

# 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

WEB VERSION

JANUARY 2017



***We had a Christmas Potluck!***

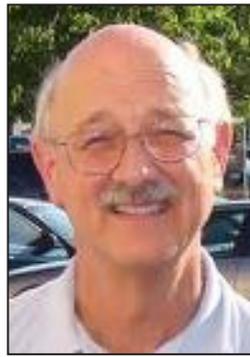


*These photos courtesy of Branch 782 Photographer Anita Holderman — with more in the web version...*



at the

# Mike:



USPS Letter Carriers have just completed another successful holiday mail season. By all indications, there was a substantial increase in parcel volume. Carriers in our Branch worked long hours and, at times until 8:00 P.M. or later.

Even though the Postal rates had been reduced, the USPS has shown a profit when you discount the Pre-funding requirement.

The new year will bring a new President and Cabinet nominees who have shown no interest in supporting Letter Carriers. It is important that *ALL* Carriers are aware of issues that may affect their job, pay, work conditions, and current and future benefits.

Below are a few examples of the proposals that were submitted in the past by those who don't have your interests at heart. Although they were defeated, they will undoubtedly be presented again.

- ⇒ A proposal to increase from 7 percent to 12 percent of basic pay for CSRS employees to pay for their retirement *with no increase in benefits. This would have amounted to a 5 percent pay cut for you.*
- ⇒ A proposal to abolish the FERS Special Annuity Supplement. That means that if you were to retire at your Minimum Retirement Age (MRA) — and it was before you were 62 years old — you would *NOT* receive any supplemental pay. *This would probably force most Carriers to defer their retirement until 62 or later.*
- ⇒ A proposal to allow the USPS to bargain to *eliminate* TSP matching contributions. *Less money for you!*
- ⇒ A proposal to *abolish* the FERS annuity altogether.
- ⇒ Change the formula used to determine retirement benefits from the average of the “High 3 Year Average” to a “High 5 Year Average” instead. *Less money for you!*
- ⇒ A proposal to reduce the return of the TSP “G” fund to almost zero. *Again, less money for you!*

Since the election in November, there has also been a proposal to *RAISE the retirement age* for Social Security to 69 for all those born in 1968 and later. While it did not pass in the last Congressional session it will more than likely be resubmitted...

There also was a Bill introduced by GOP congressman Todd Rokita of Indiana. That Bill would *eliminate* the current Civil Service protections — *including the right to union representation* — for all new federal employees, including new postal workers.

As reported in *Postalnews.com* on January 6, 2017, that Bill would allow an employee to be removed or suspended — *WITHOUT NOTICE OR RIGHT TO APPEAL* — from service by the head of the agency at which such employee is employed *for good cause, bad cause, or no cause at all.*

American Federation of Government Employees National President J. David Cox Sr. said, “Giving political appointees and the

managers who serve them free reign to punish workers without cause, while removing the checks and balances that keep everyone honest, is the antithesis of accountability.”

In addition, the Bill would:

- ⇒ Deny any pay adjustment whatsoever to workers who fail to receive a performance rating above “fully successful” in a new, management-designed rating system. That would inevitably allow subjectivity, favoritism, and politics to influence ratings.
- ⇒ Allow the government to deny earned pensions to any current or future employee who is convicted of a felony.
- ⇒ Eliminate an employee’s right to representation at the worksite by no longer allowing union representatives to resolve disputes, address issues of discrimination or retaliation, or propose improvements in the workplace during the workday.
- ⇒ Allow agencies to continue workplace investigations even after employees have quit or retired.

Each and every one of us needs to realize something: *ANY* of our Letter Carriers benefits, for both Active and Retired, can be taken away with an Act of Congress and a Presidential signature.

It will be even more important now that Letter Carriers (whether retired or still working) and their families become involved in writing and calling their Senators and Congressman in an effort to stop the attacks on Letter Carrier benefits.

You might not feel one person can do much. But, **TOGETHER**, we have shown WE CAN MAKE A DIFFERENCE.

I want to congratulate CCAs Francisco Marquez, Daniel Zuniga, Paramdeep Dhillon, Gabriel Trujillo and Arnaldo Martinez!!! They were converted to “Full-Time Career Regular Carriers” on January 7, 2017. ***Their conversions are a direct result of our NALC President Rolando holding fast to the goal of providing Contract protections for the next generation of Letter Carriers to have a direct path to full-time employment and benefits!***

I hope to see all of you at the next General Meeting on January 24 at 7:00 p.m. Entering into crucial times, you deserve info!

