

National Association of Letter Carriers

Branch 782

E.A. Baker Union Update



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VOTE

as if your job
depends on it...

We respect the political opinions of our members that range from the far left to the far right and everywhere in-between. While we all share the desire to expect our wages, benefits, and working conditions — as well as to ensure the success of the Postal Service — not every member makes their voting decisions based on how it will affect their job, career or the retirement with dignity that they hope to earn by their labor.

How members vote and what issues matter most to them is their business and their decision. However, for our members that do base their voting decisions on how it affects their jobs and careers, this is certainly not the time to sit on the bench or stand on the sidelines. The most important thing we want to stress is that YOU must exercise YOUR right to vote. **DO NOT** let others decide what will shape YOUR reality!!

Voting by mail is the best and safest way to do so — especially during this time of the Covid-19 pandemic. It CAN be done in the comfort, convenience and the safety of your home!!

Reckless chaos amidst a deadly pandemic



**Fredric V.
Rolando**

In August 2020, perhaps for the first time since the Great Postal Strike of 1970, the Post Office finds itself at the center of the media universe, at the crossroads of politics, election planning and legislative maneuvering. NALC and the other postal unions are in the eye of this storm—where we are the chief defenders of our members, the Postal Service and our democracy—and the country is rallying behind its beloved Postal Service to make sure, among other things, that it can handle the flood of mail ballots expected to be cast during the pandemic.

The swirl of recent events has been extraordinary. President Donald Trump unleashed a political firestorm by launching a

months-long sustained attack on the Postal Service and vote-by-mail—and then threatening to veto any COVID-19 relief legislation providing funds to the Postal Service. Of course, ensuring that the Postal Service can weather a historic pandemic should have nothing to do with state decisions on whether to expand vote-by-mail as a public health measure. We've pushed back, defending the security of vote-by-mail and challenging his contention that the Postal Service lacks the capacity to handle a surge in mail ballots. We produced a fact sheet on the 2020 general election rebutting all of this, and distributed it to Capitol Hill, the media, the labor movement and a range of public-interest groups. We also are participating in a joint task force with USPS and the other postal unions to address the challenges of our expanded role in the 2020 election. We will work to ensure coordination with state and local election officials so that ballots are handled in a timely manner.

On top of all that, a combination of old and new initiatives, directed locally or from postal headquarters, have resulted in a variety of reckless operational changes that have created chaos in delivery units and made our jobs more difficult and less efficient. Most of these initiatives are counterproductive and needlessly disruptive, and they have left letter carriers feeling angry, frustrated and embarrassed over the resulting delay and non-delivery of mail. And all of this is occurring amidst a deadly pandemic.

On a daily basis, our members bring a sense of normalcy to neighborhoods and communities throughout the country as their customers deal with the personal, economic and social effects of the seemingly endless COVID-19 pandemic. Ameri-

ca's appreciation of the Postal Service has never been greater, and our customers recognize that we are driven by our pride in providing timely service and our compassion for their well-being. But as letter carriers courageously perform their duties, there is an inevitable fear and anxiety inherent in having daily contact with co-workers and the general public during a deadly pandemic. Our members just want to come to work and be able to deliver the mail to their customers in a safe, efficient and timely manner—and then go home safely to their families. They should and must not be exposed to senseless and disruptive initiatives.

On a daily basis, we are forwarding reports of delays and non-delivery to USPS so it can account for, and correct, continued incidents of delays or non-delivery. We will continue to do so until all of the operationally generated incidents are resolved. We will take whatever internal or external steps are necessary to ensure that the level of service our customers rely on is not compromised. National-level grievances have been filed on both the Expedited to Street/Afternoon Sortation (ESAS) and the Sortation Equipment Reconciliation (SER) initiatives.

As of this writing, the ESAS program is being terminated, and the SER program is on hold while we continue discussions. The management structure of personnel and communication for city delivery has been changed with the recent USPS organizational restructuring. Through these new lines of communication, we fully expect to see an end to unilateral management initiatives, which would allow us to utilize our established joint task forces to effect meaningful changes in the areas of safety, service, workplace climate, contract compliance, efficiency and growth.

We also are in constant communication with members of Congress on both sides of the aisle regarding the Health and Economic Recovery Omnibus Emergency Solutions (HEROES) Act, a COVID-19 relief bill that would provide \$25 billion in financial aid to USPS to offset the effects of the pandemic, ensure high-quality service and provide hazard pay for our members and other front-line workers. After the Senate shamefully left Washington for a summer break without addressing the HEROES Act, House Speaker Nancy Pelosi called the House of Representatives back to Washington to pass the Delivering for America Act (S. 8015), a stand-alone postal bill that provides the \$25 billion in pandemic relief to USPS, along with measures intended to ensure quality service during the upcoming election. (Visit our website or use our Member App to follow the latest news on this legislation.)

For NALC, the bottom line is clear: We will do whatever it takes— at the bargaining table, in the halls of Congress, in the courts, in the streets and in the media—to protect the health, safety and job security of our members, and to defend the Postal Service and its essential role in American life.

Which Presidential Candidate or Political Party has YOUR Back?

By Ron Kania, President
NALC Branch 2

When I decide who to vote for President of the United States, I look at which candidate will best support me and my family.

For me the most important issue is which candidate will support my job. I know it is selfish; but, without my job my world would drastically change.

How can I decide on which candidate will support my job? I need to do some research on which party will have my best interests in mind. I started by reading the Republican and Democratic platforms.

What did the Democratic platform for 2020 say about the United States Postal Service? Page 60 of the Democratic Platform states:

“Strengthening the U.S. Postal Service

The U.S. Postal Service (USPS) is the world’s most efficient mail carrier, and Democrats are wholly committed to supporting a public USPS. We will fight all efforts to privatize the USPS and will work to ensure the USPS is financially sustainable, including by repealing the mandate that the agency “pre-fund” retiree health costs. Democrats will protect the Postal Service’s universal service obligation as a core American value and maintain six-day and doorstep mail delivery, which is a lifeline for rural Americans. And we will work to restore service to appropriate levels, including overnight delivery offirst-class mail and periodicals within the same metropolitan area, maintaining six-day and door-to-door delivery, and appointing members to the Board of Governors and the Postal Regulatory Commission who champion a strong public Postal Service. We will also support new revenue streams for the USPS, including allowing secure shipping of alcoholic beverages by mail and exploring options to enable unbanked and underbanked Americans to access financial services through the Postal Service.”

What did the Republican platform for 2020 say out the United States Postal Service?

The Republican National Committee’s Executive Committee voted on June 10, 2020, to adopt the same platform the party used in 2016. The USPS is not directly mentioned in the Republican platform from 2016. However, this is what it says about Federal Employees. Pay attention.

Page 8 of the Republican Platform states:

“A Federal Workforce Serving the People

The federal workforce is larger and more highly paid than ever. The taxpayers spend an average of \$35,000 a year per employee on non-cash benefits, triple the average non-cash compensation of the average worker in the private sector. Federal employees receive extraordinary pension benefits and vacation time wildly out of line with those of the private sector. We urge Congress to bring federal compensation and benefits in line with the standards of most American employees. A Republican administration should streamline personnel procedures to expedite the firing of bad workers, tax cheats, and scammers. The unionization of the federal workforce, first permitted by Democrat presidents in the 1960s, should be re-viewed by the appropriate congressional committees to examine its effects on the cost, quality, and performance of the civil service. Union representatives in the federal workforce should not be paid to conduct union business on the public’s time.”

The Republican Platform is also very anti-union. Page 5 of the Republican Platform states:

“Although unionization has never been permitted in any government agency concerned with national security, the current Administration has reversed that policy for the Transportation Security Administration. We will correct that mistake.”

**VOTE
as if your job
depends on it...**

This is an abridged portion of an article which is courtesy of the West Allis, Wisconsin October 2020 NALC Branch 2 *Pioneer*

Guest Editorial —

“Is he who no longer brings De Joy trying to dismantle the USPS?”

By Yana Miller-Farney
NALC Branch 78 Editor

It didn't take long for President Trump's big donor to show his true colors as Postmaster General. Everyone was holding their breath to see what his scheme would be after the first couple months meeting and greeting the National Union Presidents and upper level Postal management sounding like he was in the fight with us.

NALC President Fred Rolando said from the beginning that he's saying all the right things but time will tell how sincere those words were...

Well, the crap didn't last long.

First, plants put on notice they will fire up those machines at the start of shifts, get the mail out to the stations, no OT, no late truck runs. Get that mail and go!

“ I was so po'd with each new sledgehammer blow, I couldn't contain my anger towards these two individuals. ”

Suddenly, machines are getting yanked out of plants.

Remember those VERA (Voluntary Early Retirement Acts) Carriers were holding out for? We waited for years? Well, they made a comeback for certain EAS levels. Not much concern there since there were always too many chiefs and too few workers.

The icing on the cake was De Joy sending letters to forty-three states: *Sorry but we are unable to get your mail in ballots delivered in time for the Presidential election that is three months away.*

Here is an opportunity to get first class mail flowing like water and the CEO tells people, “Don't count on us! No can do!” Then “someone” starts pulling up mailboxes — you know those big blue boxes that used to be on every other corner. That are harder to find than a highway without orange barrels.

WHO does this?

What school of business did this yahoo attend?

Most leaders promote their businesses, they DON'T turn business away.

All I can remember is that the USofA was always bird dogging every country in the world about the legitimacy and fairness of their elections. Now, we have an incumbent President who is so fearful of the results that he places one of his largest donors in charge of our United States Postal Service to tear it apart three months before the election — I mean just boldly dismantling the best postal service in the world!

I was so po'd with each new sledgehammer blow, I couldn't contain my anger towards these two individuals.

I was already disgusted that Congress took their leave of D.C. without a resolution on the next pandemic relief package.

This was just the cherry on top.

We work too hard to maintain the sanctity of the mail and the respect of the American people, to let this Johnny-come-lately, flush our reputation down the sewer.

Every National Convention there are representatives from UNI (the International Postal Union), who have praised us as the best, cheapest, most reliable postal service in the world.

That will no longer be the case when he who no longer brings De Joy, gets done dismantling 245 years of delivering to every address in this land.

Article courtesy of the Columbus, Ohio
NALC Branch 78 September 2020
Buckeye Branch 78 Bulletin

AN OPEN LETTER TO USPS POSTMASTER GENERAL LOUIS DEJOY

by C. J. Mahovic, A Proud and Very Concerned member of NALC Branch 2008

Mr. DeJoy:

Congratulations on your appointment as Postmaster General of the United States Postal **SERVICE**.

Based on your actions to date, you seem to be of a mind that you are PMG of the United States Post Office **INCORPORATED**.

You are a logistics expert; you look at computer printouts and reports and punch buttons on a keyboard and consider your job done. Then you step away from your desk, go a few steps to the bathroom. To get some coffee, you proceed to the elevator, go down to the cafeteria. get a nosh and coffee, sitting in a climate-controlled area enjoying your snack. A job well done!

You have done no such thing! You've only added to the quagmire of problems besetting the USPS. The very first item you need to address is the two-ton gorilla in the room: The 2006 law passed by Congress to pre-fund 75 years of retiree health benefits. That money intended to be set aside for future post office retirees was instead diverted to pay down the national debt. No other private enterprise or federal agency is required to pre-fund retiree health benefits. This mandate is responsible for all of the USPS financial losses since 2013. What have you done to fix this?

Where were **YOU** on 9/12? Were you on the street delivering mail, seeing the look of relief and reassurance on people's faces, that the United States was not on its knees due to an attack?

Have **YOU** walked the sorting floor to see how mail is processed? Have **YOU** personally talked to the people moving the mail? It is said, "If **YOU** don't have **YOUR** hands on the mail **YOU** are non-productive." Have **YOU** delivered mail? If you had, you might know a few things...

In Office: Coming in in the morning and standing at a mail case, throwing mail into the proper slots for correct delivery. The raw mail is delivered to you sorted by route in two-foot trays with over 200 individual pieces of mail. It takes a steep learning curve to master the sequence of delivery on a route. It is not an easy nor short process. All this mail has to be pulled down and placed back into the trays that are loaded into gurneys along with the trays of DPS mail (machine-sorted mail) plus trays of larger mail (magazines, large business envelopes). On certain days of the week, trays of business fliers will be added to the mix, the sales brochures that most folks just toss (by some accounts approximately 30% of postal revenue). Packages have to be lined out for sequence of delivery. Any accountable items have to be signed for and incorporated in the mail stream.

NOTICE: ALL Express Mail has to be delivered within a time window **or** the mail charge is refunded to the customer. (This may require a deviation of route delivery to accomplish).

Usually business routes are set up to have delivery before 1 p.m. so any receipts can be made to the banks before daily statement cut-off time (usually 3 p.m.). Business cash flow (in a sense the USPS is an economic partner of **EVERY** business in America) has to be maintained on a **daily** basis to insure financial viability. As a PMG, you should realize this and **do whatever YOU can** to make sure America prospers!

