if you were to ask the postmaster about this she will tell you she tried to speak with me prior to the start of the inspections on September—but what she won't tell you is that she attempted to contact me at 3:30 PM on Friday September 9, 2011. I was away on annual leave and could not meet with her at the eleventh hour. It seems to me the request to discuss the issue with me should have occurred much sooner than the day prior to the inspections.

These are the types of things that happen when there is absolutely no leadership from the postmaster. If you think about this \$175,000.00, plus all the money she was paid in per diem and the cost of her apartment during the whole time she was OIC, you can follow the wasted money trail.

And they wonder why we do not believe them and the scare tactic information they pass on through stand-ups and order book postings. It becomes very hard to believe them when they cry every day about lack of money, but then turn around and continue to spend money like drunken sailors in Fresno on things such as needless route inspections.

As I visit the offices I am frequently asked, mostly from the newer employees, "How safe is my job?" Or I hear, "I am worried about my job, the future doesn't look very good for me."

## OUT THERE



Well, you could start by taking an active role in protecting your job by doing a few things like giving \$5.00 per pay period to Committee On Letter Carrier Political Education (COLCPE), or joining Carrier Corps and becoming an e-activist.

Contributing to COLCPE allows the NALC to give money to those in public office that support the working men and women of the USPS. Become a Carrier Corps volunteer by calling the union office and requesting an application form. Go to [nalc.org](http://nalc.org) and become an e-activist, so in the time of need we will provide you information so you can notify your political representative on important issues regarding Letter Carriers. That's how you can help your future.

If you continue to just sit back and do nothing, then you should not expect things to be different. Many members of this Branch have been preaching this for years and still most of you do nothing to help protect your future. If you continue to rely on others to do your part, don't be disappointed in the results. This is the time to join forces to save the USPS from itself and the people like our local postmaster.

Get involved today, tomorrow may be too late.

Article courtesy of the October 2011 *Postman's View* published by NALC Branch 231 in Fresno, CA

# The USPS Spin Cycle

by Ken Hill, Iowa State Association of Letter Carriers

On July 20, 2011 Postmaster General Patrick Donahoe set forth his plan to kill the United States Postal Service in the newspaper USA Today. "Falling mail volume and soaring red ink may soon doom Saturday mail delivery and prompt three-day-a-week delivery within 15 years," Postmaster General Donahoe warns.

The Postmaster has predicted an \$8.3 billion loss this year. The two main reasons for the loss are the \$5.5 billion dollar payment due September 30th to cover future retirees' health benefits to the Office of Personnel Management. This payment is mandated by congress and will take congressional legislation to stop the unfair overfunding. The US House of Representatives has a bill that needs our support. HR 1361 has 181 cosponsors. Call your congressman and ask them to cosponsor this legislation.

The Postmaster has recognized the Union's efforts to help reduce the labor extensive cost of delivering the mail.

The total number of career city letter carriers in 2000 was 241,079. In 2010 there were 192,180 career city letter carriers. And we are delivering to more addresses.

The most recent round of JARAP adjustments in the Greater Indiana District has removed 21 full time routes. This is not a large number but it is indicative of change that is happening to the mail. Despite reports, mail volume is not plummeting. Mail volume decline overall is negligible for this same period last year. Sure, Fort Wayne has removed four full time routes out of the 21. But the small town of Kendallville has actually added a full time assignment. Of the 1231 full time routes slated for adjustment this year in GID only 17 routes were eliminated outside of the Fort Wayne office.

The Postmaster General, in his push to eliminate any full time employment with his three day delivery plan, has sighted that first class mail decline to support his claims. Letter carriers know that first class mail is not our only busi-

ness. Bulk mail is up (according to the USPS' report on the second quarter of 2011). And also a huge increase in shipping services revenue a 5% increase for 2.2 billion dollars.

So where are the savings to be made in the Post Office. US Senator Jon Tester is demanding to know why the Postmaster General made \$800,000 in compensation while eliminating local positions in his state of Montana. Tester, during a Senate hearing on the nominations of Mark Acton and Robert Taub to the Postal Regulatory Commission, said that the salaries of top executives should be at the top of the list when cutting costs. "Quite frankly, when times are tough, when you start cinching your belt down, that ought to be the first place we're looking, not the last place," Tester said.

The Postmaster General's salary is \$245,000. He is the second highest paid member of Government. Number three is Vice President Joe Biden and number one is President Obama. In 2009 Donahoe was

given \$57,671 above his level 1 executive pay schedule as a "bonus."

In 2010 there were 50,903 Postmasters and Supervisors and 583,908 career craft employees. That is one "supervisor" for every ten employees. My daughter who is in the fifth grade has a great teacher, and for eight hours a day she teaches twenty four children. Maybe the Post Office could learn from public education on how to cut cost.

Often when the USPS quotes "labor makes up 80 percent of the budget", they don't mention *THAT includes* managements salary. According to records the average supervisor salary is \$64,000. That is 3.26 billion dollars a year in management salaries.

The craft has been cutting back themselves and doing more for less. It is time to follow Congressman Tester's advice, Postmaster Donahoe, and you do the same.

From the August 2011 Fort Wayne, IA Branch 116 Summit City Mailbag



# Minutes of the September 2011 General Meeting

The regular meeting of Branch 782 was called to order by President, Mike Towery at 7:00 p.m. on the 27th day of September at the branch office, Bakersfield. The flag salute was led by Sgt. at Arms, Darryl Holderman. All members of the Executive Board were present except Trustee, Lucinda Martinez. The stewards were present from Avenal, Brundage, Camino Media, Downtown, East Bakersfield, Hillcrest, Lamont, Oildale, Shafter, South, Taft and Wasco. Also present was OWCP Rep., Rick Gerdes; Photographer, Anita Holderman and Legislative Rep., Diana Herrera. The minutes of the August 23, 2011 meeting were read by Assistant Secretary, Mabel Bullis and were accepted with no additions or corrections.

**REPORTS OF SPECIAL AND STANDING COMMITTEES:** Teresa Ortega reported that the picnic "is ready to go." The picnic will be October 9th at Jastro Park, from 10:00 till 2:00. Too Fat will be serving tri-tip, chicken and ribs from 11:00 till 1:00. Members who will be setting up will meet at the Village Grill, 7:30-ish. Kim Gerdes thanked the Brundage carriers for Basil, who was not present. Kim reminded everyone that it will be Dole Ct.'s turn next month. Mabel Bullis reported that two books were sold this month.

**GOOD OF THE ASSOCIATION:** Mike Towery thanked Diana Herrera, John Ortega and Pam Smith for their hard work on the Rally at Congressman McCarthy's office. The presidents of the local mail handler and clerks union presented the petitions along with Mike Towery. Mike reported that contract negotiations are still on going with nothing to report yet. Norma Hamer is working on the MDA Fill the Satchel Drive. Renee Contreras the MDA Fundraising Coordinator for the Central Valley was a guest at the meeting along with Susanna Sepulveda and her son Mauricio who suffers from muscular dystrophy. Mauricio expressed his appreciation for what the NALC has done for MDA, and the members of Br. 782 for all they have done. He is surprised by how little is known about MDA. Mike thanked Norma for stepping up to head this fundraiser. He then thanked the guests for attending and presented Renee with a copy of the "Out There" book and explained that the proceeds will be donated to MDA. The nominations for delegates to the National Convention were opened. Nominated were Pam Smith, Diana Herrera, Basil Zuniga, Judy Kiyoshi, Deven Patterson, Frank Martinez, Paul Salazar, Kim Gerdes, Mike Meza, Darryl Holderman, Norma Hamer, Anita Holderman, Mabel Bullis, Teresa Ortega, Shari Sharpe, Rick Gerdes, Randy Courson, Paula Hogg, Lynell Howell, Mary Morphis, Molly Biggar, Emma Gonzales, Fred Acedo and Sheila Wiley. The election will be held at the November

General Meeting. Absentee ballots will be available upon request. John Ortega will head the election committee. Mable Bullis shared an article titled "13 Things your Mail Carrier won't tell you". Kim Gerdes reported that the calendars have been ordered and should be here any day. Vacation sign-up starts November 1st. Diana Herrera thanked everyone who came out for the rally. She talked about HR2309, Issa's bill. He is working very hard to get it passed. John Ortega reported that Issa is calling our surplus a "bailout." If management O.K.'s it, you can have the petition signed while on the workroom floor. Carriers can not be in uniform, or be near someone in a uniform when collecting signatures for the petition. Mike thanked Jesse Avalos for the contribution to COLCPE.

