

# National Association of Letter Carriers

## Branch 782

# E.A. Baker Union Update



ARVIN  
CALIFORNIA CITY  
McFARLAND  
TAFT

AVENAL  
DELANO  
MOJAVE  
TEHACHAPI

BAKERSFIELD  
EDWARDS AFB  
RIDGECREST  
TRONA

BORON  
LAMONT  
SHAFTER  
WASCO



**CHARTERED FEBRUARY 25, 1901**

NUMBER 1

JANUARY 2016

# The Branch 782 website is an excellent resource for you!

Need a PS Form 3971 to request some Annual or Sick Leave? Check out the Branch 782 website...

Do you want to cancel some leave? Check out the website... Are you curious about the exact language in the Regulations, Handbooks or Manuals? Check out the website... Injured on the job? Check out the Injury Compensation Manual on the website... Everything about how to do your job is in the USPS M-41. Yup, you can find the entire manual on the website! Have you seen the Local Memorandum of Agreement that is in place for *your* installation? Check out the Branch 782 website...

Retirement questions? TSP questions? How can I find a Postal uniform vendor? Looking for an EEO attorney in California? What should be done when an active duty Letter Carrier dies? What needs to be done when a Retiree passes away? FMLA vs. SLDC...what's *THAT* about? Military buy back forms?

There are also links to many, many photos from Branch 782 activities! You can even check out many of Fred Acedo's **Out there** cartoons in color!!! And, you can link to the NALC National website...

Also, you can find an augmented web version of the newsletter by clicking on the link at the top right hand side of the page "Branch 782, E.A. Baker Union Update". More pages. More info. Check it out...

# WWW.782NALC.COM



# Letter Carriers and Darkness

This month's article is a reprint of an article I wrote in the January 2015 edition of the Buzz. The topic is important as I have seen a lot of banter, especially on some of the letter carrier social media sites, and some of the angles and advice given by carriers is alarming and incorrect.

With the direction the Postal Service has been moving in recent years there has been a shift in deliveries after 5PM increasing or after dusk and into darkness. This means you could be expected to work in the dark. This causes problems every year. The rule to keep in mind is that if it is safe you are to deliver the mail. So what is safe? Safety depends whether or not there is a hazard which is defined as "a chance of accident or a possible source of danger."

Arbitrators have ruled that darkness in and of itself is not unsafe. Regional Arbitrator Witney (C-10514) states:

**Management did not violate the contract when it required carriers to deliver mail after dark.**

This case dealt with carriers delivering mail in mid-November two hours plus past sunset at 4:30pm. The NALC concedes the following position:

## **M-00483:**

**Normally, letter carriers deliver mail during daylight hours; however, there is no contractual provision which would preclude management from assigning carriers to deliver mail in other than daylight hours.**

Darkness can and may contribute to an unsafe situation. For example you are on a walking route, it is not well light, you trip over a crack in the side walk or broken or uneven steps stairs on a porch and a few feet later you stumble over little Johnny's big wheel. You may want to declare that cut as unsafe and call your supervisor.

There are several things you can do to keep safe while delivering when darkness arises. If you are on a walking route and it is not well light then you don't cut lawns. You want to walk where it is safest. This is normally the driveway and sidewalk. If the area is not well light then you probably cannot finger the mail while walking since you may not be able to see the addresses well enough. Additionally if it is not well light you cannot see where you are walking with your peripheral vision so you actually need to watch where you walk. With managements permission you can change your delivery pattern if you have mounted delivery or interior apartment delivery at the end of your delivery pattern that day knowing you could be delivering in the dark. Be proactive!!

What happens if you encounter a hazard? The proper way to report the condition to your manager is by following ELM Section 824.631 provides instruction:

**Any employee, or the representative of any employee, who believes that an unsafe or unhealthful condition exists in the workplace may do any or all of the following:**

**a. File a report of the condition on PS Form 1767 with the immediate supervisor and request an inspection of the alleged condition.**

**b. If the employee desires anonymity, file PS Form 1767 directly with the installation's safety personnel, who will immediately give the report to the employee's supervisor for necessary action. (In such cases, safety personnel must not disclose the name of the individual making the report.)**

**c. Report alleged unsafe conditions to a steward, if one is available, who may then discuss the condition with the employee's supervisor. Discrimination against an employee for reporting a safety and health hazard is unlawful.**

**ELM 824.62 states:**

**Supervisors must maintain a supply of Forms 1767 in the workplace in a manner that provides employees with both easy and (if an employee so chooses) anonymous access.**

The employee completes the first section: a box designating the Area (Specify Work Location) and a box to Describe Hazard, Unsafe Condition or Practice, Recommended Corrective Action. For example: Work Location: "Route 1111 delivery area." Describe Hazard: "During the daylight hours I have noticed that numerous sidewalks, stairs and porches are uneven, broken or cracked. When it begins to get dark, the lack of streetlights and other lighting along the route makes walking on sidewalks or upstairs to porches unsafe. With limited visibility and uneven surfaces, delivering mail by foot is very hazardous. In addition, numerous dogs are out at this time of the evening and because of the darkness are not easily or readily seen, increasing the chance of being bitten."

After you have completed your portion of the form, give it to your immediate supervisor, who then must follow the instructions in the ELM section 824.632: The immediate supervisor must promptly (within the tour of duty):

**a. Investigate the alleged condition.**

**b. Either initiate immediate corrective action or make appropriate recommendations.**

**c. Record those actions or recommendations on Form 1767.**

**d. Forward the original 1767 and one copy to the next appropriate level of management (approving official).**

**e. Give the employee a copy signed by the supervisor as a receipt.**

**f. Immediately forward the third copy to the safety office.**

When you are aware of an unsafe condition you should report this condition to your manager immediately via PS

Form 1767. Completing the form and giving it to your immediate supervisor **places the ball in management's court.** They **must investigate the alleged condition.** If they do not, **have your shop steward file a grievance.** If a supervisor investigates the reported condition and gives you instructions, recommendations and specific actions to take, give them due consideration. If you are still of the opinion that an unsafe condition exists, **you could complete another report and/or file a grievance.**

If you believe that an unsafe or unhealthful condition is so hazardous you could refuse to perform those duties, you do run the risk of being disciplined. The following is relevant:

#### **JCAM Pages 41-27:**

**41.3. I. Carriers shall not finger mail when driving, or when walking up or down steps or curbs, when crossing streets, or at any time it would create a safety hazard to the carriers or the public.**

**Although there have been no significant Step 4 settlements or arbitration awards interpreting Article 41.3.I, it is wise to bear in mind how arbitrators have generally approached the question of whether employees are justified for refusing to work in a particular place or in a particular fashion because of what the employee believes are unsafe conditions. First, there is the "iron rule" stating that an employee must "obey now and grieve later." Second, there is a narrow exception to that rule which permits an employee to disobey where he or she has a reasonable or good-faith belief that to obey would cause imminent danger to life or limb. A mere belief that a safety hazard exists is usually insufficient reason to disobey an order.**

This is especially true if the supervisor has investigated the hazard. So, before you refuse any instructions, consider them carefully, and then gather all the evidence you have in order to support your claim. The evidence is needed to defend your position if discipline is issued. Remember, darkness is not a hazard in and of itself; **you must identify specific hazardous conditions.** Everyone needs to case in the dog warning cards. It becomes more difficult to tell where the barking dog is when it is dark. If you choose to bring back the mail let your manager know. You are the only one that can keep yourself safe.