On the route: Weather: steamy hot or freezing cold, the mail goes through. Count on needing a restroom when you're at least a mile away from one — especially on a walking route! The postal delivery vans (LLVS) are not air-conditioned. **Gorilla Alert #2:** The LLVS (Long Life Vehicles) are past their planned life span and new delivery vehicles are needed as the maintenance costs are rising on these older vehicles.

But you knew all this when you curtailed machine mail sorting which added to the manual in-office sorting at the delivery case, right? Manual sorting is much slower than machine sorting, and adds to delivery cost and mail delay. No wonder you are being tagged, "**LOUIE DELAY**".

Logistic experts like you have surely cut costs. **THAT is why so many jobs and industries went offshore.** By cutting services and delaying delivery times. **YOU** do not expand **OUR** customer base — you lose it!! Would you tell the firemen fighting to save your home that they are now on overtime and to clock out? How about the ER staff working to save their patient — your loved one: "Drop everything, you're on overtime, go clock out!" Maybe you do not see the **ESSENTIAL** daily and timely delivery service of medical supplies and medications, packages, and yes, **the mail**. The mail is the Right of **EVERY** American (even you) to access a public service of communication unfettered by profit-driven enterprises or by those who look to achieve some personal gain at the expense of the citizens of our great country.

Public service is defined as "seeking the common good, not personal gain."

WHO ARE YOU? LOUIS DEJOY, POSTMASTER GENERAL; OR, "LOUIE DELAY", POLITICAL HACK?

This excellent on-point message is courtesy of the Tarpon Springs, Florida NALC Branch 2008 September 2020 Suncoast Letter Carrier's Update



Politics Has ALWAYS Been a Part of Your Life as a Federal/Postal Employee — PART II

By Eric Ellis, CSALC District 4 Officer

Peanuts fans will surely remember when Lucy Brown would hold a football in place for Charlie to kick — only to pull it away when Charlie stepped in and he would fall on his back.

To me, such an episode illustrates broken promises.

We've all been told we would get something only to be left hanging when the other party broke their word. In some cases, such occurrences mean little. *In other cases, they mean a lot.*

What I have in mind is when you pay into a retirement system only to be told later that your pension is to be cut by a third or even eliminated; because, among other reasons, YOUR benefits were thought to be overly generous.

Does this happen? Consider the following.

Before I start: **A WARNING.** When a politician says he or she wants to “reform” an entitlement or pension program, what does that mean? A hint: **YOUR** wallet is about to get thinner.

In the early 1980s, politicians “reformed” Social Security.

If you were under the Civil Service Retirement System at the time, you might have asked yourself, “Well, I don’t pay into Social Security under CSRS, so what does that have to do with me?”

Well, if you earned enough credits to qualify for an annuity under Social Security, guess what? Under the Windfall Elimination Provision (WEP), that Social Security payment would be potentially halved, give or take ten or more percentage points.

Case in point: My father worked 31 years under CSRS, and worked another seventeen under jobs in which he paid into Social Security.

Did he receive the Social Security annuity he would have received before the WEP became effective? **Hell no!**

Basically, the reformers said my father was “double-dipping” — that he wasn’t entitled to the full amount of his Social Security annuity because he earned a pension under CSRS. He told me they took roughly half his earned Social Security annuity away from him.

And the carnage doesn’t end there...

Spouses, widows and widowers took a financial hit under the Government Pension Offset (GPO). If you receive a pension under CSRS *and* receive a Social Security benefit from your deceased spouse, well, guess what? *Your spousal benefit probably got reduced by as much as two-thirds, if it wasn’t totally eliminated altogether.*

Is that fair? I don’t think it is.

Again, getting back to the meaning of the word “reform”. When Congress and

President Ronald Reagan “reformed” Social Security in the early 1980s, they made sure that recipients in many cases received less, or nothing at all.

And when it came to the creation of the Federal Employees Retirement System (FERS) in which the reformers mandated that new employees would pay into Social Security; again, the idea was entitlement slashing.

Pensioners under this new system would receive less of a pension **AND** the full age for full benefits under Social Security would be raised!

(I’ll cover this in my next article.)

NALC President Vincent Sombrotto was not pleased with this and he led demonstrations against the creation of FERS. If you work for thirty years under CSRS you can live under its defined pension. Try doing the same under FERS.

Vince was right!

For more information about the WEP and GPO, see <https://www.ssa.gov/pubs/EN-05-10045.pdf> and <https://www.ssa.gov/pubs/EN-05-10007.pdf>

I will repeat this mantra again and again.

You may not be interested in politics, but politicians are interested in you.

And in the case of **YOUR** benefits, they are **NOT** interested in making them better. (My father would roll over in his grave if I didn’t mention **THAT!**)

In my next article, I will discuss how politics affects the lives of those hired under the Federal Employees Retirement System as career employees prior to 2013.

The CSALC endorses Biden/Harris for President; locally, Jim Costa (CD-16), TJ Cox (CD-21) and Phil Arballo (CD-22). We also support Carol Mills (Trustee, Fresno Unified School Board Area 5)

ANOTHER PERSPECTIVE by Jerry Elliott, NALC Branch 148

“...we all learned from author Bob Woodward that Trump received a top-secret briefing at the White House concerning the pending Covid-19 pandemic on 1/28/20. On 2/7/20, Trump told Woodward that the virus was airborne and five times more serious than the flu. Trump said it was, “highly contagious” and “deadly” and that it affected both the elderly and the younger people as well.

Trump then proceeded to **KNOWINGLY LIE** to **ALL** the American people — he withheld the **TRUTH** about Covid-19!

He also proceeded to tell Woodward about a new top-secret nuclear weapons system the U.S. had developed. Oops! (Loose lips sink ships!) [A patriotic truism for Americans during WWII not adhered to now by CIC?].”

This information presented for your consideration is an excerpt from a much longer article which was originally published in the Akron, Ohio NALC Branch 148 October 2020 *RUBBER CITY LETTER CARRIER*

**IN TIME OF UNREST,
A LITTLE HUMOR
CAN BE CALMING**

My doctor says, “Don’t worry about the Bird Flu, It’s Tweetable!”

Sign in Urologist’s office: “Urine In Good Hands”

My doctor’s office has two doctors on call at all times,
“Is that a pair a docs?”

What idiot calls it a VET, instead of a Dogtor?

What do ghosts serve for dessert? I Scream.

I remember when Halloween was the scariest night of the year.
Now it’s Election Night!

I was born to be a pessimist! My blood type is “B Negative”.

A clean house is a sign of a broken computer.

I can totally keep secrets, It’s the people I tell who can’t!

For maximum attention, nothing beats a good mistake.

Apparently, I snore so loud, it scares everyone
in the car I’m driving.

MARK RAMIREZ
(Retired Letter Carrier)
The Golden Empire Branch 782

“OuT tHeRe”



“OuT tHeRe”



Congratulations Cindy Flores!!!

2/28/1987 — 9/25/2020**

**Last Punch Last Work Day

When Basil asked me to tell my fellow Carriers what this job has meant to me, I cannot express it without praising God!

I look way back at myself as a young woman in the Navy for four years — in a mentally, physically and emotionally abusive marriage. I saw no future for myself. In an attempt to see clear, I walked into a Christian counselor's office at 1 pm some 38 years ago and heard the words "Seek ye first the kingdom of God and His righteousness and all these things shall be added unto you". It was a Bible verse I learned as a child so I thought nothing of it.

When I got home that day, my mother called from 250 miles away and told me — *that while she was again praying about my situation in earnest* — God gave her a verse and stressed that she should tell me the verse and share with me the time she received it.

It was the same Bible verse given to us at 1 pm.

She had my attention. More importantly, God had my attention. No longer was I going to live my life on *my* terms that did not work for me; but, I was going to seek Him first. My prayer life went from once in a while to every day, and even several times a day. I knew then, and I know now, that He sees and He listens.

I knew I made a mess of my life and over time, God started to clear that up but He did not work out that marriage, because He needs cooperation from both parties for that. He did show me to this incredible job and wonderful people that are the hardest workers I ever knew, apart from my Dad who was a heavy duty mechanic at Shell Oil for 37 years. He has the bad back and knees to prove it!

Anyway I digress...

I heard laughter nearly every morning at work; and, although we could fight with each other, *there is and always has been love!* I have friends forever in my "break time girls"; there were vacations and out of town shopping trips; weddings, graduations and drinks



after work to laugh some more!! We have giggled, fought and prayed together like true sisters. CeCe, Elsie, Sharold, Alma, and Sheila are just a few of my special

relationships I cherish!! Too many wonderful people to name!

What got us through? I have learned over the years that forgiveness is KEY!! It took me awhile to figure out my grudges are stupid and meaningless. *And I remembered how much God loves me and forgives me my MANY failings, so I love everyone even if we get on each others nerves.*

I hope you all can forgive my own bungling through... I am always in need of grace as I am hopelessly messy as a person; but, honestly, I really do want to be better.



Speaking of my nerves: My favorite human in the universe — one James P. Flores who has been my co-worker since 1987 — started off by insulting me with sarcasm on USPS Day One. I should have known God chose him for me! God has a sense of humor, you see. Anyway, we remembered each other from Jr. High. His picture was circled in my yearbook.

He said later, after we married, that he thought of me two weeks before I was hired at the old PO and wondered about what I was doing. Well, the rest is history. We are pushing on our 30th year together, raised 2 kids and are enjoying seeing them raise their own children.

My whole message here is: "NEVER despair!" I have had many many hard times since I first put into practice, "Seek God first." And, I've learned to **KNOW** He will work it out.

I pray a LOT for my loved ones and daily. Also, prior to work, you all often were mentioned in my prayers, as I want you to have His favor. My wish for all of you in the future is that you will all pray



for each other often. Forgive all and love each other just... **BECAUSE. EVERYONE HAS VALUE.**

You are all fortunate enough to be of service to your community, and *they* need your smiles and your grace extended to them on their bad days. Everyone has something great that can be said about them.

If you think about it, we *all* could use more positive thoughts and kindness! This job is the perfect opportunity to turn someone's day around.

Thank you for indulging me here. It has been an honor to work alongside you. I hope that, when you feel like you are without hope, you remember my story and remember it can be your story, too.

You have hope! He is just a prayer away and He is whispering to you in a still small voice... Listen closely. They are the most important words of your life!

CINDY FLORES

** (On Annual Leave until my last day: October 28, 2020)

Retirement and the Tax Bracket

Presented by Bobby Martin, Carrier Zone 11

Resource: Article "How to Determine Your Tax Bracket at Retirement", Bing Images

I hope that everyone is doing well and maintaining during these trying times. What I wanted to educate on with this article is how taxes will impact you and your retirement. I have placed two tables, each showing the tax table based on income. One thing that was always mentioned was you should fall a bracket when you retire. Looking at the tables maybe that is not so true anymore. Outside of reducing debt, knowing how your retirement is going to be taxed is important.



With that being said, below shows how certain parts of your retirement can be touched by taxes:

Retirement Accounts

Pensions and other retirement plans typically comprise a big part of your retirement income. Pensions, traditional 401(k) plans and traditional IRAs are typically tax-deferred plans, meaning that those distributions count as part of your taxable income during retirement. For example, if you expect to withdraw \$50,000 per year, that's \$50,000 of taxable income that boosts your tax rate. However, Roth accounts, including Roth 401(k)s and Roth IRAs, allow you to take all your money out tax-free, which means the withdrawals won't be part of your taxable income.

Investment Income

Investment income not in retirement accounts is taxed differently than the money that you withdraw from your retirement plans. As of 2013, if you are making money from qualified dividends or long-term capital gains, your income is taxed at a lower tax rate than your ordinary income. Usually, dividends are qualified if you have owned the stock for at least 61 days during the 121-day period starting 60 days before the ex-dividend date. Long-term capital gains refer to profits you make from selling investments you have held for more than one year.

Social Security Income

Social Security benefits can also account for a big part of your post-retirement income, but the tax rules for the income are a bit complicated. Basically, the higher your total income, the higher the portion of your benefits that are taxed. As of 2013, no more than 85 percent of your benefits are taxable, no matter how high your income. The portion of your Social Security benefits that count as taxable income are taxed at your ordinary income tax rate.

Unpredictable Tax Rates

As of 2013, the ordinary income tax rates range from 0 percent to 39.6 percent and the long-term capital gains rates range from 0 percent to 20 percent. Of course, all of this is based on current income tax law, which can change at any time. For example, if Congress decides to raise tax rates, you might find yourself in a higher income tax bracket at retirement, even though you have less taxable income than you do today. Conversely, if tax rates fall, you could be paying less at retirement than you do now. Similarly, if the long-term capital gains rates were raised or eliminated, that would also throw a wrench in your estimations.

I hope this shines a light on your retirement and the plan to maximize it. Continue to educate yourself as you get closer to it. Stay safe always!