### **THE REALITY IS THAT THE FIGHT NEVER ENDS!**

MIKE TOWERY  
NALC Branch 782 President



**Fredric V. Rolando**  
NALC President

**N**oting that the Postal Service delivers more household e-commerce parcels than any other carrier, a Wall Street analyst told a CNBC audience that Letter Carriers were the “Stars of the Season.”

Further, a November 30 investment letter on the logistics industry from the Stiffel Company noted that “the future of USPS probably hasn’t been better in a long time.”

However...

### **Let me give you an example of a new threat.**

Last fall, the chairmen of our congressional oversight committees, Representative Jason Chaffetz (R-UT) and Senator Ron Johnson (R-WI), sent a letter to the

Government Accountability Office (GAO), the research arm of Congress.

They requested a preliminary investigation into the cost and the continued need for the letter mail monopoly and the mailbox statute. Together, these provisions make it possible for the Postal Service to serve 152 million households and businesses, at least six days a week, at the most affordable postage rates in the industrial world.

The GAO contacted NALC and asked for our views. We also have been invited to participate in a forum on these issues this month.

We will do what we always do — staunchly defend the Postal Service. **BUT WE WILL ALSO NEED THE LEGISLATIVE ACTIVISM OF OUR MEMBERS TO PROTECT THE USPS.**

GAO requests don’t just appear out of thin air. There are often ideological interest groups behind them. Such actors have always targeted the Postal Service, and there are private commercial rivals of USPS that fund them. For the free-market interest groups, the Postal Service’s success is a repudiation of their views — it proves that a government agency

can be efficient and successfully serve the common good. For the commercial rivals, it’s simply a question of profits and share prices.

We’ve recently seen a concerted effort by a whole range of right-wing organizations, funded by secret corporate donations, to attack the Postal Service and postal reform efforts. These attacks have come from the well-known **Heritage Foundation** and **Americans for Tax Reform** as well as murkier, less-well-known outfits such as the **Taxpayer Protection Alliance** and the **Sonecon Company**.

You may remember them from when United Parcel Service tried to make the bogus case against the mailbox statute. (See the October 2015 issue of *The Postal Record*.)

We’re the only folks who can stop these efforts. Armed with the truth, we will have to be “Stars of the Season” once again.

This is a portion of the “President’s Message” which is featured in the January 2017 issue of the NALC’s national magazine: *The Postal Record*.

The Editor-guy thanks Philip Dine, the Editor, and Staff for doing such an outstanding job each and every single month!!

# Why plans for replacing LLVs are heating up:

The Postal Service operates the largest civilian fleet in the world. About 190,000 vehicles are used to collect and deliver the mail, and about 140,000 of them are Grumman-built Long Life Vehicles (LLVs) These LLVs are getting up in years, and it's long past time to begin replacing them.

**They're getting far too expensive to maintain and more and more of them are ending up in a fiery blaze.**

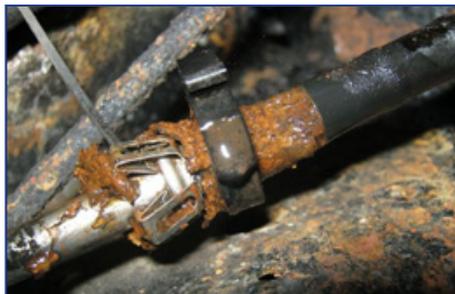
Most LLVs vehicles were purchased between 1987 and 1994. In fact, they were designed to last for 24 years, and many of them are already well past their expected lifespan.

According to Government Services Administration data, the Postal Service's vehicles are about three times older than the rest of the government's fleet. While other federal agencies replace their fleets every seven years, the Postal Service is going on 21 years and counting.

**Most LLV fires initiate from locations in and around the engine compartment and some have been linked to failed fuel system components.**

In some cases evidence was provided that oil leaks previously existed and this problem was not addressed.

Vehicle Maintenance workers pointed to cracked fuel lines, corroded connections, faulty wiring, hot fuse panels, overheating engine compartments, leaky windshield fluid lines over the fuse panel (the fluid contains alcohol), flammable fust collecting at the bottom of the steering column, and so on.