**FINANCIAL SECRETARY'S REPORT:** Anita Holderman reported that \$17,509.09 was collected for the month.

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

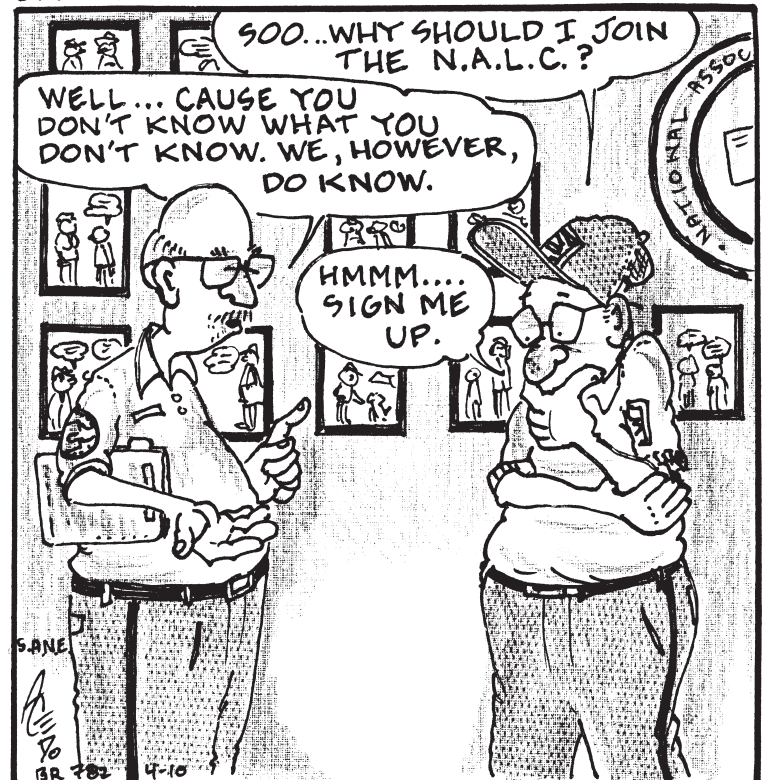
Beginning Balance	\$57,528.97
Dues and Income	\$16,757.31
Interest Income	\$8.62
Balance	\$74,294.90
Expenses	\$6,801.18
Ending Balance	\$67,493.72

The MDA 50/50 Drawing was won by Deven Patterson. The Drawing for \$400.00 would have been won by Retiree, Richard Tomlin if he had been present. There were 32 members and 5 guests present. The meeting adjourned at 7:45 p.m.

KIM GERDES

NALC Branch 782 Recording Secretary

## OUT THERE





# NON-MEMBER LIST

## MARCH 2011

### DOWNTOWN STATION

D. Pearce  
J. Cruz

### SOUTH STATION

*100% Union!!!*

### EAST BAKERSFIELD

*100% Union!!!*

### HILLCREST

*100% Union!!!*

### BRUNDAGE

D. Kinglee

### DOLE COURT

S. Hancock

### STOCKDALE

A. White  
J. Oh  
G. S. Saran  
P.M. Russel

### CAMINO MEDIA

*100% Union!!!*

### ARVIN

C. J. Brown

### AVENAL

*100% Union!!!*

### BORON

*100% Union!!!*

### CALIFORNIA CITY

*100% Union!!!*

### DELANO

C.V. Quebral  
L.A. Campos

### EDWARDS

*100% Union!!!*

### LAMONT

*100% Union!!!*

### McFARLAND

*100% Union!!!*

### MOJAVE

*100% Union!!!*

### RIDGECREST

S. R. Pierce  
H.G. Blanco  
L.M. Montano

### SHAFTER

I. M. New  
M. D. Voights

### TAFT

B. W. Krier  
K.J. Hughes

### TEHACHAPI

*100% Union!!!*

### TRONA

*100% Union!!!*

### WASCO

*100% Union!!!*

We are an "Open Shop". Membership is voluntary. We have 394 total Letter Carriers in the complement assigned to cities represented by our Branch. ONLY 18 ARE NON-MEMBERS. We are 95% organized!

## Jerry Sez...

This is an interesting time of my life. I have made a decision that I am going to retire in a few months, and I find myself looking back over the years of my career. And, I have to tell you that those years seem like they really went by pretty fast.

There have been many, many changes through the years. But, I think that the biggest, scariest things may be on the horizon.

For years, I've heard people say, "I wish that I didn't have to work on Saturday." Well, their wish might just come true, and then we'll see how many of those same people finding themselves scrambling to be in a position where they still have a job. They might find themselves then wishing that they were able to work on Saturday...

There are too many in Congress right now who intend to destroy the USPS, and they forget that they also work for us. Just because we are federal employees doesn't take away our citizenship. Those in Congress work for us. We are working people who pay taxes.

With 14% unemployment in some areas, I find it strange that Congress wants to take an action which will add even more people to folks who are out of work. In fact, a lot of USPS employees are baby boomers (and even military Vets) who are going to be hurt by a congressional plan to radically change our company.

The people in Congress hear what they want to hear—even if it's not the truth. Representative Kevin McCarthy continues to call HR-1351 a "bailout". How can it be a bailout if we would get back "our" money which the USPS overpaid?

Personally, I would really like to work a few more years as a Letter Carrier. But, I don't think that we're going to remain the trusted institution that we've historically been. Some in Con-

gress see that taking away our benefits is going to help. It just amounts to a race to the bottom.

The NALC has fought for over a hundred years to establish a safe workplace where we can be paid a fair wage. Through the years, numerous arbitrators have agreed with positions established by our National Officers and we can look forward to being able to retire. We will see what happens during the current Contract negotiations.

Some of us "older" employees will be leaving and we may not have to deal with any changes which come about. We will still remain involved.

But, it is you younger employees who are going to need to step up and protect what you have! If you don't know the Contract, learn it. Each person needs to understand your Rights!

But, you need to remember that you also have Responsibilities! That's important.

As a Shop Steward, I am always amazed at things that people do to get themselves in trouble. Why do people take longer lunches or play games with their scan points?

What makes it worse is, when they get caught, too many people fail to tell the Shop Steward. We find out that someone has agreed to a letter of warning that we didn't know anything about and it is now part of their discipline history.

Finally, I wish I knew what to do to make non-members realize how important it is to be a part of the solution to our problems. Who else is going to fight to protect all of our hard-won benefits like sick leave, annual leave and retirement? If you think that "they" can't take them away. Think again!

JERRY PATTERSON  
Shafter Shop Steward

At the beginning of the fill the satchel event, I was a bit worried. I started getting really nervous when no one was there before the start of the event.



How could this be? This event was for a great cause!! I do my best to always help out wherever and whenever I can—especially for kids. I showed up at one of the locations quite a bit early to set up signs and drop off some ice chests for all of the people who were going to show up. I started getting more nervous when I didn't see anybody else.

But then, I remembered that we were going to set up at two locations. I then went to the other place...and I started to get less nervous because I found somebody else who was energetic about having our satchels filled!



With the number of Letter Carriers that showed up to volunteer their time, it was decided to concentrate our efforts at only one location. We set up at the Starbucks/Wendy's/IHOP corners. The signs were set up, we got our voices ready, and we went to work!

Even though it was a beautiful day, the majority of cars that went by had their windows up. We waved our signs, tried to make eye contact, and yelled out our chants. Lots of people looked our way, and then looked away.

With this event being held so close to the rally for saving the Postal Service, it seemed that people thought we were protesting. One person even yelled at me that she signed the petition. I yelled back, "It's for the MDA"!



And so, even though I was less nervous, I still didn't see how we were going to do as well as I had hoped. I tried not to show it and just thanked all of those who did contribute and was really thankful that all of the other Letter Carriers seemed to be really positive about what we were doing.

*After all was said and done, we were able to collect \$853.45 for the Muscular Dystrophy Association!!*



# “Fill the Satchel”

## October 2, 2011





At the September union meeting, Molly Biggar handed me an envelope with \$355.00. The money was from our 50/50 MDA drawings. Renee Contreras, the fundraising coordinator for our local MDA office, was in contact with some of the MDA groups in Visalia and Fresno. Our collection drive blew their collection amounts out of the water, even without the monies from the 50/50 drawing!

So who was there to do such a great job to “Fill the Satchel”? Mark

Ramirez, Shari Sharp, Basil Zuniga, Pam Smith, her sister, Tami and her sister’s grandsons: Camden (age 11) and Evan (age 6) showed up with a lot of energy. Teresa Ortega and her daughter, Marissa, were there along with Darrell Holderman, Anita Holderman, Deven Patterson and her baby boy, Christian (born September 5). They were joined by Kim Gerdes and NALC Branch 782 President Mike Towery. We also had representatives from the Muscular Dystrophy Association: Renee Contreras (Fundraising Coordinator Muscular Dystrophy Association - Central Valley Chapter) and her fiance Steve. Special people who were there to add even more legitimacy to what we were doing were Susanna Sepulveda and her son, Mauricio. Mauricio is local MDA poster person.

I’d like to thank you all for your participation!! Great job!!! Next year I know we will do even better!!!

NORMA HAMER  
NALC Branch 782 MDA Coordinator

# “We Filled the Satchel!!!”

On Sunday (October 2, 2011), a number of our Branch 782 members joined Branch 782 MDA Coordinator Norma Hamer at the Northwest Promenade located on Rosedale Highway to **“FILL THE SATCHEL”**. We were requesting money donations for the Muscular Dystrophy Association. Letter Carriers all over our Nation have been supporting since the 1950’s.

It appeared to some of the public driving by that we were picketing for the USPS in support of “Saving the Postal Service”. As the public began to leave the many restaurants in the area, questions were answered by newsletter editor Basil Zuniga, Norma Hamer, and Renee Contreras of the Fresno MDA Association office about what we were doing on “our mission for MDA”.

At the end of day, our members collected over \$800.00 dollars! “WOW!!!”. It is always rewarding to see a great group of union members, such as ours, donate their time on a Sunday to collect funds for the reaserch needed to find a cure for muscular dystrophy and the many neuromuscular diseases that are present in our society.