Shamelessly lifted from the Fresno, California October 2020 NALC Branch 231 POSTMAN'S VIEW. Thank Yur, Editor Gary Bottoms!!!

Bakersfield Seniority List early in 1983

FULL-TIME REGULARS

Tesch, F. W. 08/01/49
 Reddy, J. Jr. 02/01/52
 Perkins, J. H. 08/01/53
 Gonzales, M. 03/16/54
 Evans, P. R. 05/16/55
 Pettus, R. K. 05/16/55
 Hail, B. E. 05/16/55
 Suniga, R. J. 05/16/55
 Gomez, D. D. 05/16/55
 Jackson, V. 09/16/55
 Gomez, S. M. 09/16/55
 Munoz, M. V. 11/16/55
 McKinley, J. T. 07/14/56
 Estrada, M. J. 07/28/56
 Johnson, O. W. 10/20/56
 Wright, G. C. 01/29/57
 Lane, W. L. 05/04/57
 Corella, A. L. 06/04/57
 Escalera, E. G. 07/27/57
 Gonzales, J. A. 08/14/57
 Huggins, R. 12/28/57
 Avalos, J. V. 02/22/58
 Aguilar, B. G. 02/22/58
 Gonzalez, M. V. 08/09/58
 McCoy, W. C. 11/15/58
 Villagomez, M.J. 11/29/58
 Magana, A. R. 02/21/59
 Garcia, A. 09/23/59
 Marchard, W.C. 09/25/59
 Hull, R. L. 11/28/59
 Tillett, J. R. 02/27/60
 Eton, M. J. 09/03/60
 Chavez, R. A. 10/15/60
 Robison, D. R. 04/09/62
 Altman, H. R. 07/30/62
 Price, L. W. 11/01/62
 Oscars, D. G. 05/02/63
 Pimienta, C. J. 09/05/63
 Riley, T. Jr. 09/10/63
 Ruiz, H. Jr. 10/12/63
 Maltone, F. D. 09/12/64
 Fehdraw, C. R. 10/05/64
 Neal, L. L. 11/16/64
 Jennings, E. L. 04/07/65
 Shaw, P. G. 07/03/65
 Ewings, J. L. 09/10/65
 Kidwell, H. D. 09/11/65
 Gregory, R. F. 09/25/65
 Colbert, C. L. 10/14/65
 Alexander, P. M. 10/23/65
 Aros, R. 03/12/66
 Horton, H. F. 05/21/66
 Rogers, H. J. 05/21/66
 White, G. G. 08/08/66
 Davin, M. J. 08/13/66
 Munoz, E. 08/22/66
 Golden, E. 09/21/66
 Watt, R. M. 11/17/66

Clark, F. L. 01/10/67
 Trombetta, P. R. 02/21/67
 Berna, B. 02/25/67
 Johnston, G. R. 02/25/67
 Acedo, F. Jr. 04/04/67
 Lewis, J. 06/20/67
 Shropshire, J. A. 06/22/67
 Santa Cruz, J. 07/14/67
 Chavez, A. 08/04/67
 Diaz, F. M. 08/16/67
 Collaso, E. L. 08/22/67
 King, L. E. 09/23/67
 Perez, G. 10/13/67
 Nieto, S. P. 10/17/67
 Huston, R. R. 10/18/67
 Brady, R. E. Jr. 10/21/67
 Sudsbury, J. E. 12/16/67
 Kuykendall, A.K. 02/28/68
 Gallegos, B. S. 03/09/68
 Scroggins, V. R. 03/12/68
 LaBarge, A. 05/20/68
 Dang, A. A. 06/15/68
 Martinez, A. 11/07/68
 Schooley, K. R. 11/16/68
 Wonderly, J. C. 11/30/68
 White, C. H. 02/24/69
 Siefert, W. H. Jr. 04/23/69
 Chavez, G. M. 06/17/69
 Cameron, M. L. 08/23/69
 Thomasy, F. A. 09/06/69
 Alexander, W. L. 11/29/69
 Combs, E. E. 12/23/69
 Alvarez, A. H. 01/19/70
 Jones, C. R. 01/19/70
 Newton, M. 01/26/70
 Lowe, L. J. 03/06/70
 Garvin, L. 04/18/70
 Springman, A. R. 04/27/70
 Rodriguez, R. N. 09/05/70
 Muniz, M. 09/29/70
 Morgan, B. E. 10/03/70
 Herrera, R. M. 10/26/70
 Howlett, J. A. 10/31/70
 McKenzie, B. M. 10/31/70
 Abelia, C. R. 04/17/71
 Gandara, J. 04/17/71
 Sesmas, T. 07/21/71
 Lujan, D. G. 08/62/71
 Alonso, R. M. 09/04/71
 Plummer, R. L. 11/29/71
 Zabala, P. M. 11/29/71
 Trice, J. W. Jr. 12/29/71
 Martinez, T. D. 02/05/72
 McKinney, U. Jr. 09/16/72
 Schroeder, D.R. 01/06/73
 Wiles, M. A. 04/25/73
 Krause, P. L. 04/26/73
 Morain, B. L. 05/23/73
 Ochoa, G. R. 06/15/73
 Towery, M. G. 07/20/73

Hall, M. R. 06/22/74
 Sutton, C. L. Jr. 08/14/74
 McCarthy, P. F. 03/29/75
 King, L. K. 12/07/76
 Webb, L. C. 10/31/77
 Edwards, P. W. 11/05/77
 Alexander, B. L. 02/13/78
 Long, T. L. 03/06/78
 Vasquez, F. 03/06/78
 Hernandez, P. 05/01/78
 Franey, R. T. 05/01/78
 Arbolante, T. 05/01/78
 Cooper, C. D. 05/01/78
 Pierce, R. M. 05/08/78
 Lopez, R. A. 05/08/78
 Arredondo, G.N. 05/08/78
 Ritchie, L. N. 05/08/78
 LaForce, M. A. 05/08/78
 Freeman, M. A. 05/08/78
 Booker, L. D. 07/24/78
 Aylward, J. S. 07/24/78
 Martinez, F. J. 07/24/78
 Coday, C. L. 07/24/78
 Coodey, T. L. 07/24/78
 Bryant, M. A. 07/24/78
 Trevino, R. G. 07/24/78
 Dugan, M. A. 07/24/78
 Morales, S. M. 07/24/78
 Jones, G. P. 07/31/78
**** Courson, R. N. 07/31/78**
 Buscher, M. A. 07/31/78
 Gaona, D. A. 07/31/78
 Diffie, W. B. Jr. 07/31/78
 Herrera, T. C. 07/31/78
 Russell, P. M. 08/07/78
 McMahan, P. A. 08/14/78
 Harbour, A. E. 08/14/78
 Newlen, L. E. 09/18/78
 Batchelder, B. R. 10/16/78
 Nietzel, C. M. 10/16/78
 Webb, S. E. 11/06/78
 Gardner, R. D. 11/06/78
 Shaw, C. 11/20/78
 Hicks, C. A. 11/20/78
 Sutton, M. J. 11/20/78
 Wilkinson, D. L. 11/20/78
 Baxter, J. M. 11/27/78
 Franey, A. K. 11/27/78
 Garcia, M. O. 11/27/78
 Romero, M. A. 11/27/78
 Carter, M. S. 11/27/78
 Lobre, A. R. 09/22/79
 Gateb, F. B. 09/22/79
 Guerra, E. 10/05/79
 Zuniga, B. R. 10/05/79
 Conner, A. R. 10/05/79
 Ward, C. 01/12/80
 Porter, T. G. 01/14/80
 Valdez, J. 04/05/80
 O'Neal, D. G. 05/05/80

Park, C. M. V 06/13/80
 Cruz, R. 06/13/80
 Mitchell, R. A. 07/10/80
 Trujillo, A. S. 07/12/80
 Curtis, W. H. 07/28/80
 Castanon, I. 09/04/80
 Breeding, L. A. 10/01/80
 Soler, D. K. 10/01/80
 Biggar, M. C. 10/01/80
 Roberson, J. L. 10/31/80
 Galley, K. D. 11/28/80
 Turner, D. R. 11/28/80
 Polin, R. A. 11/28/80
 Metry, E. F. 12/26/80
 Lenhart, R. W. 03/30/81
 Voth, A. D. 03/30/81
 Cepeda, A. P. 03/30/81
 Goulart, P. A. 03/30/81
 Rugnao, J. D. 03/30/81
 Lobre, S. J. 04/04/81
 Garrett, B. M. 04/06/81
 Nelson, R. C. 04/06/81
 Fanum, J. T. 04/20/81
 Hammer, L. G. 04/20/81
 Hancock, P. A. 04/20/81
 Ramirez, F. 04/20/81
 Hemingway, G.W. 04/20/81
 Cavanagh, A. 04/27/81
 Mills, H. R. 08/03/81
 Ramirez, N. 08/03/81

PART-TIME FLEXIBLES

Nichols, B. L. 08/10/81
 Diaz, D. M. 08/10/81
 Honeycutt, S. M. 08/10/81
 Thomas, W. R. 08/10/81
 Montgomery, A. 08/10/81
 Siamis, J. R. 08/10/81
 Linenberger, S.R. 09/08/81
 Clemons, L. D. 09/08/81
 Morgan, F. G. 10/13/81
 Wilder, D. J. 10/26/81
 Henson, K. D. 11/09/81
 Varela, J. M. 11/09/81
 Gifford, E. 03/20/82
 Lavoie, J. W. Jr. 05/01/82
 Rinehart, B. 06/12/82
 Gerdes, R. A. 07/06/82
 Miles, N. 07/19/82
 Sparks, R. D. 09/27/82
 Courson, T. 09/27/82
 Lindsay, T. R. 10/12/82
 Arambula, F. A. 10/30/82
 Leitko, R. C. 01/17/83
 Ternnkvist, K.B. 01/31/83
 Lanza, T. A. 01/31/83

**** #1 Senior Carrier
 October 2020**

How many of the folks on this list are on the most current seniority list?

from the editor-guy

Last month, I mentioned retired Letter Carrier Frank Tesch and said that I would try to have something more about him for the July newsletter.

When I started out as a mailman, Frank had already accumulated over thirty years carrying mail in Bakersfield. At that point, I was oblivious to what that meant.

Now, with almost thirty-two years of doing the same thing, I have a little more understanding of what he was dealing with when I first started working. Each morning, when I stand there in line waiting to clock-on, I listen to the various conversations going on around me and I get to thinking that there is a “sameness” to the routine that I’ve chosen to participate in.

And, I chuckle. Frank didn’t probably think I would stay around very long.

Hi Basil,

Thank you for the June newsletter. We were on vacation the past couple of weeks in & out a lot. No problem mentioning Dad for your July newsletter. He was always very proud of his military service and career with the PO.

He joined the Army in 1941 and was stationed in Hawaii at the Schofield Barracks on December 7th, 1941.

Below is a quote from the 25th Infantry’s history page that describes much of what I recall him talking about. (<http://www.25idl.army.mil/history.html>)

“After the Japanese air attack on Schofield Barracks, 7 December 1941, the 25th Infantry Division moved to beach positions for the defense of Honolulu and Ewa Point. Following intensive training, the 25th began moving to Guadalcanal, 25 November 1942, to relieve Marines near Henderson Field. First elements landed near the Tenaru River, 17 December 1942, and entered combat, 10 January 1943, participating in the seizure of Kokumbona and the reduction of the Mount Austen Pocket in some of the bitterest fighting of the Pacific campaign. The threat of large enemy attacks caused a temporary withdrawal, but Division elements under XIV Corps control relieved the 147th Infantry and took over the advance on Cape Esperance. The junction of these elements with Americal Division forces near the cape, 5 February 1943, ended organized enemy resistance.

A period of garrison duty followed, ending 21 July: On that date, advance elements debarked on Munda, New Georgia. The 35th Infantry, under the Northern Landing Force, took part in the capture of Vella Lavella, 15 August to 15 September 1943. Meanwhile, other elements landed on New Georgia, took Zieta, marched through jungle mud for 19 days, and captured Bairoko Harbor, winning the island. Elements cleared Arundel Island, 24 September 1943, and Kolombangara Island with its important Vila Airport, 6 October. Organized resistance on New Georgia ended, 25 August, and the division moved to New Zealand for rest and training, last elements arriving on 5 December. The 25th was transferred to New Caledonia, 3 February-14 March 1944, for continued training.

The division landed in the San Fabian area of Luzon, 11 January 1945, to enter the struggle for the liberation of the Philippines. It drove across the Luzon Central Plain, meeting the enemy at Binalonan, 17 January. Moving through the rice paddies, the 25th occupied Umingan, Lupao, and San Jose and destroyed a great part of the Japanese armor on Luzon. On 21 February, the division began operations in the Caraballo Mountains. It fought its way along Highway No. 5, taking Digdig, Putlan, and Kapintalan against fierce enemy counterattacks and took Balete Pass, 13 May, and opened the gateway to the Cagayan Valley, 27 May, with the capture of Santa Fe. Until 30 June, when the division was relieved, it carried out mopping-up activities. On 1 July, the division moved to Tarlac for training, leaving for Japan, 20 September.”