One of the most obvious problems with an aging fleet is that maintaining the old trucks is getting very expensive. Because of financial problems, the Postal Service hasn't been able to replace trucks, so it has had no choice but to repair them. It has been clear for many years that the Postal Service would need to begin replace the fleet, but the recession and its impact on mail volumes and revenues set back any plans to do so.

**The Postal Service made a decision in 2011 not to replace its delivery fleet "largely because it would cost about \$5 billion," money it just didn't have at the time.**

Now that the Postal Service's financial situation has improved the agency is moving forward on buying new trucks.

The current plan is to buy 180,000 "Next Generation Delivery Vehicles" (NGDVs). The anticipated cost for each NGDV is between \$25,000 and \$35,000, which comes to a total cost of \$4.5 billion to \$6.3 billion.

The plan has come under fire from a couple of tax advocacy groups, Securing America's Future Energy (SAFE) and Americans for Tax Reform, the critics seem more interested in bashing the Postal Service than in saving money. It's not as if taxpayers will be paying for the vehicles anyway.

Whatever approach the Postal Service takes, it takes a long time, perhaps as long as five or six years, to go through the process of deploying the new trucks. Once deployment begins, it will take several years to completely replace the old vehicles. The Postal Service plans to stagger its purchase of 160,000 new vehicles over a nine-year period beginning in FY 2018.

At this point, it looks as though mid to late 2018 is more likely. And that's if everything goes according to schedule.

**By that time, all LLVs will be well past their 24-year life span, over a billion more dollars will be spent on maintenance, and we will see more LLVs going out in a blaze.**



**If you are curious, go to this link...**  
<https://www.postaltimes.com/2016/07/2016-llv-fires/>



This article is courtesy of the January 2017 *Suncoast Letter Carrier's Update* published by Tarpon Springs, Florida NALC Branch 2008.

Thank you **Editor Mike Leishman!** Each picture was, indeed, worth another thousand words!!!

# New Year New Vehicle?

by Scott Van Derven  
Sergeant-At-Arms/Safety Representative  
NALC Branch 373



I send belated Happy New Year wishes to each Carrier and hope that all of your resolutions are still holding fast. The New Year is a time to reflect on your direction in life and holds the promise that your path in life will bring fabulous new experiences and opportunities.

Maybe one of those opportunities will be a spanking new **ProMaster**. These vehicles employ many of the things that will be incorporated into the next generation of Postal vehicles that



FCA US Media photo  
Adapted by Allpar.com



Illustration © 2015 Allpar LLC

are entering the prototype stage. Reviewing the pros and cons of the **ProMaster** may assist in getting a handle on the projected new fleet of Postal workhorses.

*One of the central features of the proposed new fleet is a walk in passenger side sliding door.*

The obvious advantage of this setup is to minimize Carrier exposure at the back of the vehicle which has been dangerous over the years for the Carrier working the mail while exposed to traffic.

However, what kinds of things have Letter Carriers discovered?

That advantage is practical during nice weather but becomes more of a problem with snow banks crowding your park points.

In order to use the door, you have to park further from the curb and have to step down onto slush or ice and a hidden curb.

The very narrow step into the vehicle is almost useless when wearing NEO style boots with their wide and rounded profile.

Some Carriers have reported that the door doesn't have a handle that is convenient to slide the door closed. Gloves and mittens make that task harder as well. I haven't heard reports if the tracks are prone to being clogged by snow — but that bears monitoring.

The rear area and cargo floor become slippery so the idea of traction strips is being investigated. This might also hinder sliding parcels in the cargo area to prepare for delivery.

The rear bumper step is also quite narrow and necessitates a very tall step to enter the rear of the vehicle. This is especially true when loading the vehicle in situations where tight parking areas don't allow for using the side door.

Some have complained that the metal folding racks are not marked on their edges and people whack their heads on them. Padding or hazard tape to reduce this are being considered.

On the positive side, the lighting is good, the racks are handy to use and the heater is good. The seat is reported to be OK but taller or shorter carriers must adjust for blind spots.

Some facilities cannot handle the taller profile in former covered parking areas. So? That perk may evaporate. (Change sometimes makes new possibilities to adapt a necessary evil.)

I would be eager to hear from those of you who are using the vehicle with your opinions and suggestions since I have not been assigned one yet myself. Feel free to send your opinions and suggestions to me at the Union office; call the Branch 2 office at 414-444-1836; or, email me at "svanderven54@gmail.com". I want to compile your suggestions into a job safety analysis or a best practices report.