MARK RAMIREZ





*We "ramped up" to "Fill the Satchel" at our September General Meeting...*



*... then—  
"We took care of our business!!!"  
We did good!*



# Joe Bua Retires!!!

On October 31, 1011 Ridgcrest Letter Carrier Joe Bua will be playing a trick on us and taking his Treat: RETIREMENT!!!

After working for the Postal Service for 24 years, 8 months and 2 weeks he is going to leave us.

Joe started his postal career at the age of 18 in Norwalk, Connecticut. After a little over a year he went into the military then returned to the Post Office and resumed his duties in Westpoint Connecticut. He worked there for a short time. Over time and many miles he found himself living in Ridgcrest and working at our post office for 23 years and 7 months.



Joe decided to apply at the Post Office because he felt that it was a very fair place to work that offered career benefits as well as a pension. He remembers that he started working in Ridgcrest earning just under \$10.00 an hour as a PTF back in March of 1988. In the time that he has worked in Ridgcrest he has worked under seven different postmasters. He can name all but one...because *that* one was only here for two weeks.

The biggest change that Joe has seen in the Postal Service is automation. He feels—that with automation—more duties and responsibilities have been put on Letter Carriers.

One of the funny stories that Joe will always remember is one day when his supervisor came to negotiate and Joe said that he had a whole lot of parcels that day. The supervisor looked and agreed that it appeared that he had more parcels than what DOIS was showing. The supervisor said that they would go to the computer and add 15 parcels to his total. The supervisor returned and told Joe with a straight face that 15 parcels had been added to his workload and that the computer added one more minute to the time he was allowed.

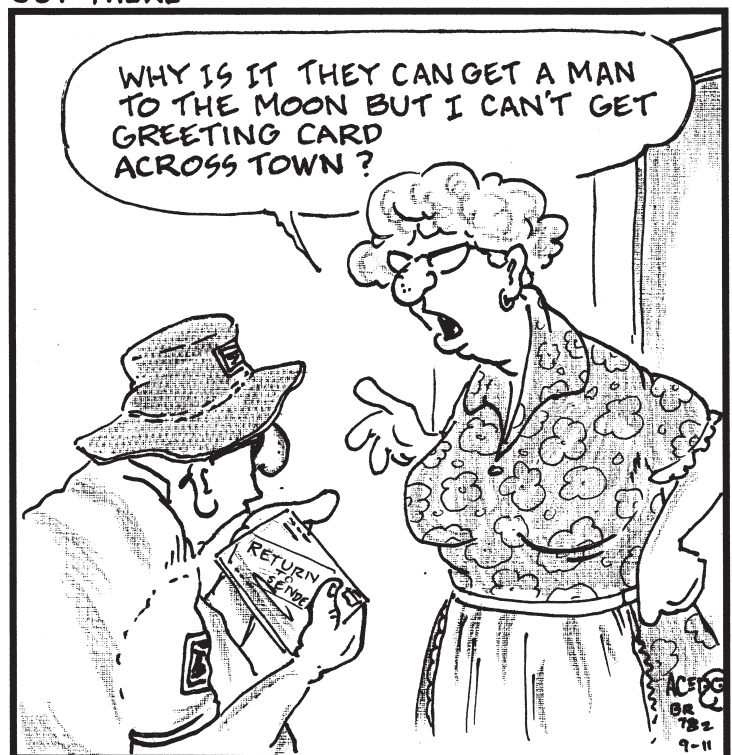
Nice to know that Joe can laugh about it now. Maybe it is because he is retiring? Joe is going to miss making his customers happy and the donuts in the swing room. (We all miss the donuts and we have not retired, yet. We just don't get them any more.) He shared that time goes fast and, too soon, our time will also come to retire.

Joe is looking forward to relaxing and enjoying life. He is going to stay active by enjoying his grandchildren, traveling, walking, watching TV and, of course, going to Lakers games.

We all wish Joe the very best! It has been a pleasure to work with Joe. *Everyone* at the Ridgcrest office will miss him. We are going to have a send-off for Joe at the Ridgcrest Office on the morning of October 31st. Stop by. We hope that Joe can make it as well!!!!

LYNNEL HOWELL  
Ridgcrest Shop Steward

## OUT THERE



# A Quick Snapshot - 93309

Randy Courson, NALC Shop Steward  
John Ortega, Alternate Steward

Assignment	Name	Seniority Date	Assignment	Name	Seniority Date
Route 901	Diaz, D.	08/10/1981	Route 935	Arauz, R.	10/26/1985
Route 902	Franey, R	05/01/1978	Route 936	Diaz, G.	04/15/1985
Route 904	Harbour, T.	12/01/2001	Route 937	Vega, A.	01/13/1990
Route 905	Costa, M.	10/02/1993	Route 938	Richert, S.	06/24/1985
Route 906	Oh, J.	01/11/2003	Route 940	Courson, R.	07/31/1978
Route 907	Davis, B.	01/27/2001	Route 941	Vacant	
Route 908	White, C.	02/14/1987	Route 942	Flores, E.	03/14/1987
Route 910	Vitson, E.	09/22/2001	Route 944	Perez, T.	02/04/1984
Route 911	Zaragoza, T.	04/12/1986	Route 950	Flores, C.	02/28/1987
Route 912	Nusser, L.	03/14/1987			
Route 913	Dang, A.	03/01/1972	T-6	Webb, B.	05/14/2005
Route 914	Hardin, J.	01/08/2005	T-6	Zuniga, R.	12/13/2003
Route 918	Eveland, D.	06/25/2005	T-6	Winch, B.	09/11/1990
Route 919	Franey, A.	11/27/1978	T-6	Carcha, G.	06/03/2000
Route 921	Fierro, R.	10/26/1985	T-6	McBride, S.	06/21/1986
Route 922	Hernandez, C.	02/14/1987	T-6	Pena, T.	12/20/1986
Route 923	La Voie, J.	05/01/1982			
Route 924	Skinner, R.	04/02/1984	PTF	Mackey, A.	04/14/2007
Route 925	Rodriguez, B.	08/21/2004	PTF	Medina, D.	05/13/2006
Route 927	Vidal, V.	01/17/1987	PTF	Richaud, R.	06/21/2008
Route 929	Cruz, B.	06/13/1980	PTF	Meyer, F.	01/15/1011
Route 930	Skinner, P.	01/17/1987	TE	Marquez, A.	10/11/2010
Route 932	Celestino, I.	09/12/1987	TE	O'Neill, A.	07/20/2010
Route 933	Hemingway, G.	04/20/1981			

Source: Stockdale Station Carrier Schedule October 15-21, 2011 and the Bakersfield Seniority List dated April 1, 2011

## Who Do the “09” Carriers deliver to?

60,120 people (14.9% of Bakersfield residents) live in zip code 93309. The largest racial group in zip code 93309 is “white” at 70.69%. Most residents occupy detached units (not apartments) as do 48.92% of the total population of Bakersfield.

The physical area which makes up the area served by the 93309 Letter Carriers is a little over ten square miles.

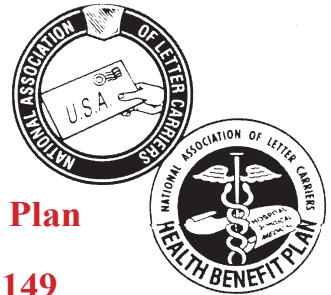
The highest number of families in zip code 93309 earn \$50,000 to \$100,000+. The highest number of families in the rest of Bakersfield earn \$30,000 or less.

Most residents of zip code 93309 (93.77 percent) use car, truck or van to go to work. Most residents of Bakersfield also use car, truck or van to go to work (93.17 percent) although public transportation is available.

Source: [www.mapszipcode.com](http://www.mapszipcode.com) › California › Bakersfield Zip Codes

# 2011 NALC HBP Info

At a glance...



NALC Health Benefit Plan	1-888-636-6252
*Hospital Pre-Certification	1-877-220-6252
Mental & Substance Precertification	1-877-468-1016
**Drug Prescription Retail	1-800-933-6252
CareMark Specialty Pharmacy	1-800-237-2767
Durable Medical Equipment	1-888-636-6252
<b>NURSE ASSISTANT (24/7)</b>	<b>1-877-220-6252</b>
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
Quit Power (Smoking Cessation)	1-877-521-0244
CIGNA Health Rewards (Discounts)	1-800-870-3470
<b>CIGNA Dental Discount Program</b>	<b>1-877-521-0244</b>
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
PostalEase Human Resources USPS	1-877-477-3273
<b>Quest Lab Services (Bakersfield)</b>	<b>(661) 631-8520</b>
<b>LabCorp Lab Services</b>	<b>(661) 631-9258</b>

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

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

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

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

\* Failure to pre-certify will result in a \$500 reduction in benefits paid by our Plan. MUST notify the Plan prior to hospital admission with doctor name and dates.

\*\* NALC Drug Prescription Program is MANDATORY generic (unless specified by your doctor, at additional cost to member). Preferred retail pharmacy 1st and 2nd fills, you pay 20% of cost of generic/30% of name brand. MAIL ORDER PRESCRIPTIONS when NALC is primary: 60 day supply \$8 generic, \$43 name brand; 90 day supply \$12 generic, \$65 name brand; 90 day supply \$5 for NALCSELECT generics (certain drugs); 90 day supply \$7.99 NALCPREFERRED generic (certain drugs), MEDICARE PROGRAM (when Medicare is primary); Retail network pharmacy: you pay 10% of cost of generic, 20% of cost for name brand, MEDICARE PRIMARY (mail order); 60 day supply \$7 generic, \$37 name brand; 90 day supply \$10 generic \$55 name brand; 90 day supply \$4 for NALCSELECT generic (certain drugs); 90 day supply \$4 for NALCPREFERRED generic (certain drugs); NALCSENIOR generic antibiotics are available; FREE for a 30 day supply, when Medicare is primary (certain antibiotics only).