Frank and Ruth were married in their home state—Wisconsin—before moving for a short time to Phoenix, Arizona and then to Bakersfield. From 1947 to 1951 they had three children, David, Anthony and myself (in that order). Before joining the PO, he had a brief career with Bakersfield law enforcement. My Mother died in September 2008. They were married over 60 years.

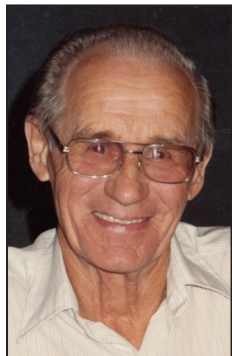
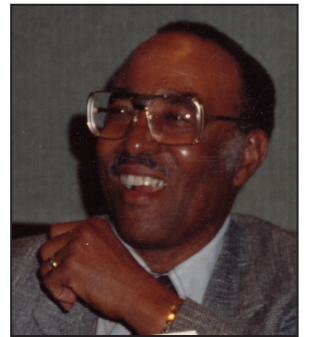
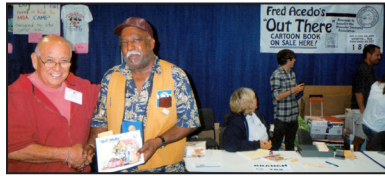
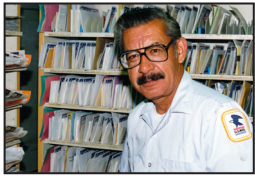
Hope this gives you some information to use if needed.

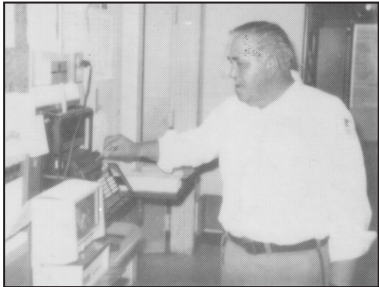
Mike & Pam Tesch

P.S. Forgot one thing. My Dad received a Bronze Star for action in the Solomon Islands I believe. Will try to get more/correct information for you.

This is a reprint of a page from the July 2011 Branch 782 newsletter. It was part of a two-page feature about long-time Retiree Frank Tesch who was the senior Letter Carrier in Bakersfield in 1983. Old-timers may remember some names on page 12.

Guadalupe Arredondo, Joanne Rowles and Basil Zuniga donated some old pix for this newsletter...





Have you ever wondered why the Branch newsletter is called the *E.A. BAKER UNION UPDATE*? (No. It has nothing to do with the name of the city of Bakersfield!)

E.A. Baker was one of those individuals who had an impact on many of us who knew him here in Bakersfield. We knew him by many names: “The Reverend”, “Rev. Ed”, and “Hang Around Ed”. A former Postmaster – Leroy Brewer – paid Ed one of his biggest compliments when he called him “18 & 8” at one of the Post Office picnics. And you can make book on the fact that Ed *had* earned THAT title!

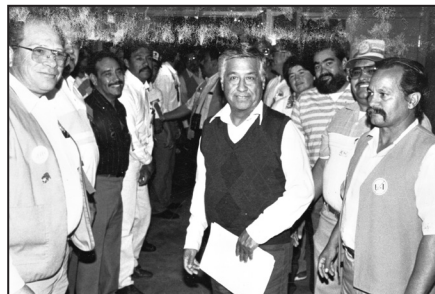
Then – as now – managers seemed to enjoy attempts to violate provisions of the National Agreement. Ed Baker would catch them at it, and all he would say would be, “It’s in The Book...” Many times, the supervisor would walk away red-faced and the Rev. Ed would say, “You don’t have the sense God promised a door knob!”

One of Ed’s desires was to be a brushfire fighter to protect his gardens; another, a car salesman impersonating Junior Samples Hee-Haw B-R-5-4-9! He was a gut busting laugh, and all those Carriers who knew him will NEVER forget him. That goes for management, also.

His lovely wife, Sandy, and son Jason still reside in Bakersfield and I’m sure that E.A. Baker is still missed by them. We also have that empty feeling. And, this special Branch 782 Centennial Issue is dedicated to his memory.

JOHN ROSS
(Now-deceased Branch 782 Member)

This little blurb was reprinted from the February 2001 Special Centennial issue of the NALC Branch 782 *E.A. BAKER UNION UPDATE*



NEWSFLASH: As the years go by, people are going to forget your names just like names of these folks have been.

Who's Really to Blame for Postal Service Ills??

By John Spring, Retired Carrier
NALC Branch 44

The US Postal Service is in the news a lot, lately. I see a lot of misinformation falsely explaining the financial predicament we are currently in. The experiences I share come from my 36 year career as a Letter Carrier.

First, some background. No, I'm not going to speak about mail delivery being in the Constitution (it is); or that Benjamin Franklin founded the Postal Service. (He did). The background I want to talk about is located in its name: **The United States Postal Service.**

Notice the last word. It was *never* meant to make money, but was a **SERVICE** to the public. Until 2006, the goal of the USPS was to break even, and they were quite successful at it.

In practice, every few years this would result in a penny or so increase in the price of stamps due to increased operating costs. The Post Office would then make money for a year or two; then, break even for a year or two; and, then start losing money again. Right up until 2006, this cycle was pretty consistent. All done with **NO** taxpayer funds.

From 2004, through 2006, the Post Office was profitable for three years in a row. President Bush and Postmaster General Potter decided to require the Postal Service to completely **pre-fund** retiree health benefits **75 years into the future**, resulting in a Congressional surcharge of **\$5.5 Billion** (!) paid YEARLY for 10 years.

For context, the profit of the USPS was 3 billion in 2004.

During the final 2 years of the Bush administration, the country fell into a deep recession, continuing into the Obama administration, causing the Dow Jones to drop from 13,000 to under 7,000.

Nobody did well around 2008. Not even the Post Office. Even with the steep decline in revenues caused by the recession, the USPS still had to pay the mandated **\$5.5Billion** a year. This caused problems that persist *even to this day.*

THIS MONEY WAS TO FULLY FUND RETIREES' HEALTH CARE FOR THE NEXT 75 YEARS.

Was there a fund set aside to protect this money? **OF COURSE NOT.** Remember the "Social Security Locked Box" that couldn't be touched? How did **THAT** work out?

Well, **THAT** money was put into the General Fund so Congress could spend it however **THEY** wanted. Big surprise.

So, while you hear these "holier than thou" politicians talking about how poorly run the Postal Service is, **PLEASE** remember things were running exactly how a public service should work — *right up until Congress and the GW Bush administration got their hands on it.*

Remember the times. The GOP had decided that there wasn't any more money available due to deficit concerns *which had been exacerbated by tax cuts.* **Yet, their greed forced them to find more money, despite their pledges for fiscal austerity.**

By putting the \$5.5B in the general fund, they were now free to spend billions for re-election and pet projects every year!

Even when the Postal Service couldn't make the required payments, Congress spent it anyway, rationalizing it by saying USPS would pay it back eventually.

This caused two things to happen: First, was the ability to continue spending non-existent money; and secondly, it made Congress hesitant to address the situation, as this would take their accumulated **\$55 Billion** slush fund off the Federal books.

Let's look at what this really is: While Congressional Republicans continue — even today to falsely gnash their teeth and cry over "Another Government Bailout" — **the TRUTH is actually just the opposite.** That **\$5.5 Billion** paid yearly to fund health care, was actually subsidizing Congress to the tune of **\$55 Billion** over the course of 10 years (even when USPS couldn't pay it).

With very little fanfare, postal employees continue doing their jobs, *even with COVID sickening thousands of them — and more than a few dying.* **WE** continue delivering medicine to Vets and Seniors and parcels to everyone else that shops online!

So, I guess the question becomes, "**Who is to blame for this fiasco we find ourselves in?**"

Donald Trump just hired Louis DeJoy as the new Postmaster General. He was a major donor in Trump's 2016 campaign. **He also holds extensive stock in our competitors UPS and FedEx.**

As we speak, these two people are both actively dismantling the Postal Service on the pretense of fraudulent mail-in balloting. **Even though his mail fraud committee came up empty after the 2016 election, Trump is trying that same lie again.**

He has stated if everyone voted by mail, he would get beat. So, he has decided destroying an American institution is worth it to get re-elected. At this point, what's a little more dishonesty?

Who would have ever thought our government could act like this? Ben Franklin is rolling over in his grave...

This article which is courtesy of the NALC Branch 44 Manchester, New Hampshire August 2020 44 Magnum

Postal Service at Center of Battle for Fair Elections

By Jamie Partridge, NALC Branch 82 Retiree and Extremely Active Activist

As I write this article at the B-Mike deadline, the top headline and subheads of the Saturday, August 15th New York Times laid out the news: "Post Office says ballots may fail to arrive in time. Every state is warned. Slowdown fuels charges Trump is attempting to hinder voting." The front-page headline of the Sunday, August 16th Oregonian screams "Leaders blast postal changes" (referencing Oregon Senators Wyden and Merkley). The Senators are calling on Governor Kate Brown to mobilize the National Guard to move the election mail (umm...that worked well during the 1970 postal strike!). And, more appropriately, they are calling for Postmaster General Louis DeJoy to resign or be fired.

New directives coming from the recently appointed PMG seem to arrive every week. First and most concerning was the directive for all trucks to leave the plant and the stations "on time." And that letter carriers should keep to a "strict schedule." With understaffing at the Processing and Distribution Centers (ours is by the Portland airport), trucks have been leaving even if all the day's mail isn't ready. Clerks have been disciplined for holding the trucks for even one minute, according to Larry Guarnero, APWU shop steward at the Portland plant. Guarnero reports multiple instances of whole zip codes of DPS staying at the plant an extra day because they didn't "make the truck."

Then at understaffed stations, carriers are directed to leave, even without all the day's mail. As NALC President Rolando recently wrote, "...letter carriers have become angry, frustrated, and embarrassed by various USPS management initiatives that are now resulting in delayed mail and undelivered routes in many areas of the country."

And the directives keep coming...the Early to Street Afternoon Sortation (ESAS) pilot, reduction of letter carrier casing equipment, removal of Delivery Bar Code Sorting machines at the plants, removal of blue collection boxes, reduction of retail hours at many post offices, the restructuring of seven districts into four and the "Friday night massacre" of the entire upper management team. All these initiatives lead to delay and degradation of the service.

Meanwhile, the USPS Office of the Inspector General has responded to a growing discontent in Congress by agreeing to investigate PMG DeJoy's conflicts of interest - he owns tens of millions of dollars of stock in USPS competitors and contractors. Plus, he is a massive contributor to the Republican National Committee which is suing at least twenty states for expanding absentee voting. DeJoy was

grilled by the House Government Oversight Committee on August 24th.

On August 13th, Trump admitted that he was refusing to allow (through the threat of a veto) the needed \$25 billion to fund the Postal Service in order to prevent widespread mail-in voting come November. Although Congress recessed August 14th until after Labor Day and may not appropriate the \$25 billion (but keep calling Congress to demand it!), the USPS certainly has the staffing to handle a 1-2% increase in mail volume that results from mail-in ballots. The problem will be delay of the mail and inadequate preparation by elections officials in those states where they will experience a huge surge in absentee ballots due to citizens' aversion to in-person voting during the pandemic.

Many of us have friends, family, and customers asking what they can do to help save the postal service. Individuals experiencing mail delay should contact the USPS Inspector General (bit.ly/USPScomplaint), their Congressperson (202-224-3121, the Capitol switchboard) and sign the petition (bit.ly/MailDelay). Those who want to get involved in national or local actions to put pressure on Congress, the Board of Governors and the Postmaster General, can visit the facebook pages: Save Our Postal Service and Portland Communities and Postal Workers United (CPWU) or email cpwunited1@gmail.com.

Many creative actions have popped up in communities around the country- writing letters to the editor, putting up window signs, helping to pass a City Council resolution, reaching out to veterans, small business, rural, senior or faith-based groups. Voter right organizations, such as the NAACP and the League of Women Voters, have filed lawsuits against attempts to limit vote-by-mail. A rowdy group rallied outside PMG DeJoy's DC condo on August 15th and at his Greensboro, NC home on August 16th with the theme - DeLiver DeMail, Depose DeJoy !

In Portland, CPWU organized a rally on August 5th at Rose City Park station (one of the ESAS pilot sites) with the theme "Mail Delay, Not Okay! Protect the Vote!" urging voters to mail their ballots early for Portland's City Council election. Representative Earl Blumenauer was joined by union leaders, and representatives from rural, small business, veterans, religious and neighborhood organizations. We attracted three television stations and had everyone sign an oversized postcard to the PMG. Stay tuned for further local actions, especially leading up to the November 3rd election.