Article courtesy of the Milwaukee, Wisconsin  
January 2017 NALC Branch 2 *Pioneer*.



# Welcome New Members!!

Joe Crisantos      Kuldeep Rai      Juan Salcido  
 Crystal Ramos      Lacey Cotillier      Desiree Dyer  
 Haley Vargas

## Minutes of the December 2016 General Meeting

The regular meeting of Branch 782 was called to order by President, Mike Towery, at 7:00 p.m. on the 20th day of December, 2016 at the Branch office, Bakersfield. The flag salute was led by Sergeant-at-Arms Jerry Patterson. All members of the Executive Board were present. The Stewards were present from Arvin, Avenal, Brundage, Camino Media, Downtown, East Bakersfield, Edwards, Hillcrest, Lamont, McFarland, Oildale, Shafter, South, Stockdale and Taft. Also present was Newsletter Editor Basil Zuniga; Webmaster Rick Plummer; Photographer Anita Holderman; Assistant Financial Secretary Marcie Rodriguez; Assistant Treasurer Debbie Guillet; Assistant Recording Secretary Norma Hamer and Paul Greenfield and Frank Martinez of the Social and Recreation Committee. The Minutes of the November 22, 2016 meeting were read and accepted with no additions or corrections. The communications were read.

**APPLICATION FOR MEMBERSHIP:** Applications were received from Jose Crisantos, Camino; Crystal Ramos, Brundage; Lacey Cotillier, Tehachapi; Juan Salcido, Dole Ct.; Kuldeep Kaur Rai, Stockdale; Desiree Dyer, Downtown and Haley Vargas, Hillcrest.

**REPORTS OF SPECIAL AND STANDING COMMITTEES:** Teresa Ortega reported that the picnic committee is great. Basil Zuniga reported that last month South Station folded the newsletter with the help of the Stewards. Next month will be E.B./Brundage station's turn. Paul Greenfield reported that there was not a meeting of the Social and Recreation Committee this month. Please contact him if you are interested in tickets for Christmas Town or Holiday Lights at CALM. Kim Gerdes reported that 4 books were sold this month. There are 854 remaining. Basil Zuniga reported that Fresno Branch 231 will be purchasing 50 books.

**UNFINISHED BUSINESS:** The motion from the November 22, 2016 meeting was read "John Ortega made a Motion that

the Branch donate \$250.00 to the Saxsenmeier Scholarship Fund. Seconded by Mike Munoz." President Mike Towery asked if there was any discussion. Seeing none, the Motion was voted on and passed.

**GOOD OF THE ASSOCIATION:** Kim Gerdes thanked all the Stewards for turning in the calendar money before the end of the year. Basil Zuniga brought some winter USPS jackets donated by Betty Marchand. Anyone interested in them should contact the office. John Ortega reported that beginning next month we will have three Steward meetings per month. He also asked for input from members about changing the General Meeting to Wednesday, so all the meetings will be on the same day of the week. Mike Towery discussed some of the issues with CCA's. Possibility of another CCA meeting in January or February. A discussion was held regarding CCA's and dog safety. When CCA's are doing parcel runs they are not being given information regarding dog issues or unsafe deliveries. Management did not know why or how to get this information to the CCA's. Some CCA's were being told not to leave 'Carrier Release' parcels if they hear a dog, others were being told to "toss the parcels" and leave if they hear a dog.

**FINANCIAL SECRETARY'S REPORT:** Anita Holderman reported that \$13,692.23 was collected for the month of December.

**TREASURERS REPORT:** Molly Biggar reported:

	October 2016	November 2016
Beginning Balance	\$70,053.05	\$49,415.90
Dues and Income	\$20,558.28	\$13,554.22
Total Balance	\$90,611.33	\$62,970.12
Total Expenses	\$41,195.43	\$10,857.92
Ending Balance	\$49,415.90	\$52,112.20

The MDA 50/50 Drawing was won by Dicie Wilder.

The Drawing for \$400.00 would have been won by Phillip Fudally if he had been present.

There were 35 members present. Six guests.

The meeting adjourned at 7:28 p.m.