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

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

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

## Some Websites for You...

Center for Disease Control	<a href="http://www.cdc.gov">http://www.cdc.gov</a>
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://americanheart.org">http://americanheart.org</a>
American Lung Association	<a href="http://www.lunusa.org">http://www.lunusa.org</a>
Diabetes Foundation	<a href="http://www.diabetes.org">http://www.diabetes.org</a>
Muscular Dystrophy Association	<a href="http://www.mdusa.org">http://www.mdusa.org</a>
Your Personal Health Record	<a href="http://www.nalc.org/depart.hbp">http://www.nalc.org/depart.hbp</a>
Asthma Information Center	<a href="http://www.ama.assn.org/special/asthma">http://www.ama.assn.org/special/asthma</a>

**Check out this PPO: Concentra Urgent Care**  
**9500 Stockdale Highway Suites 100 & 101**  
**Bakersfield, California 93309**  
**Phone: (661) 282-4900**

**Hours>M-F 8:00 am - 9:00 pm; Sat & Sun 9:00 am - 7:00 pm**

**Mark Ramirez**  
**(661) 834-5011**  
**YOUR NALC Branch 782**  
**Health Benefits Representative**

# BRANCH 782 NALC UNION MEMBERS:

## Open Season for your Health Plan selection for the 2012 year, will start on November 14th through December 12th 2011

I will be attending the NALC Health Benefit Seminar starting on October 16th, 2011. I don't have the particulars on the 2012 NALC Health Benefit Plan monthly premiums, or the changes to our Health Benefit package for the new year. But, rest assured, our National Health Benefit Director Brian Hellman and his dedicated staff—along with our involved National Officers—will have negotiated with OPM, the “BEST” possible benefit Package at the lowest monthly premiums possible for it's members for 2012.

Our NALC Health Benefit Plan has been taking care of it's union members for over 60 years! It is NALC membership owned, operated, and focused on providing the *absolute best coveratge* for each one of our Union members.

I am confident (that when you compare the NALC Health Benefit Plan to the other plans available to you during Open Season) you will make the best choice for you and your family's health coverage needs, and join *our* Union Owned NALC Health Benefit Plan.

MARK RAMIREZ  
NALC Branch 782 HBP Representative

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## Humor is the best medicine...

As a bagpiper, I play many gigs.

Recently I was asked by a funeral director to play at a graveside service for a homeless man. He had no family or friends, so the service was to be at a pauper's cemetery in the Kentucky back country.

As I was not familiar with the backwoods, I got lost and—being a typical man—I didn't stop for directions. I finally arrived an hour late and saw the funeral director had evidently gone. The hearse was nowhere in sight. There were only the diggers and crew left, and they were eating lunch.

I felt bad and apologized to the men for being late.

I went to the side of the grave, looked down and saw the vault lid was already in place. I didn't know what else to do, so I started to play for the recently departed. The workers put down their lunches and began to gather around. I played out my heart and soul for this man with no family and friends. I played like I've never played before for this homeless man. And as I played 'Amazing Grace,' the workers began to weep. They wept, I wept, we all wept together. It was a truly touching performance and the

workers were as caught up in the moment as I was.

When finished, I couldn't say a word so I packed up my bagpipes and started for the car. Though my head hung low, my heart was full. As I opened the door to my car, I heard one of the workers say, "I never seen nothin' like that before, and I've been putting in septic tanks for twenty years."

Apparently I was still lost....

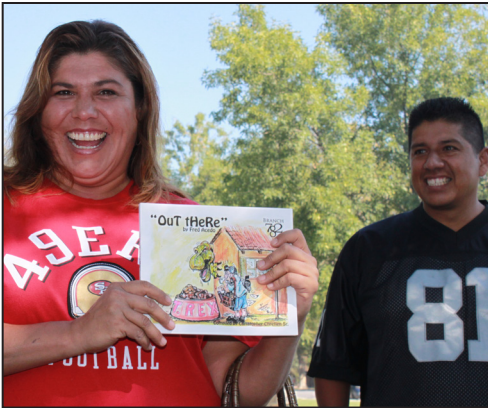
MARK RAMIREZ  
Branch 782 Health Benefit Rep.



# It Was a Great Time!

Branch #782 Bakersfield had their annual picnic on Sunday afternoon on Oct. 9th 2011. The day started out cool...a couple of random clouds and

NO WIND!! For those of you that attended last year's event, WOW, what an event!! Those of you that don't remember... the winds were so fierce that we took the party to the union hall. What an experience, but back to this year.



Teresa Ortega once again organized the picnic with "Too Fat's" catering ribs, tri tip, and chicken with all the fixins'. There were lots of games and prizes for kids of all ages. Snow cones, too. There were animal balloons and face painting (...and hair painting too. Look for Mark Ramirez's pictures.) Teresa did a great job shopping for the raffle prizes. There was lots of great stuff!

I sure like a good picnic. (...Especially when I win the flat screen t.v.) You see friends you don't see enough of. And, you just might meet someone new. And, best of all! It's free! As a union member: you, your spouse and your at home kids...all included, no charge!

If you missed this year's picnic, try to make the next one. It sure is a nice way to spend a Sunday afternoon.

ANITA HOLDERMAN



Want more picnic pictures?? Go to out [WWW.782NALC.COM](http://WWW.782NALC.COM)



Boy! Howdy! If you didn't attend the annual picnic, you surely did miss out!!!

I had an absolute blast, all the way from helping to "set up" to helping to clean up!

There were several bounce house activities for the kids, of all ages to play on. There was face painting, a balloon guy, and snow cones. So many people looked too cool with all of their designs on their faces! Some—**Mark Ramirez!**—even on their heads!



And then, there were the games! We had a water balloon toss; an egg toss; mummy wrap; and, even a cake walk! I know that there were more games planned, but we had so much fun that the time just flew by...

Oh! And let us not forget about the food. yummy!!! Too Fat did a great job on the grub. And prizes?? Just for showing up, you got a chance to take an awesome gift home!

Thank you to Teresa Ortega for coordinating this event! Thank you, too, to *every* member who helped set up, clean up, and made all this possible! It is great to have a yearly picnic where we can all come together and just play! **Personally...I just can't wait for next year!!**

NORMA HAMER



**O**ur Branch 782 Annual Picnic was held Sunday October 9th, 2011. Picnic Coordinator Theresa Ortega did a "FANTISTIC" job with this event! She received lots of help from our dedicated union members. Theresa's military style, and "Picnic Flow Chart Schedule" worked well.....as everybody just ignored her and performed their duties.

The awesome food consisted of barbecued ribs, chicken, tri-tip beef, hot dogs, beans, cheese potatoes, dinner rolls, and a selection of drinks. There was shave ice, bounce houses, super kids balloons, great prizes at our drawing, two 50/50 prizes, cake walk, candy and chips. I have to admit—I did participate in one event: Face Painting. **AND GUESS WHAT?**



As I have stated numerous times, "The Lord only made a few perfect heads, the rest, he covered with hair." Being inquisitive, I thought I might see how it felt to possess one of those "un-perfect heads"—at least for a few short hours. So I had "HAIR" painted on my "PERFECT HEAD" And, I have to tell you that it was **UGLY!!! I COULDN'T WAIT TO WASH IT OFF!**



On the bright side, the face painter remarked, "I would like to have more people like you at my birthday events, as most 'hair-impaired' people don't have senses of humor!" **Me? A sense of humor? LOL! LOL! LOL! LOL!**

So, what do I really have to say? Actually, it's pretty simple. And, this **IS** a fact: "It was a **GREAT PICNIC**, Theresa"!!!!!! Let's do it again next year!!!

MARK RAMIREZ



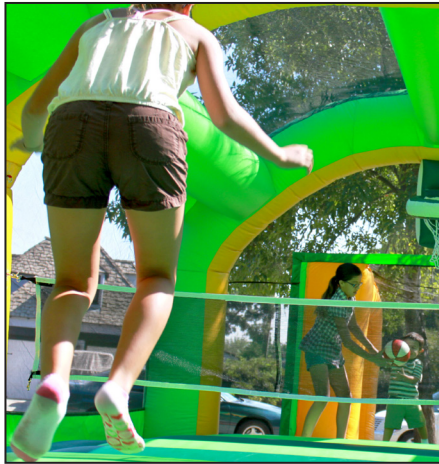
*It Was a Great Time!*



*Continued on next page...*



*Really, Truly! It Was a Great Time!*



*Pix continued on next page???*  
**YES!!!**

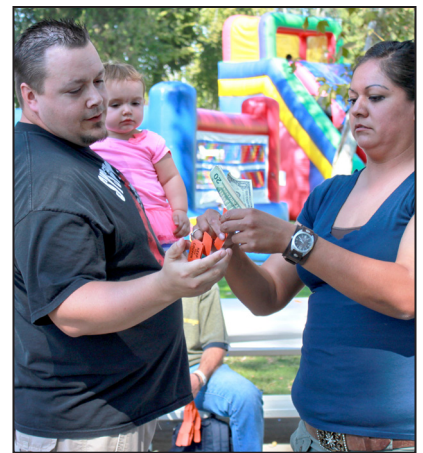
*And, all of these great memories  
are courtesy of Branch 782  
Photographer Anita Holderman!*