This article, and the page you are looking at, was shamelessly stolen, and is most definitely courtesy of the Portland, Oregon September 2020 NALC Branch 82 B-Mike. Once more, a big THANK YOU to Branch 82 Editor Suzanne Miller!!!!

Most recent www.cdc.gov update:

*As of October 18, 2020, there have been 8,019,000 Covid-19 cases identified in the United States and the U.S. territories. There have been 220,000 deaths — **twenty-two have been NALC members.** On April 16, there were 632,548 cases and 31, 071 deaths.*

Executive NALC VP Renfroe delivers regular updates on COVID-19 to you on the NALC's "You Are The Current Resident" Podcast. To listen on your smart phone, we recommend downloading the PodBean app. Then, more information can be heard @ [HTTPS://WWW.NALC.ORG/NEWS/NALC-AUDIO](https://www.nalc.org/news/nalc-audio).

Latest Covid-19 updates from the NALC? See the national NALC website. Also, stay in touch with your Branch 782 Officers if you have questions!

Health Benefit Open-Season November 9 – December 14, 2020

This an early notification about the upcoming Open Season for Health Benefit Plan selection for the 2021 year. The premiums for active employees and annuitants (retirees) can be viewed on the OPM website *when they become available.*

Premiums for Active Carriers are bi-weekly.
Retirees premiums are paid monthly.

FOLLOW THESE STEPS:

Visit the [OPM.gov/health](https://www.opm.gov/health) website, **CLICK** on **INSURANCE** at top of page,

CLICK on **FEHB PLAN COMPARISON TOOL**

TYPE in your ZIP code in box,

CHECK circle of your choice,

CLICK on arrow in box, all plans in FEHB network will show, and make a selection.

THE PREMIUMS FOR HEALTH PLANS FOR THE 2021 YEAR ARE EXPECTED TO INCREASE BY 4%

[Liteblue.usps.gov](https://www.liteblue.usps.gov) will enable employees to enroll or change plans. (You will need your ID number and PIN number.)

Shared Services can answer questions for health plan enrollment 1-877-477-3273.

OPM Retirement information center for annuitants 1-888-767-6738 (call early).

[BENEFEDS.com](https://www.benefeds.com) Dental and Vision Plan enrollment website or call 1-877-888-3337.

MARK RAMIREZ

**NALC Health Benefit Plan & Mutual Benefit Association Representative
NALC Branch 782 Retired Letter Carrier**

2020 NALC HBP Info

At a glance...



NALC Health Benefit Plan
 *Hospital Pre-Certification
 Mental & Substance Precertification
 Prescription Drug Program
 CVS/Caremark Specialty Pharmacy
 Durable Medical Equipment
“24/7 Nurse Hotline”
 CVS/CareMark Pharmacist
 Solutions for Caregivers (24/7)
 CIGNA PPO Locator Line
 CIGNA Organ Transplant Approval
 Quit for Life (Tobacco Cessation)
 CIGNA Health Rewards (Discounts)
CIGNA Plus (Dental Discount)
 Disease Management Program
 OPM Retirement Info Center
 Federal Information Center
 Social Security Administration Info
 PostalEase Human Resources USPS
 Quest Lab Services (Bakersfield)
 LabCorp Lab Services Bakersfield
Shared Services Option 5 live person
 Medicare
 Suicide Hotline
 Suicide?? Talk With Someone...

1-888-636-6252
 1-877-220-6252
 1-877-468-1016
 1-800-933-6252
 1-800-237-2767
 1-855-511-1893
1-877-220-6252
 1-888-636-6252
 1-877-468-1016
 1-877-220-6252
 1-800-668-9682
 1-866-784-8454
 1-800-558-9443
1-877-521-0244
 1-800-227-3728
 1-888-767-6738
 1-800-333-4636
 1-800-772-1213
 1-877-477-3273
 (661) 631-8520
 (661) 631-9258
1-877-477-3273
 1-800-633-4227
 1-800-784-2433
 1-800-273-8255

NALC Health Benefit Plan
 20547 Waverly Court
 Ashburn, Virginia 20149

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

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

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

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

* Call for approvals Organ Transplants,
 DME Surgeries InPatient

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

PPO Deductible: Per Calendar Year
\$300 “Individual”
\$600 “Self & Family” or “Self Plus One”

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

URGENT CARE

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

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

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

MARK RAMIREZ

NALC Branch 782 Health Benefit Plan Representative

(661) 204-5592

“Out tHeRe”



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

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

We DO have a Dental Discount Program!
 Call Mark Ramirez for details...

The Fox has Scattered the Hens

By Ray Hill, President
NALC Branch 2902

In the last issue of the Branch 2902 *Mail Bag News*, I asked the question, “Is the Fox guarding the hen house?” in reference to our new Postmaster General (PMG), Louis DeJoy.

By the time you received that issue of the *MBN*, all hell had broken loose in the USPS hen house and fear of the fox (PMG DeJoy) had scattered the hens, causing them to run around as though their heads were cut off.

As our Carriers bravely do their best to keep a positive attitude while working during the COVID-19 pandemic, SCD Management has responded by heaping as much stress as possible on them. It is apparent that fear of our new PMG’s carving knife has caused Sierra Coastal District management to go berserk and shirk their basic managerial responsibilities, including their responsibility to provide Carriers with reasonable expectations and clear instructions that are possible for the carriers to follow.

What, EXACTLY, are Management’s Instructions?

The Handbook M-41 reads as follows, in relevant part 131.4 Reporting Requirements:

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

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

I now know that the authors of the Handbook M-41 should have elaborated on that last sentence and added that, “Management will provide you with non-conflicting instructions that are possible to follow!”

Carriers have long fought the 3996 battle when requesting overtime. **THAT** is nothing new. In the past, when management denied a Carrier’s request for overtime, the Carrier was required to call from the street for authorization.

The Carrier would call and, after much annoying hemming and hawing, management told the Carrier to “...finish delivering your route but the time is not authorized.”

That was all the Carrier needed to hear. It is well-established — through past grievance resolutions — that, **once management instructs a Carrier to complete delivery of their assignment while on overtime, the overtime is authorized.**

Now, here’s an additional twist: Carriers request additional time to complete their assignments via text on their MDD Scanners.

The problem is that once they do so, **management fails/refuses to provide the Carrier with non-conflicting instructions that the Carrier is able to follow.**

One Carrier sent a text that read, “I will need 30 minutes to complete route. Should I finish route or bring mail back?”

As you can see, management responded, “Your route did not earn the time you are asking for. Deliver all the mail on your route and be off the clock by 4:30 with your mail cased and pulled down for the next day. Deliver all the mail on your route and be off the clock by 4:30 with your mail cased and pulled down for the next day.”

Another Carrier texted, “I need clear instructions what to do, finish route or bring mail back?”

Management responded, “Handbook M-41; Section 112.24; Display a willing attitude and put forth a conscientious effort in developing skills to perform duties assigned.”

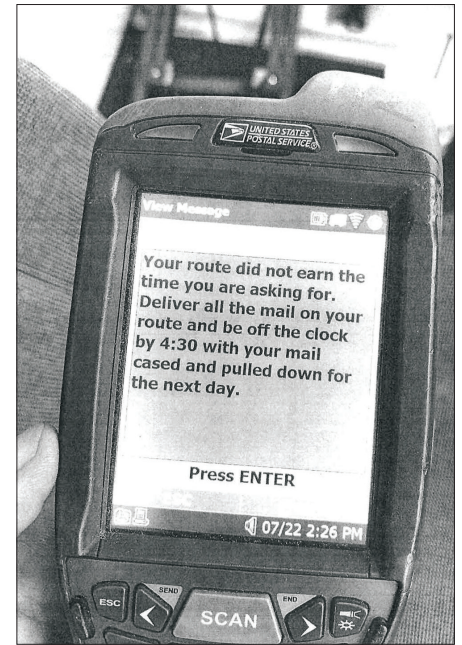
What kind of a bullshit response is that for management to give to a Carrier who simply wants to know if they should complete their assignment or if they should return to the office with all the remaining un-delivered mail?

How the hell is this allowed by SCD (Sierra Coastal District) management? I don’t believe that the fox himself, PMG DeJoy,

would consider this kind of response acceptable to an employee seeking guidance from management.

I can only imagine how angry I would be if I had to deal with that kind of response while I was on the street working in the heat, wearing a mask, fearful of COVID-19 and simply asking if I should complete my assignment or return to the office with undelivered mail!

Our Carriers are subjected to the horrible management.



Tactics, described above, place Letter Carriers in a “Damned if you do, Damned if you don’t” situation.

To add insult to injury — if the Carrier delivers all their mail, management charges them with **UNAUTHORIZED** overtime and issues them discipline.

If the Carrier brings mail back, they are charged with **DELAY OF MAIL** and issued discipline.

Is this really the manner in which SCD management wants to treat their Carriers working through the COVID-19 pandemic?

Rest assured, NALC finds this behavior totally unacceptable and we will do our best to put a stop to it as quickly as possible.

NALC.ORG Issues Statement

You are all aware of the changes in service, including widespread delay of mail, that have been implemented since PMG DeJoy took office.

The following statement dated 08/03/2020 was issued on the NALC.ORG website addressing these issues:

The National Association of Letter Carriers (NALC) thanks the American people for their long-term support and appreciation of the service our members provide to homes and businesses throughout the country. Letter Carriers value their relationship with the public, and

take great pride in serving their customers. As they risk their health each day along with other front-line essential workers, Letter Carriers have become angry, frustrated and embarrassed by various USPS management initiatives that are now resulting in delayed mail and undelivered routes in many areas of the country.

The Postal Service must provide reliable service to postal customers, particularly during the pandemic when our role is more essential than ever. We will continue our engagement with Postal Service management and Congress as we work through a transition in USPS governance, the effects of COVID-19 and the consequent need for financial relief. We appreciate the patience, support and continued confidence of the American people.

These negative changes have not gone unnoticed by Congress. House Speaker Nancy Pelosi and 174 other House Democrats sent a letter to PMG DeJoy urging him to halt the changes resulting in delayed and undelivered mail. Senate Democrats also sent a letter to PMG DeJoy, expressing frustration at the changes that appear to be aimed at slowing mail delivery.

I urge you to check the NALC.ORG Website frequently for updates on changes affecting the timely delivery of mail and the response from Congress to these negative changes.

This is an abridged portion of an article courtesy of the Chatsworth, California September - October 2020 NALC Branch 2902 Mail Bag News

A Portion of a Letter to Congressman Gus Bilirakis (R-FL 12th District)

By Al Friedman, NALC Branch 2008 as well as Florida State Association President

...I am writing to you to say I was **VERY** disappointed by your explanation for the “NO” vote on a stimulus package dealing with the Post Office. **Your message saying there is no impending crisis is TOTALLY misinforming.**

You are aware the loss of revenue was for first class volume advertising loss due to businesses being closed, and paid overtime due to thousands of postal employees in quarantine or recovering from the virus.

You mentioned a “manufactured crisis”. I find **THAT** odd when the Postal Board of Governors (all appointed by Trump) **ALL UNANIMOUSLY** agree the \$25 billion is more than needed to cover revenue loss!

I would say, “**Keep your stimulus money and pay the Postal Service back the \$50 + billion that sits in the Treasury.**”

BUT, WE BOTH KNOW THAT THE MONEY IS NOT THERE...

...As a 40-year Letter Carrier who is still representing Carriers, I see first-hand the delay of mail. A prime example is the FSS sorting machines — designed to put flats

or magazines in street order. Well, they have been and **ARE** being turned off!!!

So, routes adjusted to automation are now sorted in hand-cases. This has resulted in overtime **EVERY** day.

We have had managers afraid to use any overtime who have instructed Carriers to bring the mail back and start delivering at *that* address tomorrow... **Service?? NO!!!**

We see — on a continuous basis — routes that are out past 6:30 p.m. and as late as 9:30 p.m. This causes them to miss the outgoing trucks **that are no longer allowed to wait.** THEREFORE, OUTGOING MAIL SITS IN THAT OFFICE OVERNIGHT.

That is happening right here in the office that delivers YOUR office’s mail! It makes me wonder if YOUR congressional office mail is taking two days to get to the processing plant in Tampa...

I also hope you heard that postal workers have been issued a gag order **NOT** to talk to the press about **internal** matters. If you like, I will bring a couple of Carriers into your office so you can hear this firsthand.

Do think the USPS would let you tour the processing plant in Tampa to see for yourself? The answer — **even though you are the local Congressman** — is: **NO.**

In closing, I give Florida Republican Congressman Vern Buchanan a lot of credit for his vote of “YES” to give stimulus money to the United States Postal Service.

My question is, “Why didn’t YOU?”

This abridged article courtesy of the NALC Branch 2008 Tarpon Springs, Florida September 2020 Suncoast Letter Carrier’s Update

Congressman Gus Bilirakis:

VOTE
as if **YOUR** job depends on it...