KIM GERDES  
 NALC Branch 782 Recording Secretary

# NALC Branch 782 Non-Members September 2016\*

**Downtown Station**  
Sarah Kirby  
Javier Cruz  
Daniel Zuniga

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

**Brundage/East Bakersfield**  
Vicky Guerrero

**Hillcrest**  
100% UNION!!!

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

**Stockdale**  
James Oh  
Marty Martinez

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

**Arvin**  
100% UNION!!!

**Avenal**  
100% UNION!!!

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

**Delano**  
Cynthia V. Quebral  
Daniela Barreto

**Lamont**  
100% UNION!!!

**Ridgecrest**  
G. D Schatz

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

**Taft**  
K. J. Hughes

**Tehachapi**  
B. C. Den Beeman  
Christian Rosales

**Trona**  
100% UNION!!!

**Wasco**  
100% UNION!!!

\*CCA names are in italics

97.41% of local  
Carriers are  
NALC Branch  
782 members.

*To put it another way:  
We have 540 members.  
There are only 14  
non-members...*

## “OuT tHeRe”

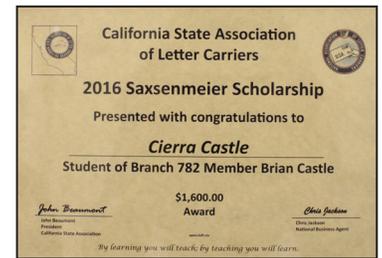


## — 12-7-16 Shop Steward Meeting —



## — 10-25-16 General Meeting —

Eric Ellis, California State Association of Letter Carriers District 4 Officer, attended our October General meeting to present Cierra Castle, daughter of Hillcrest Carrier Brian Castle and his wife Carla, with a plaque for receiving the Saxsenmeier Scholarship.  
**Congratulations to Cierra and to her proud parents!**



Pictures courtesy of Anita Holderman Branch 782 Photographer



**If you see your name on this list... Whose newsletter are YOU reading??**

Only asking because we don't have your current address. **PLEASE** inform us of your correct mailing address and you, too, will get your very own newsletter! **If you know somebody on the list, PLEASE LET THEM KNOW WE ARE LOOKING FOR THEM.** We want them to be as informed and entertained as you are!

Richard Manzo  
Yvonne Esquivel  
Gilroy Manglignont  
Enoch Moya  
Jose Gutierrez  
Adriana Chavez  
Eugene Shebley  
Thomas Lyster  
Brian Castle  
Marilu Rivera  
Christina Scott  
Cristopher Castruita

Ruben Gonzales  
Michele Thompson  
Charles Knox  
Ronald Evans  
James Griffith  
Robert Guerrero  
Steven Nieto  
Manuel Ramirez-Penilla  
Dawn Rimmer  
Reginald Thomas  
Richard Tomlin

ANITA HOLDERMAN  
NALC Branch 782 Financial Secretary

**J**oe Abril Gonzalez, beloved husband, father, and grandfather, passed away peacefully at his home on Monday, January 9, 2017, at age 88. Born in Fresno, CA, in 1928 to Maria and Melisio Gonzalez, Joe was raised in McFarland, CA. He attended McFarland High School, where he played basketball, football, tennis, and the clarinet. After graduating, Joe enlisted in the U.S. Air Force. He attended the Air Training Command at Scott Air Force Base, Illinois, specializing as a General Radio Operator. He also attended Radar Bomb Scoring Plotting Training at Carswell Air Force Base, Fort Worth, Texas. Joe received an honorable discharge in 1953, and he soon settled in Bakersfield, CA.

Joe was an avid dancer. While enjoying a night out at the Juarez Dance Hall, he was introduced to his soulmate, Trinie Filoteo. After a brief six-month courtship, they were married on February 15, 1958. Joe not only had a long, loving 58-year relationship with Trinie, he also formed lifelong bonds with Trinie's family members, who readily embraced Joe into the family. As the senior member of his new family, Joe often led prayers at family gatherings.

Joe worked for the U.S. Postal Service for 39 years. He was a dedicated postal employee who enjoyed having personal interaction with people on his route. Throughout his postal career, Joe preferred to carry his mailbag and walk his route. For a time, he even delivered mail by bicycle.