***YO! Teresa!***

*It would be great to have even more people at the Branch 782 picnic!!!! Rumor has it that we may even have another picnic next year... So, do you think that we can make the next one even better than the one we had in 2011???*







# ADVENTURES IN THE SPEED BIZ

## By Ernie Carlson

It feels strange writing a column for this issue. A lot of stuff is happening right now and it's hard to foresee the future. Are we going to get our future retirees' health benefits paid off using the money overpaid into the CSRS and FERS funds-which reminds me, have you contacted your congressional representative yet to get HR. 1351 passed? Seriously, what are you waiting for? No one's going to grade you on your presentation. Just write, "Congressman Craavack (or Congressman Duffy, if you're a Wisconsinite), please support HR.1351 and HR. 137. Thank you." ( Then sign your name. Use crayon if you want to. I shouldn't have to tell you what to do next, but it involves an envelope and a stamp, and then you're done. In fact, stop reading this right now and go do that. This column will still be here. Or better yet, read Dave Chelseth's article after you're finished writing your one sentence letter. It reminds me of the "Jungle Boogie" column Gary Pitoscia used to write years ago for this publication. Or read Ardy's column, or Tanya's column, or Robert's or Scott's article. Or, since my article's at the back of this rag, and you've probably read all the previous articles, tell yourself you've already done a good enough job finally writing that letter to your congressman, and just slide this periodical, my column facing up, into your parrot's cage and let him apply his own organic White-out to my editorial efforts. That's fair. You don't have to read anymore.

So, if you've read this far, that means you're still here. As I was saying, there's a lot going on, and I'm not sure how it's going to turn out. It's exhausting to think about. And kind of terrifying. HR. 1351 has received more emphasis in our local office than HR. 137 (again, write to your congressman telling him to support HR.1351, because it is the solution to our current fiscal situation and will put us back into the financial black. It's not a taxpayer bailout. It's a transfer of overpayments made into CSRS and FERS which will completely wipe out our debt obligations Congress imposed on us. See, it's that simple. Write your congressman and get HR.1351 passed.), but I think HR. 137 is the bellwether for our future. HR. 137 keeps six day delivery. If we go to five day delivery, it probably won't be long before we go to no day delivery. I'm trying to think of a scenario where when a business cuts its hours or days of operations it isn't followed by a going out of business sign. I can't think of one. And we've already started this process with later starting times. Failing to pass HR. 137 will just make it official. If HR.137 doesn't pass, it's the beginning of the end. The USPS will stick around for a while, but it will be like some gravely injured animal loping off somewhere to die, before the privatization vultures come around to pick its carcass clean. And if HR. 137 doesn't pass a lot of jobs will be gone. Regular carriers with less than six years of service and TE's should be writing to their congressmen, because if HR. 137 doesn't go through they'll be among the first to go (so for the third and final time, if you haven't already done so, pick up a pen and paper or sit down at a computer connected to a printer, and write a letter to your congressman. Or e-mail them. Or call them. Or find them on Myspace, Facebook or Twitter. Tell them to support HR. 1351 and HR. 137. With a Schwarzneggerian accent, I say, "DO IT! NOW!").

Seriously, I can't think of any time in my nearly thirteen year career as a letter carrier where the times seemed as dire as they do now. But listening to hopelessness and depression won't yield positive results. We need to act. So for the fourth and final time, write to your congressman and... You know the rest.

Article courtesy of the Duluth, MN October 2011 edition of the NALC Branch 114 *ZENITH BRANCH NEWS*.  
A big thank you to the author, Ernie Carlson, who is also Branch 114's excellent Editor-guy!

# *This is your world. But, you may have never considered facts...*

## Postal employment and productivity



The USPS employs 685,000 career employees and 101,000 non-career staff, making it the second-largest employer in the United States (behind Wal-Mart). The Postal Service employs more workers on U.S. soil than General Motors, Ford and Chrysler combined.



The Postal Service's workforce is one of the few groups of federal workers with the right to bargain collectively for wages and conditions. As a result, the Postal Service pays middle-class wages—the average salary of postal employees is approximately \$48,000 annually—and provides virtually all its workers health insurance and pension coverage. Wages and benefits are generally comparable to those paid by FedEx and UPS.



Union membership is voluntary, but more than 80 percent of postal employees are organized, including 92 percent of city letter carriers—the best-organized open shop in America.



The modern Postal Service delivers 139 percent more mail to 89 percent more delivery points today with just 2.5 percent more work hours than it did in 1971 when it was created.



Postal labor productivity (output per hour) increased 50.1 percent between 1971, the year the Postal Service was created, and 2000—according to the latest data available from the U.S. Department of Labor's Bureau of Labor Statistics. (This data takes into account presorting and other work sharing by mailers.) According to USPS, labor productivity rose 1.7 percent in 2007, 0.3 percent in 2006 and 1.1 percent in 2005, raising the total productivity growth since postal reorganization to 50 percent.

## POSTAGE AND PRODUCTIVITY



The USPS maintains the most affordable postage in the world. A first-class stamp, which costs 41 cents in America, costs 75 cents in Japan, 49 cents in Germany and 71 cents in Britain. While in dollar terms stamps are cheaper in New Zealand, their cost is higher relative to hourly wages of workers there.



Overall postage rates—as measured by both the Producer Price Index and the Consumer Price Index—have increased less than consumer prices in general since the creation of the USPS in 1971. The stability in postage rates was achieved even as direct and indirect taxpayer subsidies have been eliminated—driving the real cost of mailing letters down 23 percent.



The price of a stamp (41 cents, up 412 percent since 1971) has increased much less than many other ordinary products and services. For example: a movie ticket (\$9, up 432 percent since 1971); natural gas to heat your home (\$11.40 per 1,000 cubic feet, up 844 percent since 1971); a copy of Time or Newsweek (\$3.95, up 690 percent since 1971).



Since December 1997, when the BLS started collecting the data, the delivery services component of the Consumer Price Index has increased 59.2% while the postage component of the CPI increased by just 19.2%.



Postal total factor productivity (TFP, which is output per combined unit of labor, capital and material input) has increased by 19 percent since 1972, averaging 0.5 percent per year. Recent BLS research on similar private sector industries—the transportation, utilities and communications (TUC) industries and service sector in general—found significantly lower annual TFP growth rates than those observed for the USPS.

## THE POSTAL BUSINESS



The Postal Service lies at the center of a trillion-dollar mailing industry, which includes companies that print and publish documents, periodicals and publications, mail order and electronic commerce outlets, and firms that transport mail and packages. Together these mail-related companies produce 8 percent of the gross domestic product and employ 9 million Americans. If it were a private company, the Postal Service would rank No. 21 on the Fortune 500 list of American business enterprises, with annual revenues of \$75 billion, placing it ahead of many well-known firms such as Merrill Lynch, Goldman Sachs, and Procter and Gamble..



The USPS has one of the most extensive retail networks in America with about 37,000 post offices and outlets. Each day more than 7 million Americans visit a post office and make transactions worth more than \$200 million. During the holiday season, the USPS takes in more than a half a billion dollars a day.



The USPS is financially independent of the rest of the federal government, generating all its own revenues with no subsidies from American taxpayers.



Taxpayer subsidies to the USPS were phased out between 1971, when they covered 23 percent of costs, and 1983. Today, an appropriation to the Postal Service proportional to that paid in 1971 would cost nearly \$16 billion annually. The USPS is authorized to receive compensation of \$460 million per year for operating unprofitable post offices, but has not requested or received this “public service” subsidy in more than 18 years. The direct savings to taxpayers: \$13 billion through 2007.



Prior to postal reorganization in 1970, the Treasury paid the cost of health insurance and unfunded pension benefits for retired postal employees. These costs have been transferred to the Postal Service through various laws and a series of Omnibus Budget and Reconciliation Acts (OBRA) in the 1980s and 1990s, saving the Treasury an additional \$85 billion since 1970.

## USPS MAIL VOLUME AND DELIVERY NETWORK



The U.S. Postal Service handles more than 40 percent of the world’s mail volume, five times more than the Japanese Post Office, the next largest carrier of letter mail.



In fiscal year 2007, the USPS sorted and delivered nearly 213 billion pieces of mail, about 703 million pieces a day.



The USPS delivers more items in one day than Federal Express does in a year and more items in one week than United Parcel Service does in a year.



The Postal Service delivers to 146 million businesses and households each day, six days per week. UPS delivers to 8 million addresses daily while FedEx serves even fewer.



The number of delivery points (households and businesses) served by the Postal Service grows by 5,900 every delivery day—some 1.8 million addresses a year.



Each letter carrier delivers more than 43 tons of mail per year, averaging more than 2,300 letters, cards, magazines and circulars per day on approximately 240,000 city and rural routes.



The Postal Service processes more than 44 million changes of address each year—as 17 percent of the nation’s population moves every year—and forwards mail free of charge. In 2007, 73 million changes of address were completed electronically.



The USPS operates the largest fleet of commercial vehicles in the country—some 212,000 vans and trucks.