Steps to take when you believe you may have to work in the dark:

When filling out your PS Form 3996 in the morning upon receipt of your last dispatch of mail and you believe you will be delivering in the dark, list this on your PS Form 3996. Also verbally inform your supervisor you may be delivering "after dark" and that may present a potential safety problem.

If time has not been taken off you and you are on the street and you still believe you will be delivering in the dark, call management by your prescribed call in time, usually somewhere around 2pm and again inform them you will "out after dark" and that you may encounter hazardous delivery conditions.

If time has still not been taken off you and you are delivering "in the dark" and encounter a hazardous delivery situation and have to curtail delivery, either call management or if

you bring the mail back, notify management immediately and explain the "specific" hazard and file PS Form 1767. They may instruct you to return to the street to deliver. You must obey that instruction and attempt delivery again until another "hazardous" situation is encountered. When that occurs either call management or return with the mail again and be prepared once again to identify the "specific" safety hazard and fill out PS Form 1767.

If you bring mail back fill out PS Form 1571 to protect yourself, in duplicate and get a signed copy from the supervisor. Do not return with mail and fail to notify a supervisor of your return or that mail has not been delivered and end tour for the day.

Letter carriers deliver mail in all types of conditions, rain, snow, in Alaska its dark for entire days during parts of the year. **The subject of refusing to deliver mail in the dark is not a simple argument; there are many caveats in order to properly refuse to deliver mail due to a hazardous condition.** Hopefully this article gives you a road map to balancing such responsibility. Refusing to deliver mail should be the last resort, safety obviously is priority number one but as letter carriers if we are going to refuse to deliver mail we have to be prepared to provide "specific" reasons and evidence to back up those reasons, if we fail to do so, discipline is surely to follow.

In relation to "head lamps" these are NOT considered personal protective equipment. These are to be worn at a carrier's discretion, not managements. If you are injured in the dark and try to rely on the fact that you were wearing a "head lamp" be aware that discipline may still be issued as you are attempting to use non-postal approved equipment.

Article courtesy of the Buffalo, New York  
NALC Branch 3 December 2015 *Buzz*.

#### **OUT THERE**



# Minutes of the December 2015 General Meeting

The regular meeting of Branch 782 was called to order by President Mike Towery at 7:02 p.m. on the 15th day of December, 2015. The flag salute was led by Sgt. at Arms, Jerry Patterson. The minutes of the November 24, 2015 meeting were read and accepted with no additions or corrections. All members of the Executive Board were present. The stewards were present from Arvin, Avenal, Brundage, Camino Media, Delano, Downtown, East Bakersfield, Hillcrest, Lamont, McFarland, Oildale, Shafter, South and Taft. Also present was Newsletter Editor, Basil Zuniga; S.A.N.E., Fred Acedo; Webmaster, Rick Plummer; Photographer, Anita Holderman; Assistant Treasurer, Debbie Guillet; Assistant Recording Secretary, Norma Hamer and Frank Martinez and Basil Zuniga of the Social and Recreation Committee.

**APPLICATION FOR MEMBERSHIP:** Applications were received from Joanna Gunn, Taylor Becker and Catherine Burke.

**REPORTS OF STANDING AND SPECIAL COMMITTEES:** Basil Zuniga reported that he gave the member the month off, he and his family folded the newsletter. Next month will be the AO's turn; he hopes Norma can get a good turnout. Frank Martinez reported that the Social and Recreation Committee has reduced tickets for CALM, \$5.00 and Christmas Town, \$10.00. Flyers should be in the stations soon. Kim Gerdes reported that there are 970 books remaining. Molly Biggar reported that the balance on the Food Drive cards is \$638.00.

**NEW BUSINESS:** Kim Gerdes made a motion that the money made from the sale of the calendars, be used to pay for the Food Drive cards. The motion was seconded by Debbie Guillet and passed.

**GOOD OF THE ASSOCIATION:** Basil Zuniga discussed his Retirement Breakfast, he thanked all those who attended. Mark Ramirez read the poem that he wrote for Basil.

**FINANCIAL SECRETARY'S REPORT:** Anita Holderman reported that \$12,790.74 was collected for the month.

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

Beginning Balance	\$69,488.92
Dues and Income	\$19,905.78
Total Balance	\$89,394.70
Expenses	\$45,505.38
Ending Balance	\$45,889.32

Molly explained that the expenses included the property taxes and the new air conditioning/heating units.

The 50/50 Drawing for the Food Drive cards was won by Darryl Holderman who donated his winning to the Food Drive cards. (\$17/\$17) The Drawing for \$200 would have been won by Manfred Martin who was not present.

There were 39 members present.

The meeting adjourned at 7:24 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

KIM GERDES  
NALC Branch 782 Recording Secretary

## Non-Member List November 2015\*

### Downtown Station

S. Kirby  
J. Cruz  
D. Zuniga

### South Station

M. Martinez

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

Hillcrest  
100% UNION!!!

### Dole Court

D. Morris

### Stockdale

J. Oh

### Camino Media

C. Rodriguez

### Arvin

100% UNION!!!

### Avenal

100% UNION!!!

### California City

100% UNION!!!

### Delano

C.V. Quebral  
D. Barreto

### Lamont

100% UNION!!!

### Ridgecrest

G.D. Schatz

### Shafter

M. D. Voights  
L. M. New

### Taft

A. Veach  
B. M. Krier  
K. J. Hughes

### Tehachapi

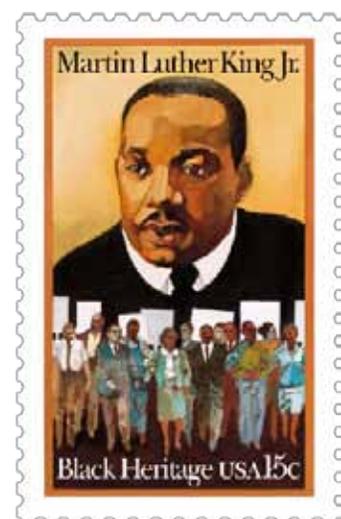
B. C. Den Beeman

### Trona

100% UNION!!!

### Wasco

100% UNION!!!



\*CCA names are in Italics

With only 16 non-members, we are  
**98.03% organized!**



# NALC Branch 782 December Meeting & Potluck

Thanks for the pix, Anita Holderman!!!

## Why Should I Go To The Union Meeting?

by Dave Durocher, Secretary  
NALC Branch 2008

**W**hy should I spend one night a month with the people I work with, when eight hours a day is probably enough is the thought on most members' minds. Well let me explain my reasons for attending my monthly Union meetings.

When I started working for the Postal service I was overwhelmed by all the rules, forms, types of mail, different routes, types of delivery and obstacles involved in placing a piece of paper in a tin box.

Overwhelmed by management giving, sometimes contradictory orders, confusion was the rule of any day. I wanted to know everything I could about doing my job, so I attended my first Union meeting.

At that meeting I met the officers of the branch, their knowledge, and the knowledge of the other members in attendance, and the camaraderie of being part of a "Team" (Union). I suddenly

became much more at ease with the mountain of information dumped upon me as a new employee.

Attending meeting after meeting I learned I was not alone, picking up something new every meeting kept me going back. Getting the most up to date information on what was going on in the Postal world. Learning the history of this Union, and how our working conditions could be, without all the hard work put in by former Union members, earning us a decent living wage, job security, benefits, holidays, overtime pay and more.

If you have a question about your job, the monthly meeting is the perfect place to get the right answer.

If you are unhappy about something involving your job, the monthly meeting is the place to talk about it. It may not always go the way you hope, but it will be discussed with you, and hopefully explained completely. The union will provide training for route inspections when needed, and current information on any other factors going on.