Joe enjoyed riding motorcycles, playing tennis, working in the yard, playing poker, going to Carpinteria Beach, and spending time with his family. Joe had an incredible work ethic, an unwavering commitment to his family, and a passionate dedication to his children and grandchildren. Joe had a special relationship with each of his grandchildren. He was their chauffeur and their confidant. He enjoyed biking in the park, feeding the ducks, getting hamburgers, and playing checkers with each of his grandchildren. Joe never failed to attend the special events in his children's and grandchildren's lives. Joe was a wonderful, generous husband, father, grandfather, and friend who was always there to help when needed. Joe served as a wonderful role model for his children and grandchildren.



Joe is survived by his wife of 58 years, Trinie; his sister, Socorro Munoz; his children, Jo Ann Seaton (Dennis), Margo Kooren (Dutch), and Joseph Julian Gonzalez (Monique); his grandchildren, Brandon Mullins, Jessica, Zachary (Sylvia), and Dylan Seaton, Julian Gonzalez; and numerous nieces, nephews, and in-laws.

A celebration of the Rosary was held at 9:00 a.m., followed by a Funeral Mass at 9:30 a.m., on Wednesday, January 18, 2017, at St. Philip the Apostle Church, 7100 Stockdale Hwy., Bakersfield, CA. Burial was at Greenlawn Memorial Park Southwest, 2739 Panama Lane, Bakersfield, CA. A reception followed at Logan's Hall at St. Philip the Apostle Church.

The family would like to thank the extended family members who graciously offered their time and assistance through this difficult period; their generosity is greatly appreciated. The family would also like to thank the staff at Hoffmann Hospice for the kind and compassionate care their loved one received. In lieu of flowers, the family request donations be made to Hoffmann Hospice at [www.hoffmannhospice.org](http://www.hoffmannhospice.org).

# In Memorium

## Joe Gonzalez

September 11, 1928 - January 9, 2016

Joe was a very, very good Letter Carrier. He always looked and acted professionally. He also expected other Carriers to do the same.



Recently...

In 1967, as a newbie, I was on Joe's Downtown route for a week. After his vacation, he wasn't too happy with me. We didn't have rubber bands back then. I would cut the strings on the mail...and throw them on the ground on the street. **He found them...**

Also, there was no CFS. Carriers personally entered all of the forward info on each letter. The pink cards were very important. After vacation, Joe came back to find that I hadn't done as good a job as he would have done with them or the string. **He let me know how he felt...**

You know what? Fifty years later, I still have a lot of respect for Joe Gonzalez!

FRED ACEDO



July 27, 1972



Young Joe on a motorcycle

Two of these pix are courtesy of Joseph Julian Gonzalez' (Joe's son) Facebook Page.

# from the editor-guy

*When my telephone rang the other night, I had no idea it would be Homer Ruiz. Homer Ruiz??? I ask you: "Is THAT name familiar?"*

*If you are a Letter Carrier who has worked for more than twenty years in Bakersfield, you probably remember Homer. If you don't remember him, YOU MISSED OUT! This is why he contacted me.*

I read obituaries in our newspaper to see if people I know have passed on. It seems that —too often— I find someone that I am related to, used to work with or I see a name that I recognize. I read that Joe Gonzalez had passed away. Joe Gonzalez? That name brings back memories...

I worked with Joe Gonzalez (at the Annex on California Avenue and at Bakersfield's Downtown Station) and with quite a few characters! *Some* of them were Manuel Edwards, Jim Tillett, Phil Evans, Freddie Castro, Jon Sudsbury, Gary Golden, Bill Siefert, Billy Hale, Hugh Altman, Pete Colbert, Mickie Cameron, Cheryl Cooper, Mary Bryant, Linda King, "Spike", Raul Hererra, John Reddy, Allen Springman, Eddie Osborne, and Buddy Gallegos.

My postal career started in 1960 and I retired in 2000. While my memory isn't as good as it used to be, there *are* still a few things that I can remember.

The very day new postmaster Leroy Brewer flew into the Bakersfield airport, he drove directly to his office at the Annex. On his way, he saw a jeep driven by a Letter Carrier who wasn't wearing a seat belt and had the door open.

The next day, Leroy had a standup and told us that he'd better not catch any other Carriers driving *his* jeeps like that.

The Carrier he saw was Joe Gonzalez!

Joe, like me, always seemed to be ready to do anything at work that needed to be done. He was willing to help anybody! It seemed like we were constantly being sent out to help out on the street; do collections, parcels runs, pick up mail from a train or at the airport. This is when there was no overtime pay and — as I recall — we started out making \$2/hour. I remember that Joe *always* seemed to have a smile

on his face. I never recall that he had any bad things to say about anybody.