Source: NALC Website

**Some people always want to share opinions about how all “government employees” are wasteful, inefficient and would never make it in the “real” world.**

**Here are the facts. Read them and understand them.**

**By the way, it was “government employees” who gathered data, analyzed information, provided the needed support and logistics, and who—finally—followed through with eliminating Osama Bin Laden... It wasn’t the folks at Walmart or UPS...**

# Congratulations John and Annette!



Sunday, October 9th, 2011 was a FULL day for many of us. I don't think I could have included one more thing to do on that day. I sure wasn't gonna try.

Besides the annual picnic for Branch 782, there was the wedding of Annette Meza and our own Vice-President,—John Ortega. What a beautiful outdoor ceremony and a great reception. CONGRATULATIONS AND BEST WISHES from all of us!

ANITA HOLDERMAN

*We've got a lot more pictures from John and Anette's wedding!! Go to [WWW.782NALC.COM](http://WWW.782NALC.COM)*

<http://www.virtualwall.org/iStates.htm>

From: Mario Muniz Sr. <mm.usmc-0311@sbcglobal.net>  
Subject: Fwd: VIETNAM WALL...Name Location Finder

Date: Monday, October 3, 2011, 1:22 AM

The link above is a virtual wall of all those lost during the Vietnam war with the names, bio's and other information on our lost heroes. Those who remember that time frame, or perhaps lost friends or family can look them up on this site. Pass the link on to others, as many knew wonderful people whose names are listed.

You might have this link already but here it is in case you don't. I found all my Marine buddies K.I.A. and found out how long they were actually in country before they died. It's really amazing how they did this. It will help not just us vets, but anyone looking for a friend or family member. *Please pass it on.*

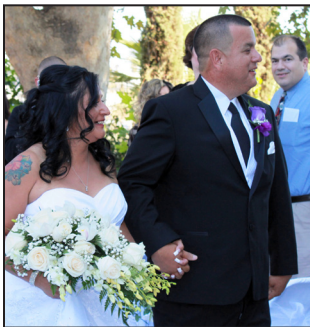
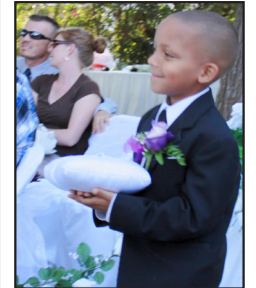
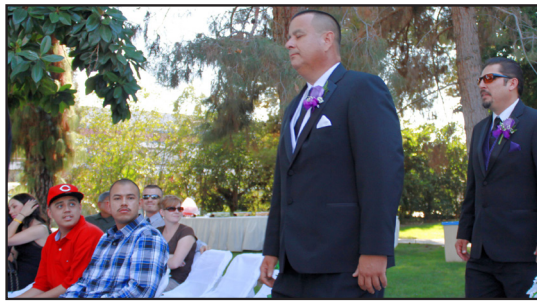
Someone spent a lot of time and effort to create this.

First click on a state. When it opens, scroll down to the city and the names will appear. Then click on their names. It should show you a picture of the person, or at least their bio and medals. This really is an amazing web site! Someone spent a lot of time and effort to create it. I hope that everyone who receives this appreciates what those who served in Vietnam sacrificed for our country.

God Bless our Service members, past and present, God Bless you and God Bless America!

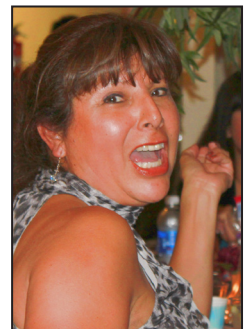
S/F MARIO MUNIZ

A Proud Vietnam Veteran and also  
a proud NALC Branch 782 Retiree



*Some memories captured by Branch 782  
Photographer Anita Holderman~*

Yes, there are more pictures! Turn the page and see for yourself!!!



# *John and Annette, We had a Party!!!*

*Annette and John*

*Annette Meza  
and  
John Ortega*

*invite you to share in the joy  
of the beginning of their new life together  
when they exchange marriage vows  
on Sunday, the ninth of October  
Two thousand and eleven  
at three o'clock in the afternoon  
Bakersfield Museum of Art  
1930 R Street  
Bakersfield, California 93301*

*Reception at five o'clock  
Casa Royal Banquet Hall  
1401 California Avenue  
Bakersfield, California 93304*

*10.09.2011*



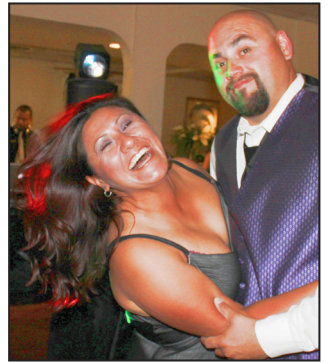
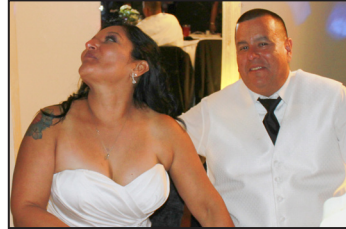
*Just in case you were wondering... Turn the page for even more pictures from Anita Holderman!*



*If it looks like  
it was a party...*

*Guess what?  
It was!!!*

*We got proof!!!*





from the  
**editor-guy**

**Can You tell Me why I don't get my newsletter until two months after its published. I know the Post Office is slow, but *that* is crazy. Even as a Retiree, it would be nice to get it on time. Sincerely, Ron Gross**

Hey, Ron!

I wish I knew what to tell you. All I know is that we drop the newsletter off at the Bulk Mail Center on the Thursday afternoon after we do the folding, stapling, addressing, counting, etc on the Wednesday evening before.

Additionally, I also know that there are complaints sometimes from folks (for example in Shafter/Delano) that they don't get their newsletter until *after* the general meeting. I get really frustrated by that. I also know that I have my newsletter sent to me instead of just taking it home after we're done on Wednesday so that I can see if I get mine the next day (in 93309). There have been times when I've gotten it on Saturday instead of Friday like it could have been delivered.

But... I do have an option for you. What is that other option??????

The other option that I can offer you is this: Branch 782 has a website. I produce a "web version" of the newsletter which (usually) has a lot more pages. The reason is that print and mailing costs are prohibitively expensive. An electronic version allows me to put in more things. For example, the September print version has twenty pages. The web version I pumped up to forty pages. There are extra pages of pictures and a lot more reprinted articles from other NALC Branches.

If you want, I suggest that you type this in your search bar - - 782NALC. This should take you to some hits which will let you access the Branch 782 website. When you get to the page, look for the "E.A. BAKER UNION UPDATE" link. Then, look for the September 2011 newsletter.

"Service" in the name of the Postal Service is almost an oxymoron anymore...

I know that this doesn't really answer your question about why it takes so long. I wish I could answer it.

By the way, is it okay if I publish your e-mail in the newsletter next month? Of course, you probably won't see it until some-time in December - - unless, of course, you go to the website.

Be Well! Basil

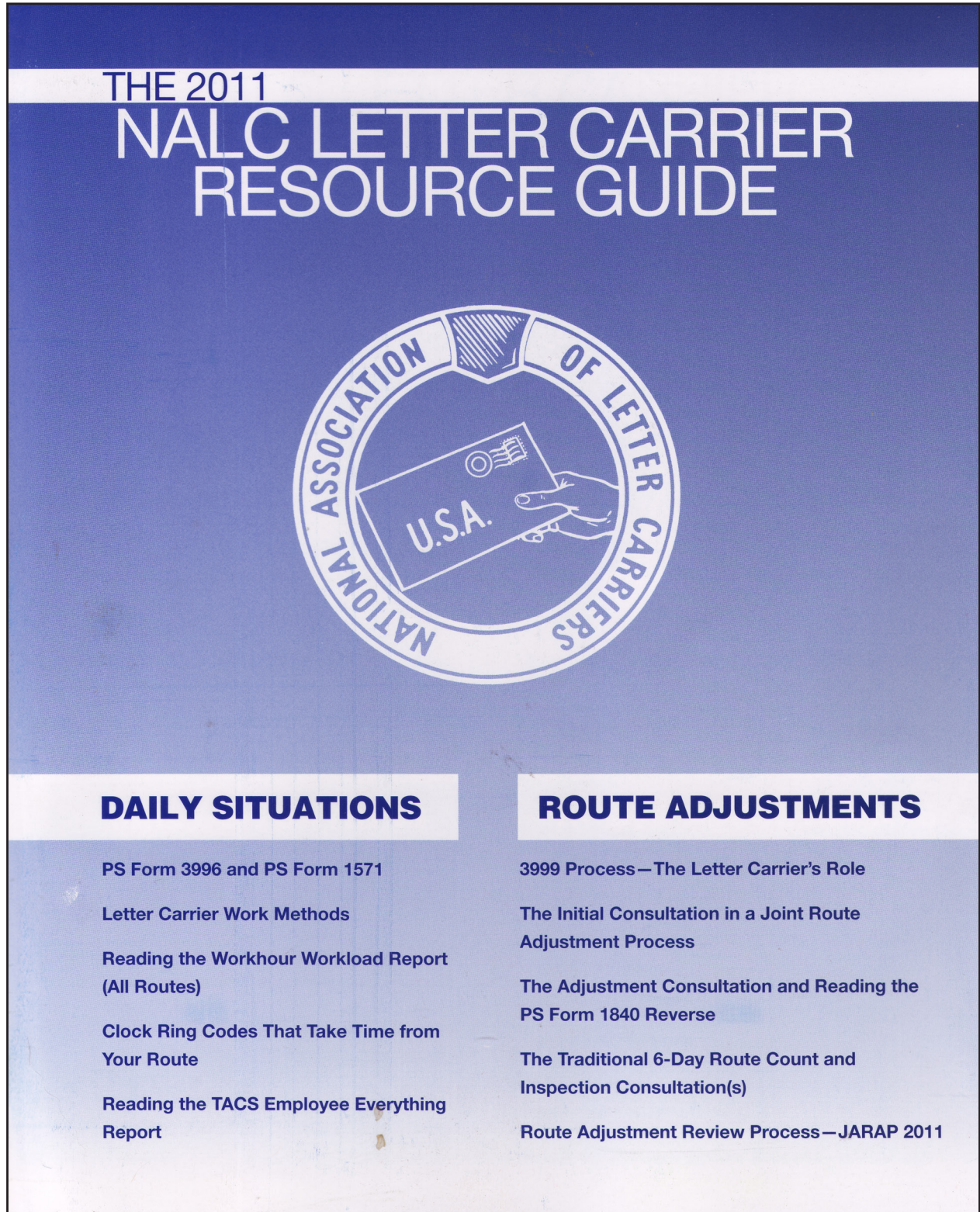
Out there



**Yes. You can. Please put my email in the newsletter in case anyone wants to get in touch with me: [sixtosixty@yahoo.com](mailto:sixtosixty@yahoo.com). Sincerely, Ron Gross**