THE VIEW FROM THE COUNTRY CLUB

The “Back to the Future” Edition

I wrote the following article back in 2011. I was a newbie Carrier in my

forties just writing what I thought was a “funny” piece on how the Post Office would look in the future.

By Dave Mayou,
NALC Branch 114

I swear to God — I was trying to be funny. I had no idea that the USPS might use my ideas. It was a joke, boss! Please don't keep following my suggestions. Again... IT 'S JUST A JOKE.

Anyhow, here's my article from 2011...

“Dear Dave,

Dave from the future here. Remember that movie, “Back to the Future”? Well, it turns out that time travel actually is really possible.

Here I am in the year 2035 — in my seventies now. Still working. I'll be eligible for retirement when I reach 79 (more on that later). Oh, by the way, I'm using Microsoft Office 2030 to type this; hopefully you'll have some way to convert it!

I'll bet you're wondering what it's like to be a Carrier in 2035.

First off, we're no longer called Carriers, we're now called “Casers”. Why Casers?

In your day you “carried” the mail from house to house. The postal overhaul commission of 2016 found that method to be very wasteful, and they instituted the policy that all mail would be cased at NDCBUs (Neighborhood Delivery and Collection Box Units).

If a customer wants their mail, they either have to walk to the NDCBU or they hire someone from UPS or FEDEX to deliver the mail from the NDCBU to their door.

Oh, and all rural deliveries—we don't do those at all now—not cost effective.

You know actually, I should start at the beginning of your day here in 2035 (Actually, the day starts at night as you're now working two jobs to try and make ends meet.)

When you arrive at the Village Post Office, located here in the back of the Mega-Walmart, you check in with the supervisor-bot. (As I recall, back in 2011 you didn't have supervisor-bots yet. I think they came in about 2015 or so.

They found that there really was no need for all these supervisors running around doing the work which could easily be done by robots. (Animatronic supervisor simulators)

Looking back, I've gotta say that not all change is bad.

There's no need to clock in as the chip keeps track of everything. The chip is like the MSP scanners you had to lug around in 2011, except the chip is actually implanted in each caser, just below the skin on the forearm. It has built in GPS.

The supervisor-bots know exactly where you are at any given moment. A good

example would be when, just the other day, I had to use the bathroom while on my route.

As I turned off my predetermined route to head to the gas station I heard the supervisor-bot's voice boom out of the speaker, “Caser Dave, you are off route. This is a job discussion. Return to your route NOW.”

It's interesting that the software on the supervisor-bot has never been updated since the voiding of the postal contracts. That part where they talk about ‘job discussion’ is a throwback to those contract days.

But then, I think it was 2020...that's when they privatized the postal service.

(You might have noticed that the stamp on this letter cost \$32.00...there's been a bit of a price increase since we became WalMail Corporation.)

I've gotta tell you about what Walmail tried in 2023. In the interest of saving money they figured they could consolidate all mail processing into ONE giant processing facility.

To save even MORE money they moved the facility to China.

WalMail didn't expect the pushback from the American Public. It turns out that it was taking anywhere from 7 to 10 days to process mail in China and then deliver it back to the state from which it came.

So, in 2025 WalMail moved all processing back to the US, to a giant facility in Texas. (It's rumored that the majority of the workers there are illegal aliens...but that's just a rumor.)

You know, now that I recall, back in 2011 a Carrier job paid fairly well. Not so now. We're all just above minimum wage.

Our health care plan comes to us directly from the Postal Service. (Let's just say



Please, Mr. PMG, don't enact these suggestions! I'm just kidding.

that we hope we never get ill as the plan only covers about 20% of all health care costs.)

Still, somehow, we're all living longer in 2035. That's why the Congress — in 2030 — raised the retirement age to 79.

I'M ALMOST THERE!!!

[Oh, and Dave, in 2019 you might want to use the numbers 14, 22, 13, 29, 30 and 16 in the Powerball lottery. I'm not trying to change the future or anything... just saying that you MIGHT wanna' try those numbers on OCT. 26, 2019.]

OK, Dave from the present here again. I'm still delivering mail on my route because I never took my own advice and used those lottery numbers."

Again, I want to apologize to all my Carrier Brothers and Sisters: I DIDN'T mean to give the USPS a strategic plan for the future back in 2011.

ON the positive side, we haven't been reduced to minimum wage yet and we haven't instituted nationwide NDCBUs

...so that's good, right? And? The chip hasn't been implanted in us yet. (As far as we know).

But, we ARE tracked minute by minute EVERY DAY. God forbid we take 11 minutes on a 10 minute break!!

Mail processing consolidation isn't to the point of one centralized location, yet; but it sure did get consolidated since I wrote back in 2011.

This is going to shock our newest members but, believe it or not, letter mail used to go from one address in Duluth to another address in Duluth OVERNIGHT!

It's true.

Back in 2011 the mail collected in Duluth was actually PROCESSED in Duluth! Apparently, that made too much sense, so they moved all outgoing processing to the Twin Cities.

Now mail logs some miles before it reaches it's final destination. Could more consolidation be in the future? Of course.

And, as we've seen of late, with the new

PMG programs, casing of mail could be a thing of the past. I said we'd be casing at the NDCBUs. In retrospect, that would be an improvement.

The new plans are for cCarriers to case mail on the dash of their vehicles. I wish I was joking. I also wish I was joking about moving the retirement age to 79. OK, maybe not quite that old, but it's probably going to go up...

We, as a nation, are currently spending our way out of a pandemic and the President's latest plan is to not pay into the Social Security Trust Fund so that workers can have a payroll tax reduction. (Executive orders of August 8th, 2020 as signed from the clubhouse at Bedminster, NJ)

This article was meant to be sarcastic.

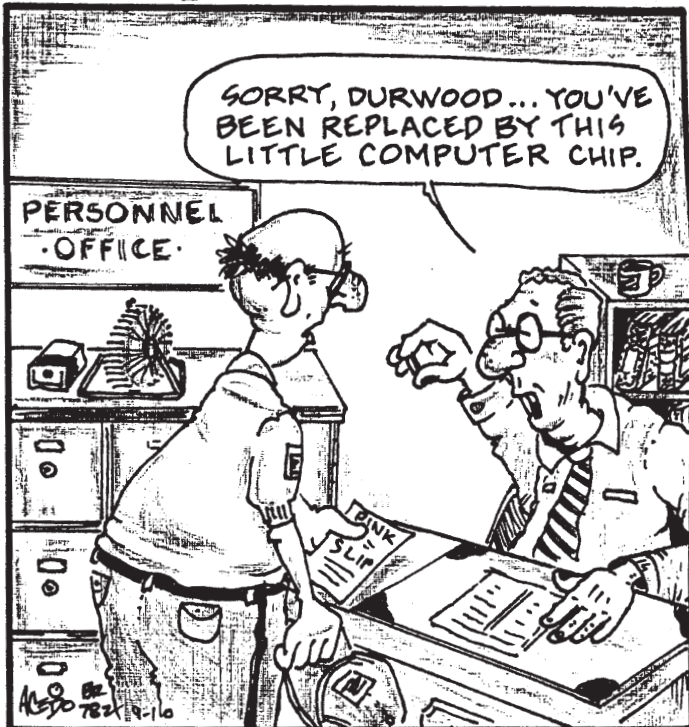
Please, Mr. PMG, don't enact these suggestions! I'm just kidding.

I really hope I don't write another article in 2029 where I again apologize for my suggestions.

Also, Dave of the future: **DON'T YOU THINK IT'S TIME YOU RETIRED**

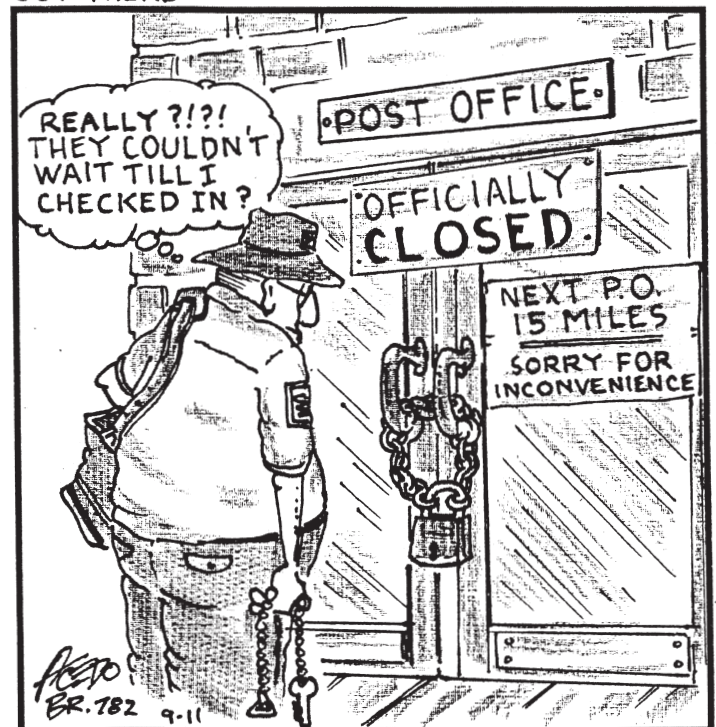
This article is courtesy of the Duluth, Minnesota September 2020 NALC Branch 114 ZENITH BRANCH NEWS

OUT THERE



Originally published August 2011

OUT THERE



Originally published October 2011



NALC Fact Sheet

Department of Legislative and Political Affairs — National Association of Letter Carriers, AFL-CIO
100 Indiana Ave. NW — Washington, DC 20001-2144 — 202-393-4695 — www.nalc.org © NALC

The 2020 General Election: America Can Count on the U.S. Postal Service

The United States Postal Service, founded in 1775, is one of America's greatest democratic institutions. It has been central to our democracy from the beginning when it served as a disseminator of the Federalist Papers and promoted widespread citizen literacy via the low-cost distribution of newspapers and books. Starting during the Civil War, Americans have used the mail to vote, and the Post Office has been essential to our system of elections ever since.

In the Covid-19 Election of 2020, the Postal Service will be more important than ever when tens of millions of Americans will stay safe by casting ballots distributed by mail. Indeed, at least ten states and jurisdictions (CA, DC, CO, HI, MT, NV, OR, UT, VT and WA) will send all registered voters their ballots by mail this fall, while most other states will permit absentee voting without any "excuse." Further, several of the 15 states that require such an approved excuse to vote by mail have either waived the requirement this year or explicitly authorized "concerns about the Covid-19 pandemic" as a legitimate excuse to vote by mail.

The Postal Service's role in American elections goes far beyond the distribution of mail ballots, however. The 8,500 election boards that oversee and conduct our elections rely on the Postal Service for the entire process. They use it to register voters, certify candidates, provide voter guides, distribute sample ballots, notify citizens of their polling places, and to inform voters of their early voting options. Meanwhile, candidates, parties, civic groups and organizations of all kinds use the Post Office to disseminate information and campaign literature – a function that will take on added importance in a year in which physical canvassing will be difficult.

USPS has the capacity to deliver

In 2016, 139 million Americans voted in the general election – and nearly one-fourth (32 million) voted on mailed-out ballots. This year, total turnout could surpass 150 million voters and vote by mail volume could double or more. Although millions of Americans drop off their ballots in person (in drop boxes, at polling places or at voting centers), millions also return their ballots by mail. This has raised questions for some about whether the Postal Service has the capacity to deliver such a high volume of ballots this fall. But even if every American voter returned his or her ballot by mail, the Postal Service has more than enough capacity to deliver the extra volume. Consider the facts:

- In 2019, the Postal Service delivered an average of 470 million pieces per day, six days a week – and scaled up to deliver more than 650 million pieces of mail per day during the peak holiday period in December.
- Currently, with the economy depressed by the coronavirus pandemic, USPS is delivering about 350-400 million pieces of mail per day – meaning that it has considerable excess capacity to handle any surge in mail volume.
- There have been neither lay-offs nor any kind of downsizing of our processing or delivery networks during the crisis – barring any adverse decisions by postal management, the Postal Service can meet any increased demand this Fall for political mailings and mail ballots.

The Postal Service affirmed its capability in a statement issued on August 3, 2020: "The Postal Service has ample capacity to adjust our nationwide processing and delivery network to meet projected Election and Political Mail volume, including any additional volume that may result as a response to the COVID-19 pandemic."

Although the recession and the public health crisis have reduced its letter mail revenues and raised its costs for personal protective equipment and other safety measures, the Postal Service has cash reserves that are more than enough to permit uninterrupted services through the election. Meanwhile, Congress is debating proposals to appropriate funds to the Postal Service to help it weather the negative impact of the pandemic.

USPS election mail protocols

The Postal Service has always given election mail priority treatment, and postal employees have embraced an ironclad commitment to ensure every ballot is delivered safely and securely to voters and returned to election officials.