Also, I think that Joe had been in the Air Force and always looked really sharp in his mailman uniform. I remember that, when we were finally authorized to wear walking shorts at work, Joe got a uniform pair of USPS shorts as soon as possible!



I eventually went into supervision in the early 1980s, started floating around to different stations and I don't remember when Joe retired. But, it had to be sometime in the late 80s. It's been many years since I've seen Joe, but it was still a bit of a shock to read about his passing.

## HOMER RUIZ

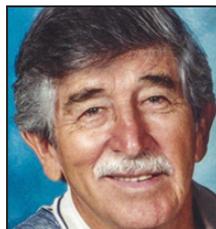
**A**re you a person who reads the obits? I'm not. (At least not yet...) Anyway, as your editor, I really appreciate when somebody informs me that a former Letter Carrier has passed away.

The notion that a person can just "leave" unacknowledged makes me feel sad. This is whether through retirement or death.

Through the years, I've also come to realize something else which is accentuated by a line in Joe's obituary: "Joe worked for the U.S. Postal Service for 39 years." His obit actually goes on to address a little more about Joe's mailman career. However, through the years, many others that I've read don't have anything other than how long an individual worked for the Postal Service. I understand. But...

It's almost as if all of the time spent in our work lives are somehow relegated to an afterthought. I find that mystifying.

Joe worked through the **HOT** summers. *YOU know what that's like!* He worked when it got dark. *Again, YOU can identify!* If Joe had been asked, he could have told you where the boxes were on the streets where he used to deliver *and* if you went to check them out, you might discover the *very same* mail boxes he put mail in from the 1950s through the late 1980s are still there... His work world was, in many senses, the same universe that we inhabit today. (Granted, Joe never had to deal with DPS, scanners, or the way that management knows where you are each and every minute that you are out there on the street.) But, he experienced dogs;



and, I'm sure, he may have even limped through those pesky ankle sprains that seem to catch each of us by surprise.

## Joe Gonzalez was one of us!!

When I first walked through that big swinging door at the Annex in 1979, entered that cavernous, dark space and was directed to where Carriers cased their mail, I had no idea that my own postal trek would span the next thirty-six years.

At that time, the 01, 04 and 09 Carriers were all housed at the Annex. Soon after, the different zones were moved to other locations. I was assigned as a 93301 PTF and helped the Regulars deliver out of Bakersfield's Downtown Station.

It was during this period that I first remember being around Joe Gonzalez. He would pull down swings for me. I would listen to him talk when the Carriers went down to the swingroom for breaks; and, I remember that he always seemed to have a smile on his face and that his eyes seemed to twinkle with some secret delight.

I regret not taking the time to learn more about Joe or some of the others I worked with. Many of those — what to me were "old timers" — were WWII, Korean War, or Vietnam War combat veterans. And, I **REALLY** wish that I had discovered more about their individual stories. *Every* person has a story.



Ultimately, I take comfort that Joe had a long, active life in retirement. Although eventually robbed by a stroke of his mobility and other things which can be taken for granted, he was



always surrounded by a loving family and his wife of fifty-eight years, Trinie.

Judging by the many pictures of him with family which were on display at the reception following his well attended funeral, Joe lived a fantastically rich and fulfilling life! That gives me hope for my own sojourn as well.

(One final observation: I found that Joe's son, Joseph, got his hair from his Mom.)

## BASIL ZUNIGA

Joe's pictures here are by way of the Facebook page of Joe Gonzalez' son Joseph Julian Gonzalez.

# A little of this and that...

by John J. Piffner,  
Vice-President  
NALC Branch 373

## OWCP

At the Fall Steward Training recently, David Teagarden gave a presentation on OWCP. He related a story of a Letter Carrier who received a papercut at work.

The papercut got infected with gangrene and it was quite serious. However, the Letter Carrier didn't fill out a CA-1, nor tell anyone of the papercut when it occurred. When the Carrier later tried to file for benefits OWCP denied his claim because neither did he file a CA-1 at the time of the incident nor tell management of it.

Mr. Teagarden made the point that no matter how minor the injury may be, a Carrier should always inform management in case it develops into something more serious.

\* S.A.N.E.



Originally published July 2003

Recently I was pulling a large flat parcel out of an orange tub. There were heavy staples sticking out of it and I cut my hand open on it. It didn't look serious but keeping in mind the above I requested a CA-1 from management to document just in case.