Those are some of the reasons I always attend my monthly meeting.

Article courtesy of the May 2015 Tarpon Springs, Florida  
NALC Branch 2008 *Suncoast Letter Carrier's Update*

Each and EVERY month, Branch 782 sponsors a drawing to encourage **YOU** to come to our Meeting\*. There was no winner in December 2015!!!

**Now, YOU could win \$250!!!**

If no one wins in January, it will go up by \$50 each month until there is a winner — or until it hits the max limit of \$500.

\*The fine print: **TO WIN THE MONEY YOU HAVE TO BE PRESENT WHEN YOUR NAME IS DRAWN!**





**LARRY SHEPHERD**

*Vice President*

Management in their infinite wisdom is cranking out discipline faster than a cheetah could pounce on a 204B. This is the true story of Christmas spirit as brought forward by the Postal Service. The spirit of giving out as much discipline as their superior's dictate. Management has their own guide concerning discipline in the Handbook M-39 that they are supposed to follow. The Union quotes from the M-39, Section 115.1, 115.2 and 115.3. These sections include the basic principle that discipline should be corrective in nature, rather than punitive, and the obligation of the delivery manager to make every effort to correct a situation before resorting to disciplinary measures. The manager has an obligation to their employees and to the Postal Service to find out who, what, when, where, and why and to make absolutely sure that they have all the facts when problems arise.

**115.1 Basic Principle**

*In the administration of discipline, a basic principle must be that discipline should be corrective in nature, rather than punitive. No employee may be disciplined or discharged except for just cause. The delivery manager must make every effort to correct a situation before resorting to disciplinary measures.*

**115.2 Using People Effectively**

*Managers can accomplish their mission only through the effective use of people. How successful a manager is in working with people will, to a great measure, determine whether or not the goals of the Postal Service are attained. Getting the job done through people is not an easy task, and certain basic things are required, such as:*

- Let the employee know what is expected of him or her*
- b. Know fully if the employee is not attaining expectations; don't guess — make certain with*

- documented evidence.*
- c. Let the employee explain his or her problem — listen! If given a chance, the employee will tell you the problem. Draw it out from the employee if needed, but get the whole story.*

**115.3 Obligation to Employees**

*When problems arise, managers must recognize that they have an obligation to their employees and to the Postal Service to look to themselves, as well as to the employee, to:*

- a. Find out who, what, when, where, and why.*
- b. Make absolutely sure you have all the facts.*
- c. The manager has the responsibility to resolve as many problems as possible before they become grievances.*
- d. If the employee's stand has merit, admit it and correct the situation. You are the manager; you must make decisions; don't pass this responsibility on to someone else.*

**Management must make every effort to correct a situation before resorting to disciplinary measures. Unfortunately, a lot of the time Management does not pass the "any effort" much less the "every effort" test to correct a situation prior to resorting to discipline.**

Article courtesy of the Louisville, Kentucky NALC Branch 14 December 2015 Br. 14 NEWSLETTER.

**"OuT tHeRe"**





## Contract Quiz Bomb

True or false questions to test  
your contractual cognition

### T or F ?

1. Postal Service regulations implementing the Family Medical Leave Act (FMLA) are found in the Employee and Labor Relations Manual (ELM) Section 515
2. The birth of an employee's child and the care of that child during the first year after birth can qualify as an FMLA covered illness
3. The placement of a child with the employee for adoption or foster care can qualify under the FMLA
4. FMLA entitles eligible employees to take up to 12 workweeks of job protected leave during a 12 month period
5. The Postal Service has selected the postal leave year which begins with the first full pay period that begins a calendar year
6. Veterans and active-duty service members have additional rights under the FMLA
7. To qualify for FMLA, the employee must have been employed for 12 months and worked 1250 hrs during the 12 month period immediately preceding the date that the leave starts
8. An employee's own serious health condition that makes an employee unable to perform the functions of the job can qualify as an FMLA covered illness
9. The need to care for the employee's spouse, son, daughter or parent with a serious health condition can qualify as an FMLA covered illness

**All answers are True** and are taken from M-01866 - Leave under the Family and Medical Leave Act. More questions? See your Steward and visit: <https://www.nalc.org/workplace-issues/contract-administration-unit/fmla>

Article courtesy of Everett, Washington  
Snohomish County Branch 791 December 2015 *Monthly Report*.

## Bereavement Leave

City Letter Carriers may use a total of up to three workdays of annual leave; sick leave or leave without pay, to make arrangements necessitated by the death of a family member or attend the funeral of a family member. Authorization of leave beyond three workdays is subject to the conditions and requirements of Article 10 of the National Agreement, Subsection 510 of the Employee and Labor Relations Manual and the applicable local memorandum of understanding provisions.

**Definition of Family Member:** "Family member" is defined as a:

- (a) Son or daughter - a biological or adopted child, stepchild, daughter-in-law or son-in-law;
- (b) Spouse;
- (c) Parent; or
- (d) Sibling - brother, sister, brother-in-law or sister-in-law; or
- (e) Grandparent.

**Use of Sick Leave:** For employees opting to use available sick leave, the leave will be charged to sick leave for dependent care, if eligible.

**Documentation:** Documentation evidencing the death of the employee's family member is required only when the supervisor deems documentation desirable for the protection of the interest of the Postal Service.

**Note:** As clarification, in-laws covered by the Memorandum of Understanding Re: Bereavement Leave includes the spouse of a child (whether biological, adopted, or stepchild). The memorandum also applies to the parents and siblings of the employee's spouse (whether biological or adoptive).

Bereavement leave for City Carrier Assistant Employees is addressed by the joint Questions and Answers on CCA's, question # 32. Are CCA's covered by the Memorandum of Understanding, Re: Bereavement Leave? The answer is yes, however, CCA's do not earn sick leave and therefore may only request annual leave or leave without pay for bereavement purposes.

Article courtesy of the Peekskill, New York  
NALC Branch 693 Winter *Westchester Carrier*.

# 2016 NALC HBP Info

## At a glance...



NALC Health Benefit Plan	1-888-636-6252
*Hospital Pre-Certification	1-877-220-6252
Mental & Substance Precertification	1-877-468-1016
Prescription Drug Program	1-800-933-6252
CVS/Caremark Specialty Pharmacy	1-800-237-2767
Durable Medical Equipment	1-888-636-6252
<b>"24/7 Nurse Hotline"</b>	<b>1-877-220-6252</b>
CVS/CareMark Pharmacist	1-888-636-6252
Solutions for Caregivers (24/7)	1-877-468-1016
CIGNA PPO Locator Line	1-877-220-6252
CIGNA Organ Transplant Approval	1-800-668-9682
Quit for Life (Tobacco Cessation)	1-866-784-8454
CIGNA Health Rewards (Discounts)	1-800-558-9443
<b>CIGNA Plus (Dental Discount)</b>	<b>1-877-521-0244</b>
Disease Management Program	1-800-227-3728
OPM Retirement Info Center	1-888-767-6738
Federal Information Center	1-800-333-4636
Social Security Administration Info	1-800-772-1213
PostalEase Human Resources USPS	1-877-477-3273
Quest Lab Services (Bakersfield)	(661) 631-8520
LabCorp Lab Services Bakersfield	(661) 631-9258
<b>Shared Services Option 5 live person</b>	<b>1-877-477-3273</b>

**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

**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"

### OUT THERE



"This is a summary of some of the features of the NALC Health Benefit Plan High Option. Detailed information on the benefits for the 2016 NALC Health Benefit Plan can be found in the official brochure (RI 71-009). All benefits are subject to the definitions, limitations, and exclusions set forth in the official brochure."