USPS has [well-established protocols](#) in place for handling election mail. There is a National Election Mail team based in Washington that oversees a network of state and local election mail coordinators who work election boards. They help design mailed ballots, aiming to speed delivery by encouraging the use of Intelligent Mail Barcodes and special visual identifiers that improve mailed ballot visibility in the mail stream. This allows election boards and voters to identify and track ballots and improves the public's confidence in the vote by mail process.

Every election cycle, the USPS distributes an official [Election Mail tool kit](#) to election boards and maintains a special [website](#) for local and state election officials to report Election Mail concerns directly to USPS, allowing a rapid response team to resolve such concerns. It also conducts training for employees that come into contact with election mail and monitors its service performance for election mail, aiming to surpass its normal 96% on-time goal for First Class Mail delivery.

Earlier this year, the Postal Service affirmed its commitment to deliver any mailed ballot back to its destination election board, even if it does not have proper postage. (USPS generally seeks reimbursement from election officials, budgets permitting.)

Ballot safety and security

American voters can have complete confidence in vote by mail, both in how the Postal Service handles ballots and how election boards manage the process.

Within USPS, protecting the sanctity of the mail, regardless of the type of mail, is the highest priority. Tampering with any piece of mail – ballots included – is strictly prohibited. Employees who do so face federal prosecution and risk being fined and/or jailed. Indeed, the USPS polices its commitment to mail security with an internal security workforce, the [Postal Inspection Service](#).

As a result, the Postal Service is among the most trusted companies in America when it comes to [protecting privacy](#) and is by far the public's [favorite agency in the federal government](#), with an approval rating of 91 percent.

Election boards have also developed methods to minimize the possibility of voter fraud with mail ballots. Such fraud is [exceedingly rare](#) according to data compiled by the Heritage Foundation. In most states there are more security checks on mail-in votes than on in-person votes, according to Neal Kelley, the Republican Registrar of Voters in Orange County California. When it comes to ballot security, there is no discernable difference between “mail-in” ballots and “absentee” ballots. Ballots mailed to all registered voters, like those sent to voters who have applied for absentee ballots, are handled with all the same strict security protocols. For more information on how election boards use tried-and-true methods to make vote by mail safe and secure for all American voters, see the attached FAQ sheet or visit the [National Vote at Home Institute](#) website.

Federal action needed

America's 210,000 city letter carriers and their union are totally committed to performing at the highest level when our country votes this fall. NALC is urging the U.S. Postal Service to create a special joint task force with the postal unions to overcome the unique challenges of serving America's voters and election boards during the current public health crisis. As we did during the primaries this year – when about

half of all votes cast involved mailed out ballots – we intend to meet these challenges.

Of course, the sudden and unplanned shift to the use of absentee voting in response to the Covid-19 crisis did not occur without logistical problems for local election boards and the USPS. In many cases (in Wisconsin, Maryland and Georgia), the surge in demand for absentee ballots overwhelmed under-resourced election boards, causing many such ballots to arrive late or not at all. Some voters were disenfranchised, even as overall turnout increased dramatically. It is imperative that these boards – and, where relevant, the Postal Service – learn from and correct any shortcomings in their operations before the November general election. **But state and local election bodies must have the resources to do so.**

The federal government must act. Congress must provide states the funding they need to make in-person voting safe in November and to expand their election boards' capacity to efficiently and expeditiously process the surge in mail ballots expected this year. The HEROES Act adopted by the House of Representatives in May provided \$3.6 billion for elections support. The Senate should embrace this funding proposal to protect our democracy, and the Trump Administration should approve it. With the loss of local tax revenues hammering state and local government budgets, only the federal government can fill the gap. At a minimum, Congress should take two actions:

- First, the U.S. Treasury should pay for or reimburse all American election boards for the cost of postage for all domestic mail ballots, both outgoing and return postage, using the excellent system we have in place for overseas voters under the Uniformed and Overseas Citizens Absentee Voting Act (UOCAVA). This would cost no more than \$150 million.
- Second, to promote faith in our democracy and to prevent destructive political polarization, Congress should use its Constitutional authority to regulate the conduct of federal elections to ensure that all votes cast by Election Day are counted. That means that all ballots in the possession of the Postal Service at the end of November 3, 2020 should be counted, regardless of when they are received by election boards. Any funding approved for the 2020 election should mandate this.

Conclusion

The United States is one of the world's greatest and oldest democracies, of which every American can be proud. The peaceful transfer of political power following elections has been a hallmark of our democracy for more than two centuries.

Voters in the United States can count on the Postal Service and its employees to honor that heritage in November. But Congress must do its part too to ensure a smooth 2020 election. The future of our country and the health of our democracy depend on it.

Source is NALC Website — <https://www.nalc.org/government-affairs/body/2020-general-election-002.pdf>

“ In the Covid-19 Election of 2020, the Postal Service will be more important than ever when tens of millions of Americans will stay safe by casting ballots distributed by mail. ”

NEWS & INFORMATION

October 01, 2020

Election mail task force update for Letter Carriers

NALC and the other postal unions and management associations continue to meet with the Postal Service to prepare for the anticipated increase in election mail this fall. We have made progress on the operational protocols and communications we reported on the September 23 election mail task force update. Additionally, we deployed local election mail task forces all over the country.

Local election mail task forces consist of management and union members in each postal facility. The NALC representatives in delivery units are selected by the branch president. Each task force should ensure appropriate communication is accomplished with all employees and quickly identify and resolve issues that may arise.

This week, task forces participated in a national meeting to educate them on protocols that have been put in place. A daily checklist has also been developed to give each task force a variety of issues to check to ensure protocols are followed. In the coming days and weeks, the task forces will ensure nationally developed stand up talks are delivered to all employees.

We encourage letter carriers that are serving on these task forces to have daily conversations with other task force members about the status of operational protocols and communication locally. Should any questions arise, letter carriers should contact a branch officer or the appropriate national business agent.

October 15, 2020

Lump Sum Terminal Leave Payment for 2021

On September 3, 2020 the NALC and the Postal Service agreed to a Memorandum of Understanding (M-01928 in the NALC Materials Reference System) which allows regular work force career employees to carry over 520 hours of accumulated annual leave from leave year 2020 to leave year 2021. M-01928 states:

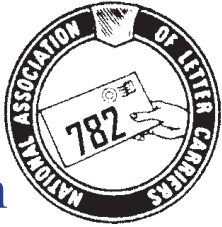
The parties agree that for leave year 2021, regular work force career employees covered by the USPS-NALC Agreement may carry over 520 hours of accumulated annual leave from leave year 2020 to leave year 2021.

In all other respects, the ELM provisions for payment of accumulated leave are not changed because of this Memorandum. This MOU will expire December 31, 2021.

Although this memorandum did not impact the ELM provisions for payment of accumulated leave, after further discussion, the Postal Service has confirmed that employees that retire during leave year 2021 can receive a terminal leave payment of up to 520 hours. Separating employees may receive a lump sum terminal leave payment as follows (found in Employee and Labor Relations Manual section 512.732):

Bargaining Unit Employee. Bargaining unit employees may receive a lump sum leave payment: If separating other than under the Voluntary Early Retirement Authority (VERA), for accumulated annual leave carried over from the previous year; accrued annual leave for the year in which they separate, up to the carryover maximum for their bargaining unit (see 512.32); any unused donated leave; and for full-time and part-time regular employees, holidays that fall within the terminal leave period. Any part of the unused annual leave earned during the leave year of separation that is in excess of the maximum carryover amount is granted prior to separation rather than paid out in the form of a lump sum payment. No payment is made for unused leave that the employee would have been required to forfeit at the end of the leave year. Employees retiring pay period two (2) of 2021 (which starts January 2, 2021) through the 2021 leave year can receive a terminal leave payment of up to 520 hours.

Source for this "NEWS & INFORMATION" is the NALC Website at NALC.ORG



from

Kim Gerdes

Recording Secretary

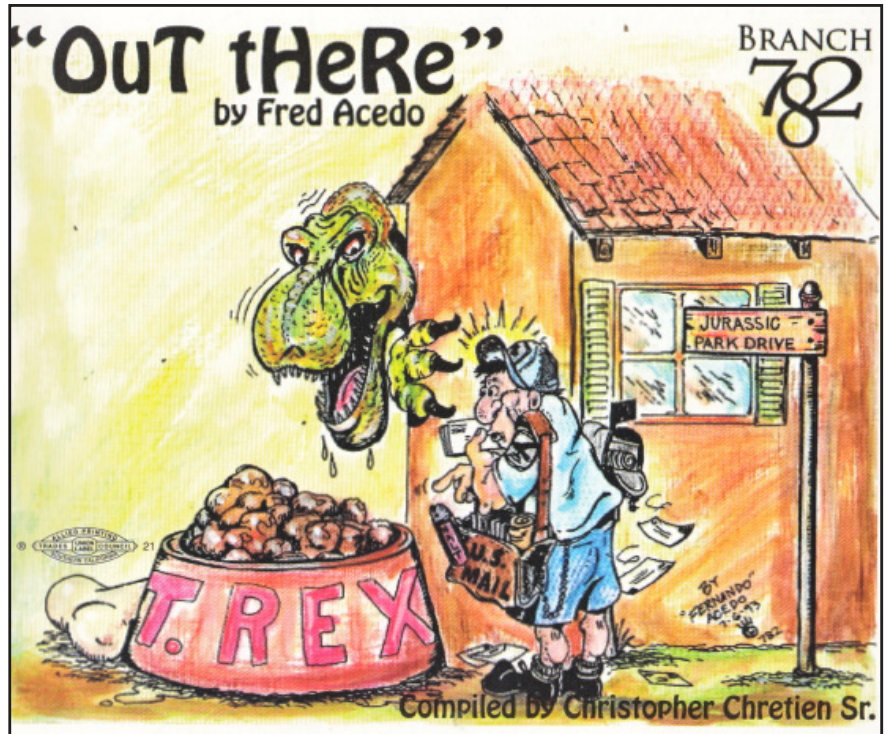
Request an autographed copy of the book...

We hope you consider ordering a Fred Acedo **Out tHeRe** cartoon book!! **We have a deal for you!!!**

Over 130 pages of cartoons featuring our Letter Carrier world can now be yours for an amazingly low cost!!

To make life simple, request as many copies as you want by clipping the form at the bottom of the page and returning it & payment via USPS mail to Branch 782.

You can also order by contacting me via e-mail at krgerdes91@hotmail.com. Or, you can call me at the phone number on the bottom of this page. The book and projected shipping costs are provided below. You can even share *your* work life with family and friends with this book as a Christmas gift...



Dear Kim Gerdes, NALC Branch 782 Recording Secretary

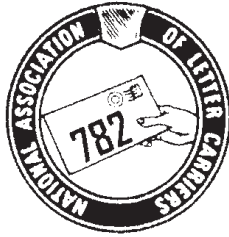
Please send me _____ **Out tHeRe** book (s)! I know people who will love them!

Name and address for shipping: _____



One book is **\$7**. Two books for **\$10**. (Postage rates based on number of books ordered.)
We ship via USPS Priority Mail Flat Rate box. (For larger orders, please request the best rates.)

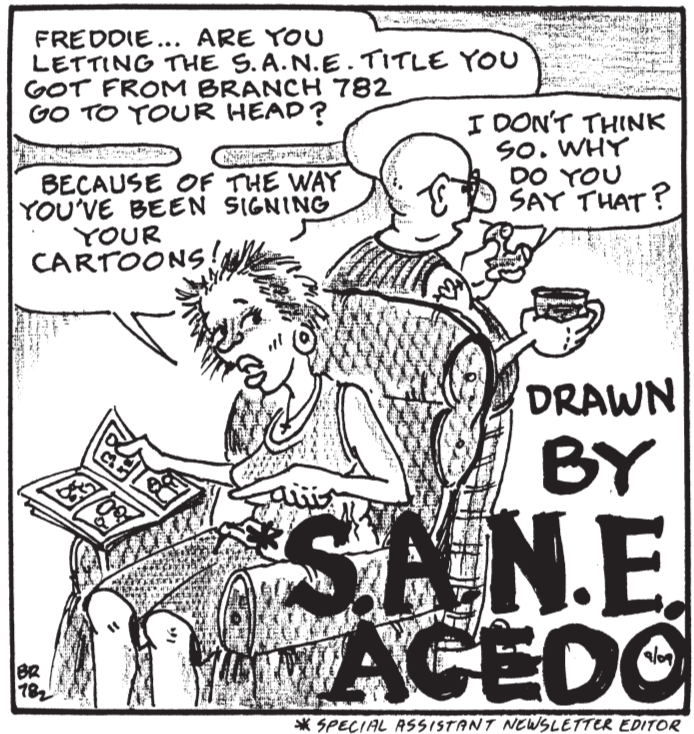
NALC Branch 782 ● 2628 F Street ● Bakersfield, California ● 93301 ● (661) 301-9676



from the editor-guy

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

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



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

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

BASIL ZUNIGA

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

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

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

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

Please make check payable to Basil Zuniga, Branch 782 Editor-guy

Please include \$7.90 for USPS Priority Mail postage.