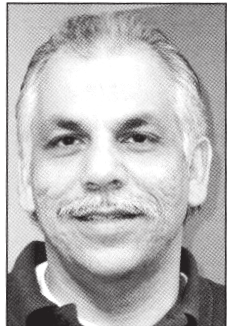
This 68 page book should look familiar. You received a personal copy in the mail because you are a member of the NALC. More importantly, the information contained *IN* the booklet had better become familiar to you as you go about your daily duties. Why?

At some point—maybe sooner than you realize—you are going to realize the importance of what is in this book. It's not rocket science. This is what a professional Letter Carrier knows...



# Expect Change

By Frank Salazar, President



If you read my last article, you may remember that we are having a lot of disruption in many of our units. Currently, we are going through JARAP 2011 reviews and adjustments. FSS units are not covered by these adjustments. As I described in earlier articles, many carriers are getting upset by these changes. When reviewing the units, the District Evaluation and Adjust-

ment Teams (DEATS) are finding that some routes are over 8 hours and that some routes are less than 8 hours. As such, the routes have to be adjusted to as close to 8 hours as possible, which means that, territory has to be added to the routes that are under 8 hours and taken away from the routes that are over 8 hours. However, in order to accomplish this task, the DEATS have to look at every route in the unit; not just your route. And, this is where the problems arise.

When moving territory from one route to another, we have a "domino effect". Moving territory from Route #1 to Route #2 may mean moving territory to Route #3, which may affect Route #4, #5, or #6 and so on down the line until we have no territory left to move or just enough left over to create auxiliary routes. Inevitably, there are errors when territory is moved or we don't like the territory we are losing or receiving for whatever reason. Keep in mind that the DEATS have to take all the routes in the unit into consideration not just a few. They will take a carrier's input into consideration, but your input may not fit into the overall adjustment of the unit. For example, you make want to keep your last hour of mounted. But, to properly adjust all the routes in the unit properly, you might have to be given park and loop. Or your territory may have to be shifted north and you may lose your business deliveries and pick up park and loop deliveries in a residential area. There are a myriad of possibilities. Remember, in this environment change will be constant. The territory you lost in the last inspection may return to you in the next inspection. Or, all the routes in a unit may have to be posted for bid because of an abolishment of a senior carrier's route and you may end up on a route that is totally different. Please understand that in these economic times with businesses advertising less and first class volume continuing to drop, we will be experiencing one adjustment after another until things turn around in the economy. When this happens is anyone's guess.

## **Don't Take the Bait**

Have any of you heard about the 7:01 Rule? The 7:01 Rule is a rule that has been on the books for many years.

If on any day, an employee has completed their assignment in less than 8 hours or has worked at least 7 hours and one minute and has nothing else to do, Management may let that employee go home and that employee will be paid 8 hours for the day. Wow, that's neat! I finish my route or assignment in at least 7:01 and Management will let me go home and pay me 8 hours for the day. What a deal!... Wrong!

Have you ever wondered why Management is offering this program now? I'll tell you why. This offer was mainly pitched in our FSS offices, which are not part of the 2011 Joint Alternate Route Adjustment Process (JARAP). These FSS offices are currently going through a 60-day review process. Now, if you bit on the 7:01 bait your route will evaluate at less than 8 hours during this 60-day review. And guess what, if your route is under 8 hours Management will add territory to your route to bring it up to an 8 hour assignment. Or, Management can evaluate your route less than 8 hours an attempt to abolish it and piece it off to other assignments or make it an auxiliary route. Now, if you skipped your 30 minute lunch and 10 minute street break to make it back in 7:01, you just added another 40 minutes to your route on top of the 59 minutes because of 7:01.

Nothing good has ever come out of 7:01. Only suckerfish bite on this kind of bait. Be warned.

## **One Day Counts**

I've been receiving a lot of complaints and inquiries about one day counts. One day counts or Special Office Mail Counts are conducted to determine the efficiency of a carrier. Basically, is the Carrier making standards (18 & 8)? If Management doesn't believe you're making standards, they can do a one day count or special count. It's like a route inspection, but for one day. Management must give you one day advance notice. Just case and carry the route like you do every day. Management can only use this information to determine if you're making standards or to correct any deficiencies they may observe. Management cannot adjust your route using this data. However, if Management notes that you are doing something wrong or improper, they have to bring it to your attention and correct you in the proper manner. If there are no deficiencies, they should still discuss the results of the special one day count with you and that should be the end of it.

*M-39-Chapter 2 Section 141.2 Special Office Mail Counts  
When management desires to determine the efficiency of a carrier in the office, a count of mail may be made. The carrier must be given one day's advance notification of this*

*special count. Use Form 1838-C to record count and time items concerned. The carrier must be advised of the result of the office mail count.*

Most of the complaints I am receiving on one day counts deal with the conduct of the route examiners. Some carriers state that the examiners are constantly talking to them in the office telling them what to do or not to do. On the street, other carriers state that examiners are telling them to put off comfort stops, to speed up, are setting the pace, are telling them not to deliver the parcel to the door, but to leave a PS Form 3849 and the examples continue. The M-39 Chapter 2 section 232 details the conduct of a route examiner. For the most part, examiners are to observe and notate. They are not there to discuss, comment, instruct or criticize. However, if a carrier is committing a serious safety infraction, the examiner should stop the examination, place the carrier on line 22 waiting time and correct the carrier and/or call the carrier's immediate supervisor to discuss the infraction with the carrier. Otherwise, the examiners observe and notate.

#### *M39-Chapter 2 Section 232 Conduct of Route Examiner*

##### *232.1 The route examiner must:*

- a. Not set the pace for the carrier, but should maintain a position to observe all delivery points and conditions.*
- b. Not suggest or forbid any rest or comfort stops but should make proper notations of them.*
- c. Not discuss with the carrier on the day of inspection the mail volume or the evaluation of the route. These matters must be discussed with the carrier at a later date when all data has been reviewed and analyzed.*
- d. Make notations on the day of inspection on the appropriate form or separate sheet of paper of all items that need attention, as well as comments on the day of inspection. Also list any comments or suggestions for improving the service on the route, as well as suggestions or comments made by the carrier during the course of the inspection for improvement in delivery and collection service.*
- e. Make comments and suggestions clearly, and in sufficient detail for discussion with the carrier and for decision-making purposes. The manager who will actually discuss the results with the carrier must have enough facts and figures to reach a final decision on any necessary adjustments to the route.*

### **MSP & Del Con Scans**

Scan, scan, scan, we are required to scan. Make sure that you are scanning all your MSP scans and Del Con scans. Our customers ask us to scan and our employer requires us to scan, so make sure you scan everything you possibly can. If you are having problems with your scanner, bring it to Management's attention preferably in writing. If your labels are torn, worn, sun damaged or missing, also bring this to the attention of your supervisor. Although you should not be disciplined for missing scans, Managers in

some of our offices are doing just that. They are issuing discipline to carriers for missing a scan. Our District Manager Kerry Wolny stated at a recent President's Meeting that it is not his intent to discipline carriers for missing scans. However, he wants us to emphasize to all our memberships that we should scan everything possible. When it comes to lunch scans, we have at least a couple of Managers requiring carriers to deviate to scan an MSP before and after lunch. This is not proper. We should scan the MSP's when we get to them. However, follow the instructions and see your Steward as soon as you can. Scanning is part of the job, so make sure you do it on a daily basis.