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

### URGENT CARE

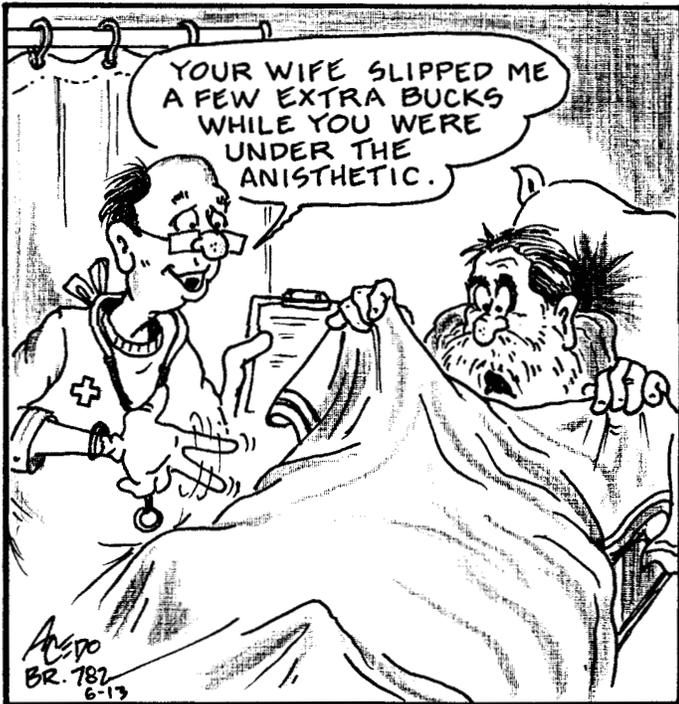
**Sendas Urgent Care:** 9450 Ming Ave., Bakersfield (661) 587-2500  
 M-S 8 a.m. - 9 p.m. Saturday/Sunday 8 a.m. - 8 p.m.  
 ASK FOR OTHER LOCATIONS

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

Our PPO doctors and facilities—through (OPA Network) CIGNA—save us and the Plan thousands of 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) 398-6075**

## OUT THERE



# Utilizing the CIGNA PPO/OAP network

For the NALC Health Benefit plan members, utilizing the CIGNA (PPO) preferred providers (OAP) Open Access plus network when choosing a physician/specialist or medical facility, it will save the member/family considerable out of pocket \$\$\$ dollars.

I have listed a few of the PPO providers "IN OUR AREA" we can use when medical services are needed. Our plan is accepted nation/world wide, and the member can use other providers "not" in the PPO network; but, the member will pay any additional charges.

### Urgent Care Facilities

Sendas 3409 Calloway Dr. 661-587-2500 ask for other locations

### Accelerated Urgent Care

9710 Brimhall Rd. 661-829-6747 ask for other locations

### Hospitals

Mercy Hospital 2215 Truxtun Ave. 661-632-5000  
Mercy southwest 400 Old River Rd. 661-663-6000  
Memorial Hospital 420 34th St. 661-327-1792  
San Joaquin Hospital 2615 Chester Av. 661-395-3000

### Labs

Quest 661-631-8520 ask for other locations  
LabCorp 661-631-9258 ask for other locations

### Imaging (x-rays)

Quest imaging 9602 Stockdale Hwy.  
661-633-5000/661-633-5001

### D.O. Dr. of Osteopath (adjustments of spine)

Dr. Dirckx 2725 16th St. 661-864-1150

### Chiropractic

42 listings

### Physical Therapy

Whittington 2400 Bahama Dr. 661-328-5655  
Laurente 2400 Bahama Dr. #200 818-901-6600

### Pharmacies

CVS has many locations  
Rite Aid...Walgreens...Costco...Sav-On drugs...  
LongsDrugs...PLUS there are numerous other small  
pharmacies in this network

"Remember" FLU SHOTS are FREE at the  
pharmacies n the network !!!

24/7 Nurse Hotline 1-877-220-6252

**"ALWAYS VERIFY", THE DR. or  
MEDICAL FACILITIES  
are in the CIGNA PPO/OAP NETWORK !!!**

### Acupuncture

Bae 8911 Cinnabar Ct. 661-323-7575  
Brian Kim 9900 Stockdale Hwy. 661-847-9717

### Podiatrist (feet)

16 listings

*If you are traveling out of town, you can write down the  
Urgent Care and Hospital that is in our network, in the area  
you are visiting... just in case of injury or illness.*

## HOW DO YOU DO THIS?

Log on the NALC website...Member Benefits...NALC Health  
Benefit Plan...QUICKLINKS...CIGNA Healthcare OAP  
online Provider Directory...type in City/State...and type of  
medical services that you might need in the area  
you are visiting.

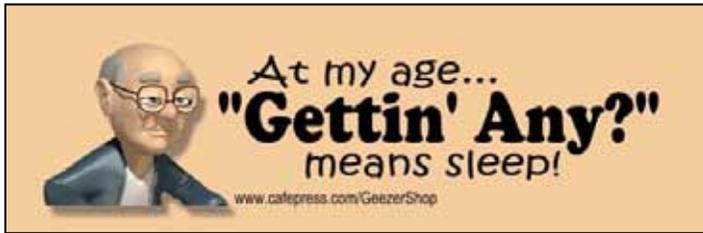
OR

CALL CIGNA PPO/OAP Network for assistance at  
1-877-220-6252

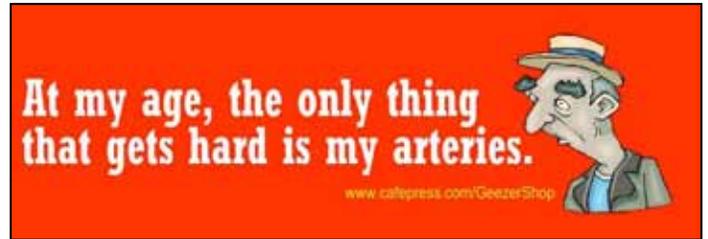
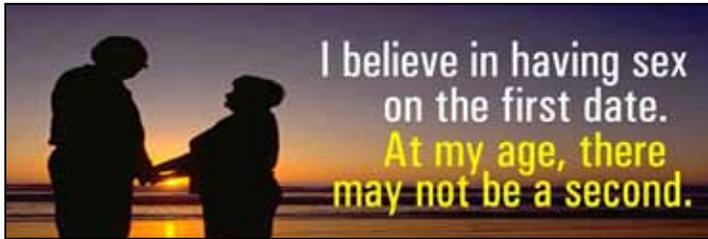
For our CCA members enrolled in the Consumer Driven or  
Value Option Health Benefit Plans call 1-855-511-1893

MARK RAMIREZ  
NALC Branch 782 HBP Representative

# Humor from Mark Ramirez is more than just a prescription for health...



...it IS a way of life!!!



## Holiday Cheer...and Mark is glad he doesn't drink...

With the Holidays upon us, I would like to share a personal experience with my friends about drinking and driving. As you may know, some of us have been known to have brushes with the authorities from time to time on the way home after a "social session" out with friends.

Well, two days ago I was out for an evening with friends and had several cocktails followed by some rather nice red wine. Feeling jolly, I still had the sense to know that I may be slightly over the limit. That's when I did something that I've never done before — I took a cab home.

Sure enough, on the way home there was a police road block, but since it was a cab, they waved it past. I arrived home safely without incident.