Editor-guy ● 2412 Hasti Acres Drive ● Bakersfield, California ● 93309-4734 ● (661) 205-1603

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

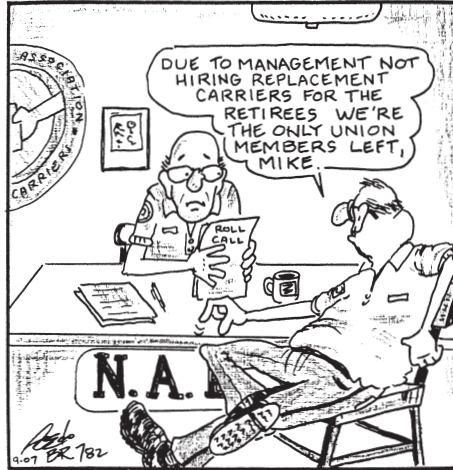
This is a sample. You are looking at page 74 in the *NALC Editor Resource Book*. There are 176 pages in this book that explore glimpses into our lives as Letter Carriers from January 2003 to July 2016...

OUT THERE



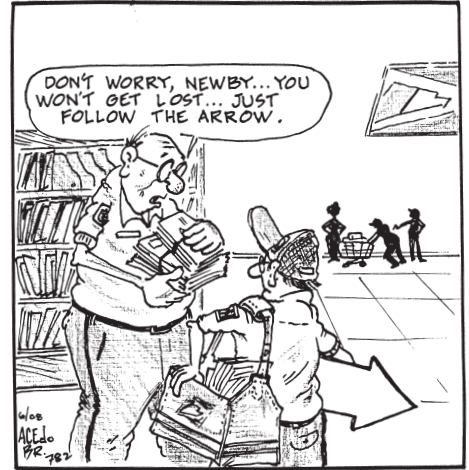
Originally published April 2009

OUT THERE



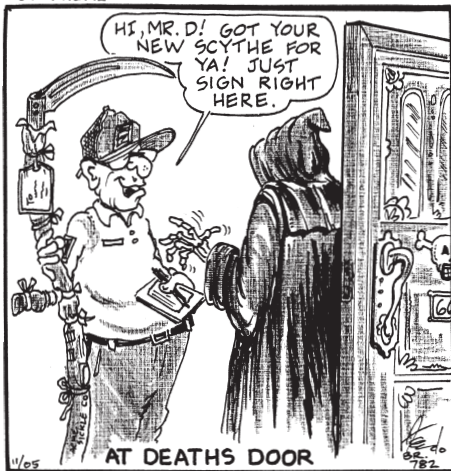
Originally published April 2009

OUT THERE



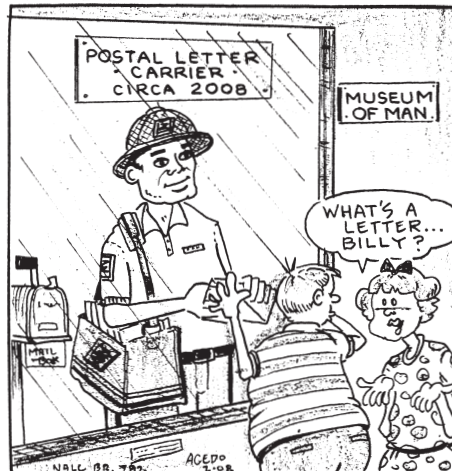
Originally published May 2009

OUT THERE



Originally published May 2009

OUT THERE



Originally published May 2009

OUT THERE



Originally published May 2009

OUT THERE



Originally published May 2009

OUT THERE



Originally published May 2009

OUT THERE



Originally published May 2009

DOHERTY & DONELON SCHOLARSHIPS

Deadline: This form must be returned to NALC Headquarters no later than December 31, 2020.

Eligibility

- Applicant must be the son, daughter or legally adopted child of a letter carrier NALC member in good standing — active, retired or deceased. Stepchildren and grandchildren are eligible if they live with the letter carrier in a regular parent-child relationship.
- Applicant's parent must be a member in good standing of NALC for at least one year prior to making application.
- Applicant must be a high school senior when making application and must submit the form provided at right, signed by the NALC member and an officer of the member's NALC branch. This form must be returned to NALC Headquarters by December 31, 2020.

Requirements

- All applicants must take the Scholastic Assessment Test (SAT) or the American College Test (ACT) in either their junior or senior year. A copy of the official scores from the administering organization must be received at NALC Headquarters by midnight, March 31, 2021. (Computer-generated print-outs of test scores will not be accepted.)
- All biographical questionnaires and secondary school reports must be received at NALC Headquarters by midnight, March 31, 2021.

Regulations

- Scholarship is to be used toward pursuing undergradu-

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

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

Terms of awards

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

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

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

SCHOLARSHIP APPLICATION

Date _____ (PLEASE PRINT CLEARLY)

Please send instructions as to how I can compete for a scholarship award. I am a senior in the 2020-21 school year.

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

letter carrier _____

of Branch No. 782 City Bakersfield State CA

My name is _____

My address is _____

City _____ State _____ ZIP _____

Phone No. _____

Signature of NALC parent member
(or spouse if deceased)

Last 4 digits of Social Security No.

Signature of branch officer

Printed name of branch officer

Title Date

This form must be returned no later than December 31, 2020, to the NALC Scholarship Committee, in care of the National Association of Letter Carriers, 100 Indiana Ave. NW, Washington, DC 20001-2144.

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

2021 Carl J. Saxsenmeier

Scholarship Program

The California State Association of Letter Carriers (CSALC) is now accepting applications for the 2021 Carl J. Saxsenmeier Scholarship Program. **All applications must be received by the Scholarship Chair by January 8, 2021.** The Chair will send scholarship packets to all applicants by the end of January 2021. The scholarships are available to the children or grandchildren of members of NALC Branches within the State of California who have not served in a supervisory capacity in the previous two (2) years from the date of 2020 award announcement. Applicant's parent / grandparent must be a member in good standing of the NALC for at least one year prior to applying. Applicant must be a high school senior when applying. Saxsenmeier Scholarship awards are issued in the year of graduation and are not renewable.

Derek Simpson
Saxsenmeier Scholarship Chair
18315 E Bellbrook St
Covina, CA 91722-2754
626-384-1746

Saxsenmeier Scholarship Application
(Please Print)

Student's Name:

NALC Member's Name:

Home Address:

City / State/ ZIP

Home Telephone:

Cell / Fax:

Email Address:

Applicant's Signature:

NALC Member Signature:

Relationship to Applicant:

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

NALC Branch

Officer Signature:

Title:

Branch Officer

Printed Name:

Branch Number:

782

Each — and every — Fred Acedo cartoon is an “article” for you to think about your world...

“OuT tHeRe”



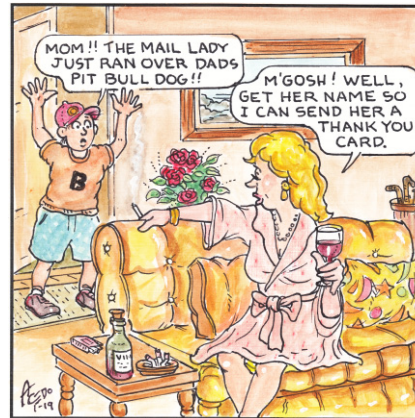
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“OuT tHeRe”



“OuT tHeRe”



“OuT tHeRe”



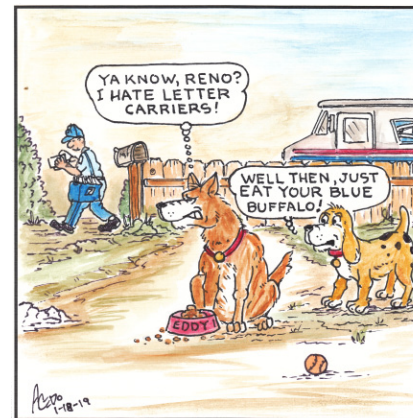
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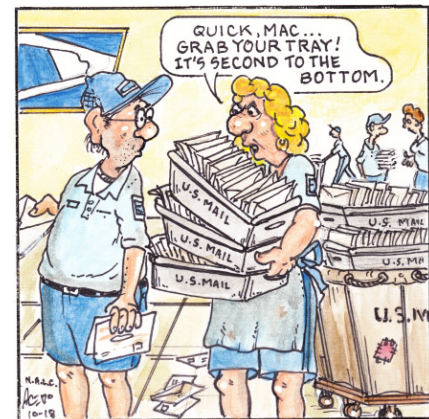
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“OuT tHeRe”



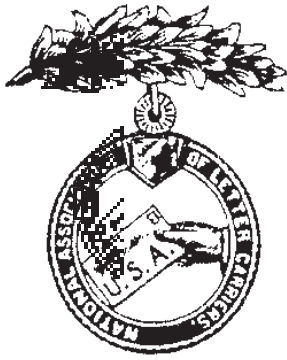
“OuT tHeRe”



“OuT tHeRe”



Have a thought for a cartoon? Mail your idea to Fred Acedo, S.A.N.E., P.O. Box 6532, Bakersfield, CA 93386-6532



Branch Officers

President	Mike Towery	(661) 331-9171
Vice-President	John Ortega	(661) 809-8140
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Trustee	Paul Salazar	(661) 303-3603
Trustee	David Treto	(661) 865-8922

E.A. BAKER UNION UPDATE is published monthly by Merged Branch 782 of the National Association of Letter Carriers, AFL-CIO.

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

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

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

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

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

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

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Anita Holderman, Branch Photographer
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NALC Branch 782 Shop Stewards

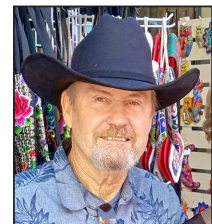
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Lamont Alternate	Manuel Alvarenga	(661) 331-9171
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Shafter (93263)	Norma Hamer	(661) 619-1465
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South Station Alternate	Judy Kiyoshi	(661) 817-5529
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East Bakersfield (Alternate)	Ryan Woommavovah	(661) 322-7624*
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Brundage Station (93307)	John Ortega	(661) 809-8140
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Dole Court (93308)	Denise Ream	(661) 304-6625
Dole Court (Alternate)	David Treto	(661) 865-8922
Stockdale Station (93309)	Randy Courson	(661) 345-0256
Stockdale Station (93309)	Maria Valenzuela	(661) 496-5929
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Camino Media (Alternate)	Paul Salazar	(661) 303-3603
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Edwards AF Base (93523)	Vacant	(661) 331-9171
Ridgecrest (93555)	Lynnel Howell	(760) 382-3030
Tehachapi (93561)	Vacant	(661) 331-9171
Trona (93562)	Lynnel Howell	(760) 382-3030

OWCP Representative	Rick Gerdes	(661) 301-9675
USPS Social Recreation Rep.	Paul Greenfield	(661) 203-7802

* Denotes Post Office Phone Number

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

Rick Plummer, Webmaster





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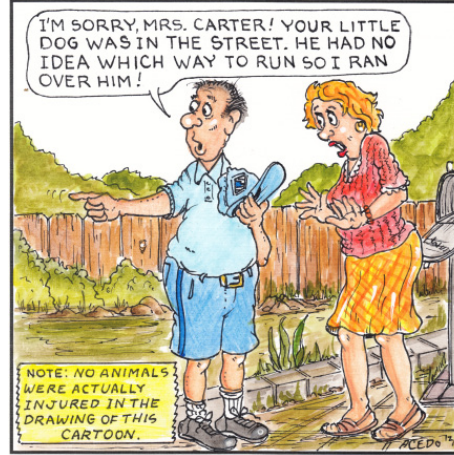


DUE TO THE CONTINUING COVID-19 PANDEMIC, AND FOR THE SAFETY AND HEALTH OF ACTIVE AND RETIRED LETTER CARRIERS AND THEIR FAMILIES, IT IS NECESSARY TO CANCEL THE GENERAL MEMBERSHIP MEETING SCHEDULED FOR WEDNESDAY, OCTOBER 28, 2020

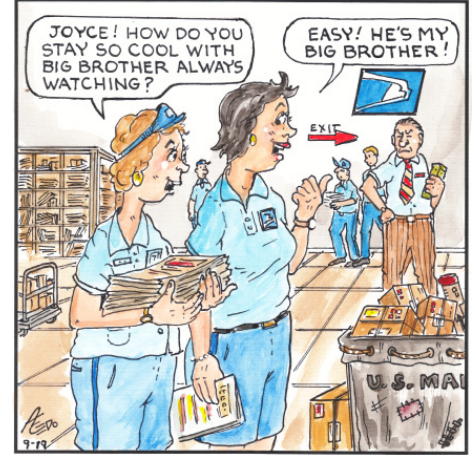
"OuT tHeRe"



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"OuT tHeRe"



Print version had 12 pages. This web version has 32 pages. More schtuff. More for you...