#### *M-01458 Step 4 Settlement March 13, 2002, Q98N-4Q-C-01045840*

*The Managed Service Points (MSP) initiative is a national program intended to facilitate management's ability to assess and monitor city delivery route structure and consistency of delivery service. The following reflects the parties understanding of MSP:*

*The parties agree that management will determine the number of scans on a city delivery route. Time credit will continue to be given during route count and inspections and will be credited in total street time.*

*MSP does not set performance standards, either in the office or on the street. With current technology, MSP records of scan times are not to be used as timecard data for pay purposes. MSP data may not constitute the sole basis for disciplinary action. However, it may be used by the parties in conjunction with other records to support or refute disciplinary action issued pursuant to Article 16 of the National Agreement.*

*City letter carriers have the option of using a personal identification number (PIN) other than the last four digits of their social security number.*

*Section 432.33 of the Employee and Labor Relations Manual (ELM) remains in full force and effect when MSP is implemented. It provides that Except in emergency situations, or where service conditions preclude compliance, no employee may be required to work more than 6 continuous hours without a meal or rest period at least hour.'*

*Lunch locations for both the incumbent and carrier technician on a city delivery route continue to be determined in compliance with Section 126.5.b(2) of the 39. PS Form 1564A Delivery Instructions' lists the place and time that city letter carriers are authorized to leave the route for lunch. However, the parties recognize that, consistent with local instructions and operational conditions, city letter carriers may be authorized to leave at a different time and/or place. Notwithstanding this, the parties agree that city letter carriers will scan MSP scan points as they reach them during the course of their assigned duties.*

## **Rolando was Right**

Those of you who doubted President Rolando when he stated that the Postal Service wouldn't stop at 5-day delivery, that they would cut it down to 4 days, 3 days, 2 days, 1 day until they finally piece off it were wrong. In an article published in USA Today in July, Postmaster Donahoe was quoted as stating that in 15 years we will probably be talking about delivering mail 3-days a week (Monday, Wednesday, and Friday). After this statement, UPS corporate officers commented that their company would come in and pick up the slack for parcel delivery on Saturdays. UPS spokesmen also commented that they could pick up the pieces after Postal Management shuts down post offices in many communities across the country with their UPS stores. Brothers and Sisters, we have to pay attention to the political arena. We can't be so absorbed in our personal lives and families that we do not know what is going on around us. A good place to start is on page 6 of the August 2011 Postal Record. What we need now is to have members who reside in Congressman Gallegly, McKeon, and Waxman's Districts to write or call their offices to have them support HR 1351, The United States Postal Service's Pension Obligation and Recalculation and Restoration Act of 2011. We also need members to contact Congressman McKeon and Waxman about supporting H.Res.137 Expressing the sense of the House of Representatives that the United States Postal Service should take all appropriate measures to ensure the continuation of its six-day mail delivery service. Please remember that we are not out of the woods with 6-day delivery or contracting out. Republican Congressman Darrell Issa of San Diego is not our friend, and neither are the crackpots in the Tea Party. The job you save may be your own.

### **Is NRP Dead?**

No, not quite. However, according to a postal item I read on the Internet, the National Reassessment process ended on January 31, 2011. It seems that the Postal Service has been losing so many cases nationwide and paying out millions of dollars that it finally noticed that the process was in violation of the Employee & Labor Relations Manual 546. Therefore, the Service in its infinite wisdom changed some language and renamed the program ELM 546. Management still has to make every effort to find work within the injured carrier's defined medical restrictions by doing daily job searches within the craft, outside the craft, within the installation and outside the installation, but it still hasn't stopped Management from improperly putting carriers out. We will continue to file the appropriate grievances.

Locally, our Branch has been very successful in NRP grievances collecting hundreds of thousands of dollars for our injured members. If you are an injured carrier who had been violated by the NRP and won a recent grievance, the Branch has sent you a copy of the decision. Management

should have sent you a PS form 8038 to recoup back pay and lost leave. You should have also received a TSP Form, if you were unable to make deposits into the TSP while you were out on the NRP. If you have not received these forms, please contact your Steward or the Union Hall a.s.a.p. We will continue to fight the good fight and make it right for those who have been wronged. All for now back in two.

Article courtesy of the September-October 2011  
*Mail Bag News* published by NALC Branch 2902  
in Chatsworth, California. Thank you so very, very much!!

This excellent article was written by Frank Salazar,  
President of NALC Branch 2902.

He addresses numerous issues that you might  
not even be considering, yet.

**But—*THIS IS ONE OF THOSE BIG BUTS!***

YOU need to become very familiar with  
the points that he makes.

The title of his article, "Expect Change" hits the  
nail on the head. Just because something  
hasn't happened where you work  
doesn't mean that it can't...

*Part of me has to wonder if anyone  
ever reads the information  
contained in these pages.  
If you do, let me know...*

*Preferably, send a letter to me care  
of the Branch 782 mailing address—  
upper left corner on the back page.*

*You can also send an e-mail to:  
[brziii@aol.com](mailto:brziii@aol.com).*

*Basil Zuniga,  
Branch 782 Editor-guy*

## Valerie Lizette Salazar 1990 - 2011



Valerie Lizette Salazar was born January 4, 1990 and passed away peacefully October 1, 2011—the feast day of St. Therese of Lisieux, “the Little Flower.” Visitation for Valerie was held Thursday, October 6, 2011 at Mish Funeral Home (120 Minner Ave.) from 4:00 - 8:00 p.m. with the Rosary recited at 6:00 p.m. A Mass of Christian Burial was held at 11:00 a.m. October 7, 2011 at Christ the King Catholic Church (1800 Bedford Way).

Valerie was preceded in death by her beloved sister Stephanie whose heart, like Valerie’s, was capable of great love but was not healthy. Valerie is survived by a host of family and friends who love her and will miss her greatly, including: her Mom and “Pop”, Elizabeth and Oscar; her sister, Melissa; her new nephew, Dominick; and her Grandparents, Cousins, Aunts, Uncles, Madrinans, Padrinos and Friends.

She touched so many lives in her short time through her infectious laughter and her generous and loving nature. Valerie’s influence extended from the San Francisco Bay Area where she was born, to Bakersfield where she attended Liberty High School, to Taft College, and even down into Mexico. She was very close to the Lord and to her Roman Catholic faith, a gift from her parents. Valerie had a special place in her heart for children and was studying to be a Kindergarten education teacher. She spent valuable precious time with family and friends watching movies, and cheering on the San Francisco Giants, the Oakland Raiders and the LA Lakers.

Valerie’s life can be summed up in this quote: “Live, Laugh, Love.” Like St. Therese,—her Confirmation saint’s name—Valerie spent her so short time on earth scattering her flowers of laughter and love on all those she met. Her favorite quote by St. Therese of Lisieux was this: “Love proves itself by deeds, so how am I to show my love? Great deeds are forbidden me. The only way I can prove my love is by scattering flowers and these flowers are every little sacrifice, every glance and word, and the doing of the least actions for love.”

Modified from information published in the *Bakersfield Californian* on October 5, 2011 [www.bakersfield.com/obits](http://www.bakersfield.com/obits)

### from the editor-guy

Mike Towery’s article this month makes note of a very sad event.

He offers his condolences to a Letter Carrier grieving the loss of his daughter. I’ve never worked with Oscar Salazar, and I know that I don’t *really* know what he’s going through. But...

I have two sons who have dealt with asthma and my wife and I have spent countless hours in hospital chairs and praying. So, I kind of understand.

I know exactly when I heard about Valerie’s death. I deliver mail to The Mall in Bakersfield. When I delivered mail to the owner of the Orange Julius, he said that—at his church—

there was quite a group of Letter Carriers at the funeral of a girl who had died. He explained a little of what he knew and asked me if I knew her father who he assumed was a Carrier in Bakersfield.

After I told him that I hadn’t heard anything, I told him that I would look into it. I wondered why I hadn’t heard anything. Had “the grapevine” failed me?

I made a call. Eventually, Rick and Kim Gerdes gave me a little background. How come I hadn’t heard about Valerie? I learned more when I read the obituary.

I remember thinking (as I have often thought before), “How do you fit a person’s life into just a few short sentences or paragraphs?” Really!! How can a short obituary capture all the years of anxiety, worry, anger and being ‘dismayed at how unfair life can be’ that Valerie must have grappled with??? And how about her mom and dad?

If I read correctly, Valerie was preceded in death by her sister, Stephanie. And, I think, they were both afflicted with a heart condition/disease of some type. Ah...

Although I never knew her, I did smile at two specific things. The first is that she must have called her dad “Pop”. *That’s* what my kids call *me*. Secondly, I think that Heaven is the kind of a place that definitely has a place for someone like Valerie. I think that I would like to meet her someday. It’s on my list of things to do...

BASIL ZUNIGA



# Branch Officers

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

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

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

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

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

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

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Wasco Alternate (93280)	Mabel Lyons	(661) 900-8892
Downtown Station (93301)	Kim Gerdes	(661) 834-2059
South Station (93304)	Darryl Holderman	(661) 487-5353
South Station Alternate	Judy Kiyoshi	(661) 817-5529
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www.782nalc.com**

**Rick Plummer, Webmaster**



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Bakersfield, California  
Permit Number 32

## General Meeting Tuesday October 25, 2011 7:00 p.m.

Branch 782 Office  
2628 "F" Street  
Bakersfield, California

**FORWARDING SERVICE REQUESTED**

### **OFFICIAL NOTICE ELECTION OF NALC "GOLDEN EMPIRE" BRANCH 782 DELEGATES TO THE 2012 NATIONAL CONVENTION**

#### **ELECTION**

The election will be conducted by secret ballot at the regular meeting on November 22, 2011 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 22, 2011, 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 21.

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 (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

*Membership Meeting  
Drawing*

*\$450.00!!!\**

*\*Fine Print: As a Branch 782 member, YOU have a chance to win \$450 this month!!  
But, you **HAVE** to be present at the meeting when names are drawn...*

*Don't forget to check out the web version of this newsletter! More is better... Go to our [WWW.782NALC.COM](http://WWW.782NALC.COM)*