This was a real surprise as I had never driven a cab before. I don't know where I got it and now that it's in my garage, I don't know what to do with it.

...but he does like to share jokes!

What did the bald man say when he received a comb for Christmas? "Thanks....I'll never "part" with it!"

STRESSED is just DESSERTS spelled backward.

There are three "Stages of Santa". **1:** You believe in Santa! **2:** You don't believe in Santa! **3:** You are Santa!

Why was Santa's little helper depressed?  
He had low "Elf Esteem"

What nationality is Santa Claus?  
North Polish

Two snowmen on the front lawn. One snowman says to the other, "Do you smell carrots?"

What happened to the monster who ate the Christmas tree?  
He had to have a Tinsel-ectomy.

The location of your mailbox shows you how far away from your house you can be in a robe before you start looking like a mental patient.

My 60 year kindergarten reunion is coming up soon and I'm worried about the 125 lbs. I've gained.

I always wondered what the job application is like at Hooters...  
Do they just give you a bra and say, "Here, fill this out"?

MARK RAMIREZ

NALC Branch 782 Health Benefit Representative

# Tales of Yore

by Mark Woodbury  
NALC Branch 2555

**T**he famous saga of Trooper Reynolds came into being because of a game of “musical cases”.

It all started many years ago with a postmaster in St. Johns named Dave Y. He had a perverse penchant for moving furniture.

You see, Dave believed that if he could just figure out the ideal case configuration for maximum efficiency he could greatly increase office productivity, and fame and fortune (bonuses) would surely follow.

To that end, he orchestrated a series of moves that in one instance had Carrier cases clustered in a center clump, and yet another time had cases hugging the outer walls. All the while he searched for that magic formulation that sadly had Carriers scratching their heads and clerks bumping into each other in helpless confusion.

Veteran Carrier Jack Davis jokingly suggested to him that if we were going to play “musical cases” it might be easier to mount the cases on rollers to assist the next few moves. It would’ve been funnier if the postmaster hadn’t seemed to stop and consider it...

In any case — after months of nonstop migrations — nothing he did seemed to work.

In fact, productivity as a result of all that chaos had gotten

worse. He decided — in a fit of sudden inspiration: “Carriers are goofing off.”

So with one last move he thought to take the Supervisor’s desk out of her office and put it smack dab on the workroom floor — where she could keep an eye on the slackers and crack the whip when necessary.

Brenda C. was the supervisor. In fact, she was a good sort for a supervisor.

And, as bad luck would have it, her desk ended up uncomfortably close to mine...

*Not that I was any big rabble rouser... Far from it, being new on the job and a quiet and shy type.*

However, being close by, I was there and privileged to witness the birth of the “Trooper Reynolds Saga”.

It all started early one morning as Brenda answered the phone: “Hello, St. Johns Post Office, Brenda speaking.”

To tell the truth, at first I paid no attention. A phone call to the supervisor was just not a noteworthy thing, boring in the extreme and easy to tune out.

But, then I began to notice an increase in tension, a slight rise in tone from the supervisor.

“No. No sir! I did no such thing... Yes. I came down Chandler road this morning on

my way to work, but it was not at a ‘high rate of speed’.

“Ah,” I thought as I continued to listen. “Now **THAT IS** interesting.”

“I didn’t see any patrol car, officer Reynolds... I’m sorry. **Trooper** Reynolds. But, there was no one there... An automated traffic stop? An ATP!? I’ve never heard of any such thing!!! How do you know it was me? ... A camera? You have a photo of me? ... No, I don’t want you to fax it to the office!”

(It was then I noticed that the normal office din that is usually akin in volume and frenzy to feeding time at the zoo had lessened appreciably as people stopped what they were doing and leaned in to listen.)

“The ticket is **WHAT!! THREE** hundred dollars! You’ve **GOT** to be kidding! I don’t have that kind of cash... You’ll take a **POSTAL** money order!”

Her voice got shrill as panic crept in. I began to feel a bit sorry for her...until looking over her shoulder...I saw that a crowd of excited listeners had crept in.

There in the front row I spotted Bimb’s smiling face ...and a quick wink.

“What do you mean that **DOESN’T** include court costs? .... **AND** administrative fees? Why would there be **COURT COSTS!!?** ...I see...”

And now words seemed to fail her.

“I don’t... I...ah,...uh...You want me to come down to the police station? **WHY ON EARTH** would I do that?!! I am **NOT** SLURRING my words!!!! And I **WON’T** be taking no field sobriety tests!!! **WHAT IS WRONG WITH YOU!!** You \*^@\*\*\*#\*\*\*, **DON’T TELL ME TO CALM DOWN!** What?.. There’s a... fine for... **DIS-RESPECTING A POLICE OFFICER?**”

Her face had gone white. She paused and looked around — seeing for the first time a sea of grinning faces.

“Wait a minute... wait... I thought I recognized that voice... **IS THAT YOU, MITCHELL?????**”

Then the entire office exploded in laughter. as she proclaimed:

**“DAMN YOU MITCH!!!”**

Article courtesy of the November-December 2014 East Lansing, MI *Spartan News*. Thank you Branch 2555 Editor Mark Woodbury!!!

Branch 782 Editor-guy Note:  
I have been wanting to use this article for a whole year. I hope you enjoy it like I did...



## The Saga of Trooper Reynolds

# 93304 South Station Christmas Potluck



Pictures by Anita Holderman  
South Station Letter Carrier



## A Christmas Gift

A guy's wife was nagging him hard for a four-wheeler but still he bought her a beautiful extravagant diamond ring for Christmas. The husband's friend was amazed at his decision and asked him in secret, "Why couldn't you buy a car instead of the diamond ring?" The husband smiled and answered, "Fake cars are not easy to find."

# 2016 Stamp Out Hunger Food Drive

by Pam Donato  
NALC Community and  
Membership Outreach Coordinator

Ever want to help set a world record? You can, while at the same time you can help your neighbor, the older couple down the block, your children's friends at school, or the family of the soldier serving overseas.

*We have the chance to do it with our 2016 Letter Carrier Stamp Out Hunger Food Drive on Saturday, May 14.*

First, the "world record" claim. After much research, including a notice from representatives of Guinness World Records, we now know that NALC owns the current record to beat. The 77.1 million pound food collection total we reached in 2011 is considered the number to surpass for any other group or organization holding a one-day food drive (conducted at multiple locations). So with a serious collective effort for our 2016 Letter Carrier Food Drive, we could set a new world record.

## UFCW joins Food Drive as national sponsor

NALC is pleased to announce that United Food and Commercial Workers International Union (UFCW) has signed on as a national partner for the 24th annual Letter Carriers' Stamp Out Hunger Food Drive, which will take place in 2016 on its traditional second Saturday in May: Saturday, May 14.

The partnership between UFCW and NALC is a natural one. Working families not only see their letter carrier at least six days a week, they often see their grocery clerk or checker just as frequently. This partnership is perhaps even more appropriate since UFCW represents workers in food-related industries, such as grocery stores and food-processing facilities.

*Our food drive is the largest one-day food drive in the United States.* In 2015, active and retired Letter Carriers, along with their family members and friends—not to mention countless volunteers—collected almost 71 million pounds of non-perishable food. These results brought the grand total to more than 1.4 billion pounds since the drive began in 1992.

NALC looks forward to working with UFCW as Letter Carriers continue to make good on our commitment to use our Food Drive to deliver much needed food to local food banks and food pantries.

While being part of a world record setting is an exciting and admirable objective, this food drive began with, and has continued to work toward, a singular goal for over 23 years, to help those in need in our own communities. Remember, the people who need help are not unlike your own family, immediate or extended. They are working families, the elderly and children. They are the families of those actively serving in the military. They are single

parents, grandparents raising grandchildren, parents dealing with a child's serious health condition and families in which a parent has lost a job. These are folks doing everything "right," often working more than one job, but still unable to make ends meet. They go to your place of worship. They have the same values and goals as you do. And as we learned from our own members last year, some in the NALC have been on the receiving end of this kind of help at some point in our lives.

The NALC began preparing its 2016 Food Drive efforts well before the 2015 haul was stacked on food pantry shelves. This mammoth food drive, NALC's national day of giving, takes more than a full year to plan and organize. It's one of the toughest days of the year, but it's also one of the most gratifying. Each bag of donations represents a meal for a family in need.

This early, Branch leaders are developing their strategies for the May 14 Food Drive. So here's what you can do to help: Reach out to your community. Do you have a food pantry on your route you'd like to have receive some of the food we collect? How about your church or faith community; does it have a food shelf that needs help? Are you aware of an afterschool program that could use donated food? Figuring out where the food goes is part of the planning. Those who work inside these hunger organizations can be creative and resourceful planning partners, too. It's best to start making these connections now. Early planning is also needed to harness the spirit (and healthy, strong legs) of groups your children might be involved with. The NALC Food Drive is an excellent volunteer opportunity that provides community service hours, often needed for college applications and résumés. Help connect us to student youth groups from high schools, colleges and universities. Boy and Girl Scouts and church youth groups are well organized and eager to participate.

Don't forget adult volunteer organizations, such as the American Legion, VFW and veterans' organizations, Rotary Clubs, Lions Clubs, etc. If you are a member of one of these groups, help connect your Branch President to the person in charge of that group to coordinate an NALC Food Drive volunteer opportunity. The addition of these "official volunteers" can help lighten the load for all the Carriers in your Branch.

Let your Branch President know right now that you'd like to help. We're still about five months away from our NALC Food Drive, but your help and the connections you may have are needed right now.

*Please help make May 14, 2016, the best NALC food drive!*

**It's not too  
early to begin thinking  
about the Food Drive...**

# THE VIEW FROM THE COUNTRY CLUB

by Dave Mayou  
NALC Branch 114

Sometimes what you hear is all there is. Sometimes there's more behind what is being said. Example, when your spouse says, "Never mind, I'll take care of it," there are some underlying things which aren't being said.

What follows is a guide for some of the most common utterances of your friendly neighborhood supervisor:

When a supervisor says, "This will go good on the street!" what they are actually saying is: This is the section of the route that I had pivoted that no senior carrier would touch, so I am giving it to you."

When a supervisor says, "This handoff should be about a half hour" what they are actually saying is This handoff should be a half hour if you don't actually have to drive anywhere to do it. A half hour hand-off in Proctor when you are delivering in Congdon Park is not really a half hour!

When a supervisor says, "Manage your mail to make eight" what they are actually saying is: It's really easy to manage when I don't actually manage.

When a supervisor says, "Gather around for a stand up talk," what they are actually saying is: Stand near your case quietly and pretend you can actually hear what I say while whispering. Just be aware that if I talk about slips, trips and falls and then you go out on your route and slip on some ice, I will then discipline you for disregarding my instructions to avoid slips trips and falls.

When a supervisor says, "Sure I will enter that DPS holdout for you," what they are actually saying is: Sure I will file that DPS holdout in the circular file.

When a supervisor says, during the morning go-around, "Call if you won't make five" what they are actually saying is: I realize there is no way on earth that you will be able to

make five but it's much easier to pass this problem off to the closing supervisor than it is to actually deal with the problem in the morning.

When a supervisor says, "Call if you won't make five, and, by the way, do you have a headlamp?" what they are actually saying is: I realize you won't make five but at least I care enough to not send you out into the dark without a headlamp.

When a supervisor says, when you call in from the route, "Why are you running late?" what they are really saying is: I don't really want you calling in and forcing me to make a delivery decision. By me being an ass on the phone you should know that it's easier just to skip your breaks and your lunch then it is to call in and deal with me.

***(Seriously...don't skip lunches and breaks. Management has three, and only three options when you call in: Have you continue delivery, regardless of how long it takes; Have you curtail some or all of your delivery, stop-ping delivery if necessary, or; Sending you assistance. Instructions to "Hurry up", whether actually said or IM-PLIED through intimidation, are NOT OK!)***

When a supervisor says "OK" when you tell them you will be in past five they are NOT DOING THEIR JOB. As stated above, they have three options to choose from when you are running late. OK is not one of the options. OK means that the supervisor doesn't have a plan yet Sometimes OK sounds like "I'll see what we can do." That's just OK with more words.

When a supervisor says, "Hey carrier, come on into the backroom so we can do your yearly one-on-one consultations" this really means that HELL HAS FROZEN OVER! This is NOT a statement you will hear from a supervisor. It is one of the things you are SUPPOSED to hear, but won't!

When a supervisor says, "Come on back for a day in court" what they are actually saying is; come on back while I level some charges against you. A carrier's response to this question should ALWAYS be, "I request that my steward be present during this investigation."

When a supervisor says, "I realize that you are new on this route. Call me before 2 to let me know how you are doing," what they are actually saying is: Call at 2 like I said... just don't expect me to actually ANSWER the phone. If you call, over and over and over, we MAY eventually pick up the phone... just don't count on it!

Be advised, not every supervisor will say or do the things stated above.

It's satire. Satire is based in fact...

Article courtesy of the Duluth, MN  
Zenith Branch News published in  
December 2015 by NALC Branch 114.



# Safety Advice

by Paul Purcell, NALC Branch 258

Last fiscal year we encountered a rise in motor vehicle accidents (MVA) in addition to injury and illness accidents (I&I) prompting district is looking into ways into cutting down on these accidents, the most common MVA accidents are hitting stationary object and the I&I accidents are slip trips and falls.

The district and local management can put as many policies into place as they want but ultimately the reduction of accidents comes down to us working safe. We make decisions everyday on whether we are going to do an unsafe act, where it be our driving speed on wet, leave covered roads or not paying attention to where we are walking. Accidents happen and some are not our fault but when we work the hours we do for the amount of days we work in our careers the odds are against us that something may happen. Management thinks we do these things intentionally to get out of work, I do not know of a single letter carrier who intentionally gets hurt to get out of work but this is the mentality of who we work for every day. As I said, there are carriers who have accidents; we need to find the root cause for these accidents to help prevent future accidents but management will want to discipline a carrier for getting hurt, if management attempts this sort of action the stewards and officers of this branch will defend you. If you have an accident and are hurt doing the duties of a letter carrier report it right away and seek the proper medical attention you may need and we will help you with the rest.

One extra thing we must pay attention to is our vehicles we use on a daily basis on our routes, they are in such despair and the problem is getting worse every day. You are required to do a daily check on the vehicle assigned to the route that day. Every day I see carriers get into their vehicles check to see if it starts and head back into the office; this is not a proper vehicle check. A proper vehicle check is checking each item on the Notice 76; do not rush through the daily inspection. In addition to those items on Notice 76, you should be checking your rims and tires for traction and rust. This past year we had an issue where a carrier's hub cracked apart from the rim and luckily the carrier was not going a great rate of speed.

If you come across a problem with your vehicle fill out a PS Form 4565 and make sure you keep copy 2 for yourself. If the problem is a safety issue fill out a 4565 in addition to a PS Form 1767 if you feel the vehicle is unsafe to drive. Management cannot make you drive a vehicle you deem unfit for you to work in safe manner. It has also been brought to my attention management has given the Ford Focus to carriers to deliver their routes; these cars are not meant for delivery mode. My question where is the mail stored, for delivery? Mail is not to be stored in the front or back seats for safety and security reasons.

Another big issue we are experiencing is work in the dark, Darkness is not the unsafe act but working in the dark maybe. We must make an attempt when working in the dark and again it is your call. Management cannot make you work in the dark if you feel it's unsafe. Everyone is different and all routes are different. Carriers who have mounted or cluster boxes will feel safe while others who deliver in the city may not. Again, you must make an attempt when told to work in the dark.

Lastly, along with reporting vehicle defects we should be reporting hazards on our route. The very least you should have a hazard card written up so others who work on your route are aware of the hazard. If there are issues needing future attention, fill out a PS Form 1767 for the hazard and if it's not addressed see your steward or myself. Contrary to management's belief they cannot make you perform a task if you have a safety issue with that task.

Recently a question was raised about dog warning cards and this has been addressed by the District Safety Manager and Central Penna. NALC/USPS Joint safety Task Force which I am a member.

The dog warning cards are meant as a tool to alert us of bad dogs on our routes. We don't want 100 dog warning cards cased in on routes, while every dog can bite at any time we don't want carriers becoming complacent when seeing dozens of warning cards cased in to alert us of every dog. A carrier told me she has a list of where dogs are for a complex on her route. This is a good way to alert us of all dogs but then we would use the dog warning cards for alerting carriers of a bad dog.

Article courtesy of the Reading, Pennsylvania Pagoda Branch 258 December 2015 *NALCASTER*

# What Does an Article Written in Illinois in 2007 by a Branch 245 Member Have to do With Branch 782's Brad Smith's Article written in 2009?

## “Numbers Are Like Constipation... You've Got To Work It Out” by Jerry Pyfer NALC Branch 245

**P**ark Branch management, I suppose like any other manager, has been on a big numbers kick lately. Numbers (as in street, office, percent to standard) are what management lives and dies with. I—on the other hand—really couldn't care less. Although, in some instances, I suppose I really should.

Several arbitrations and memorandums of understanding have repeated the fact that Letter Carriers cannot be disciplined for simply not making the numbers, either in the office or on the street... otherwise, I would have been stuffed and mounted on a supervisor's plaque on the wall after the Special Route Inspection War!

I really do understand just how vindictive managers can be when they fail to make their case of a Letter Carrier slacking off by their use of numbers alone.

A few weeks ago, the Station Manager came over to my case as I was working away. He spread out several sheets of paper full of numbers with an inquiry: Why was Route 1103's street times varied up to an hour and 23 minutes? Just the day before, I had exceeded street time by 57 minutes. “**HOW DO YOU (ME) EXPLAIN THESE**



**“HOW DO YOU (ME) EXPLAIN THESE VARIANCES????????????????”**

The boss made the case that—because of the inspection two years ago—I should have the most accurate time reference in the system. I had to agree. 1103's numbers should be the most accurate. But, the B-Team disallowed 20 minutes of comfort stops (as in potty breaks). *However, when my bladder says it's time to head for the bathroom, I head for the bathroom or it will get mighty embarrassing.*

And my bladder does not understand what a B-Team is, thus the comfort stop time is still used.

After a short debate whether the B-Team disallowed 10 or 20 minutes, I informed the boss that supervisors have checked up on me five times in a week and-a-half and walked with me three of those times. I asked them if they witnessed any wrong deeds committed by me. They hadn't by the way.

I made it known that I understand that Letter Carriers are supposed to expect street supervision at any time. But if I get walked with three times again, while other Carriers have not, there *will* be a disparity grievance.

If you feel management is unfairly tailing you, record the times and places so when a disparity can be filed on your behalf, the Steward has evidence. We will compare your treatment with that of fellow Carriers.





## from the editor-guy:

I was amazed that so many crazy folks showed up *before* 7:30 a.m. on a Sunday morning to join me for my retirement breakfast. Can't speak for any of them, but I really did enjoy myself.



As we were driving to Noriega's, my wife (Marcelle) and I wondered how many people would hear the alarm and then mutter—as they rolled over—saying something like this:



"I like Basil.  
But, I don't like  
him *that* much!"

*Thank you to  
each of you!!!*

BASIL ZUNIGA

## Basil is Re-Tired

It's Basil's birthday breakfast,  
Many friends are present here!  
It is an annual gathering!  
At Noriega's, every year!

Always a pleasant atmosphere,  
With a very joyous mood!  
together with Basil's "joy" in life,  
"Family, Friends and Food!"

Basil is retired,  
And officially "Postal Free!"  
Now's the time to celebrate,  
With a "Colonoscopy"!

by Mark Ramirez  
NALC Branch 782 Poet at Large

## The Feet of a Mailman — A Look Back —

by Marcena (Zuniga) Neil  
The oldest of the 8 kids...

How many miles? Seriously. If we could add them up, if there had been a way to keep track, just how many miles had Papa's feet carried him? Enough to go across country? Enough to travel around the globe? Enough to get to the moon?

I used to wonder things like that. You see, my Papa has been a mailman for 36 years. 36! And it's true he drove parts of his routes, but the majority of his career entailed him pounding the sidewalks with his own two feet. Door to door... Box to box...

His career began by taking parts of other carrier's routes - naturally the worst parts. After this training period came his very own route, one he would carry for the next 23 years. He had two other routes during his career, the last of which included the Valley Plaza Mall, delivering to the stores - all indoors! This carried

with it a most wonderful perk - Air Conditioning! I will explain why this was such a benefit in a moment.

I remember when he got the job all those years ago and wondering if that meant he would deliver mail to our neighborhood.

(It didn't.)

I remember my mom teaching me to iron. And among the clothes I learned to iron were his uniform shirts. Sometimes, just for fun, I'd iron in military creases.



Genevieve Zuniga (child #8) reads her sister's message.

I remember him getting up at what I considered an ungodly hour to head off to his station to case the mail before starting his route.

I remember going with my mom to bring him his lunch and how cool it was to see him in the middle of his day.

I remember in stores occasionally running into people who lived on his route, how they greeted him like a friend and how he seemed genuinely glad to see them.

Later he'd tell me, "That was Mr So-And-So. He lives at Such-And-Such an address. *I was convinced he knew everyone's address by heart.*

I remember when he became editor of the Branch 782 newsletter and the hours we spent each month folding, stapling, labeling those newsletters prior to mailing. I also remember proudly reading his article "From the Editor-Guy" published each month. He is a fantastic writer!

I remember all these things, but what I remember most, though I never told him, is thinking about the beating his feet were taking.

My old hometown, Bakersfield, can get a little warm in the summer, in the same

way my oven gets a little warm when I set it to broil at 600 °F.

Papa's feet, encased in heavy leather boots all day, must have felt like they were on fire as he walked for miles under the blazing sun, carrying a satchel of mail that weighed as much as a small child.

Sometimes when he came home he'd ask us to bring him a beer, and a pan of cold water in which he could plunge his aching feet. Then while sitting there, soaking his tired toes, he'd take a rag and black shoe polish and shine his boots up so they'd be ready for the next day.

Shiny or not, boots can only take so much before they give out, and his boots eventually had it. The sole had separated from the leather upper and flapped up and down with every step. New boots weren't cheap, and money was scarce. Papa was, after all, providing for his large family and he tended to put things like food, a house payment, and other such necessities ahead of new footwear for himself. What then was he to do?

Pop is a pretty resourceful guy. A fistful of rubber bands did the job admirably.



Yes, they had to be replaced frequently, but they held his boot together for longer than he or my mom would like to remember. That rubber-banded boot cannot be entirely forgotten, however. There is a Letter Carrier group photo that clearly shows a lighter colored

“something” wrapped around the dark boot of a young carrier who just happened to be in the front row.

He did eventually get a new pair of boots, and then another... One pair came to him in an unexpected manner. He was delivering mail to a trailer park when he noticed smoke coming from a laundry room. When he looked inside he saw flames coming from a plastic trash can (probably caused by a discarded cigarette) and no one else around to see what was happen-

ing. He immediately took action and to avoid burning his hands, kicked the can out of the building. His boot was covered in melted plastic. The laundry room wasn't damaged. No one was hurt. And with gratitude the trailer park bought him a new pair of boots.

Despite the headaches and foot-aches that came with the job, he seemed to enjoy getting to know people on his routes. He would start conversations by saying, “I've got a dumb joke for you. Are you ready?”



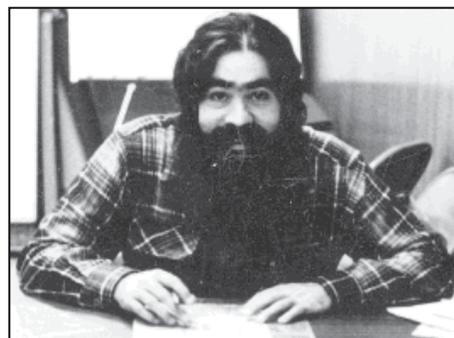
Basil telling Vince Sombrotto a dumb joke...

He was always watchful of the elderly he delivered to, checking in on them to make sure they were doing alright.

He once gave aid to a baby who had managed to get the end of a metal hanger stuck in her mouth, piercing her tongue. She was bleeding profusely. Taking the baby from her frantic mother, he quickly pulled the hanger out and handed the little one back to her mom. The next day he heard that the doctor said the baby would be fine.



Basil should have listened to Mark Ramirez as he asked, “Hoser”, aren't three pizzas enough????!?!?”



Early 1980's editor “schuff” in the old Branch office.

He really did care for and take care of the people he served every day.

Every day for 36 years...

And now he is retiring. Now he will no longer have to pound his feet (and knees, and back...) for hours everyday. Now he starts something new.

And to him I have something important to say:

# Thank You, Papa

*Thank you for all those hours, all those years you gave to take care of us.*

*Thank you for choosing to have us kids instead of a BMW.*

*Thank you for working even when you were sick or sore, hot or cold.*

*Thank you for putting up with the hard parts of your job.*

*Thank you for encouraging us and teaching us to look for creative solutions to problems - even if it involved rubber bands.*

*Thank you for making sure we had food in our bellies, a roof over our heads, and a shoes on our feet.*

*Thank you for talking to us about life and teaching us how to look at both sides of an issue.*

*Thank you for taking us to church.*

*Thank you for trips to the beach, music in our house, and dogs in our life.*

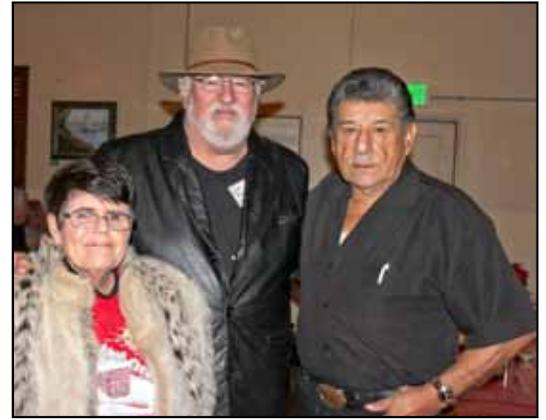
*Thank you for showing us what hard work looks like.*

*Thank you for showing us what it means to take pride in your work and give it your all.*

*Thank you for being our Papa.*

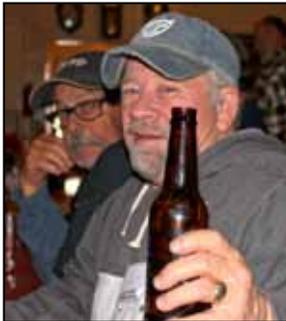
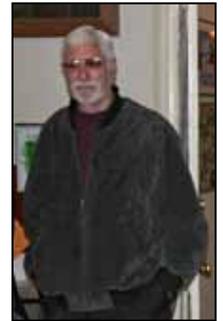
*I love you.*

*Continued on next page...*



is at an "I'm RETIRED!"  
Breakfast with Basil Zuniga





Thank you to NALC Branch 782 Photographer Anita Holderman for her mucho many wonderful pictures!!! I really appreciate your great eye!!



from

# Kim Gerdes

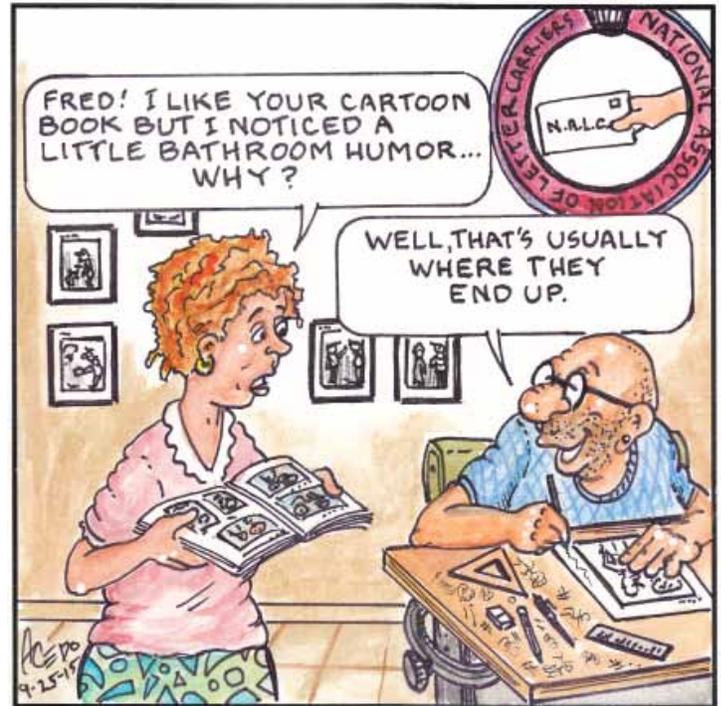
## Recording Secretary

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

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.

**"OuT tHeRe"**



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...

Finally, I want to present you with an up-to-now unpublished example of Fred's work. Enjoy!

Dear Kim Gerdes, NALC Branch 782 Recording Secretary

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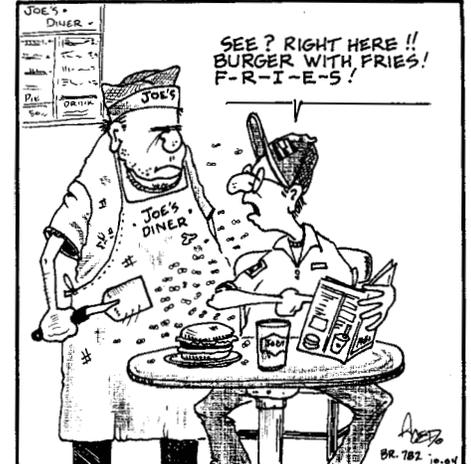
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