Of course, management refused to give me the form. The stupidvisor told me to just write him a statement. Since I did not

receive the CA-1, I had my Steward file a grievance. It was resolved that in the future any time a Carrier requests a CA-1, management will provide it.

If you *EVER* receive a slight injury you should request the CA-1. What?

If you *EVER* receive a slight injury you should request the CA-1.

If you decline medical attention at the time of the incident, the CA-1 is just filed away. It is not sent to OWCP. But it is important documentation should you need medical attention later.

You never know.

And why would you want to have to deal with these idiots later on if something does happen?

## SCANNER AND CAMERA PICTURES

At a service talk, management gave the Carriers an instruction that they are not to be taking pictures with their phone cameras while at work.

Pretty much on a daily basis the scanner battery dies by the end of my day. Recently, I called in and informed management that I would be later than my projection because of the dead battery which now required me to write down the scan label numbers. It was going to take some time because I still had a lot of packages left to deliver.

When I called in, the stupidvisor told me to just take a picture of the scan label with my phone...

*Can you see how management always has a different take on things when it benefits them?*

Well, I informed management of their prior instruction and then proceeded to write down all the scan numbers. Then — when I got back to the office — I had to manually input **all of the numbers** into a different scanner.

When management is always on Carriers about every trivial thing, I have no intention of doing them any favors.

*NEITHER SHOULD YOU.*

## OH! SPEAKING OF PARCELS

Anyone can see that parcels are going to be the future of this company. And that's

good! However, this company is not set up to handle the deluge of parcels we are seeing.

From infrastructure in moving them between offices, to Clerk sorting and handling in the offices, to Carriers trying to load them in LLVs that were designed for maybe 30 parcels at the most.

The day after Thanksgiving I had four orange tubs of parcels. I literally stacked them to the ceiling and had to push them forward so that I could close the back door of the LLV.

Those who work with me know that I sort the parcels in street order by stacking them on the garage floor. Then it takes me an additional 10 minutes to move them from the ground to the back of the LLV.

This is the only way I can stack so many parcels in some order. There are just too many parcels to route them in the back of the vehicle.

The mismanger thinks those 10 minutes are just a waste of time. He told me how he routed some rural route parcels into the back of the LLV... But, of course, he didn't have 4 tubs to deal with the day he delivered them.

I disagreed with him but he's running the place.

So, now I route the parcels in the back of the LLV. Except now, I only take half the parcels with me. I made a trip back to the office to get the parcels for the second half of the route one day. After that, I started getting parcel help.

*So, is the mismanger really saving 10 minutes by the end of the day with all the auxiliary assistance I am receiving?*

One day, I followed the guidelines of the M-41, section 225.22 and turned a piece of mail around in the case for every parcel that I had. This burned up management's precious office time; but since management thinks 10 minutes is too much to second-handle parcels on the dock they will just have to suck it up in the office.

*And it actually worked out great on the street.*

Every time I got to a piece of mail that was turned backwards, I got out and delivered a parcel. Nothing to keep track of as I worked through the route.

So, what's the point of all of this?

**WE** are the ones handling all of the parcels. **WE** should be allowed to handle

them in the manner that best fits our route. **WE** are the ones dealing with trucks that are too small.

Carriers will *always* find the best and easiest way to get something done. *That is if the brain deficient managers can stay out of our way.*

In the 28 years I have worked at the post office I have never seen a clipboard get anything done!

## CLOCKRINGS

I had a supervisor years ago, who always tried to change my clockrings. I was wise to her, and when she lied about doing it, I caught her in the act by showing how she manipulated the clockrings. Needless to say, I have not had any problems since then. I *ALWAYS* keep track of my clockrings so that I can compare them to my paycheck.

Recently I have heard from three different Carriers how they were shorted a whole day of pay and put on AWOL. The union got it straightened out for them. But *EACH OF YOU* should take the time to keep track of *YOUR* clockrings each day so that you can compare them to your paycheck.

This keeps management honest.

## DOWNTIME

There hasn't been much talk lately about downtime but as we move towards spring it will resurface again. Management looks at its precious DOIS, is told by their bosses to believe its accuracy and then they try to convince Letter Carriers that we do have plenty of down time.

But what about management downtime?



This cartoon is from the original **Out tHeRe** book and was originally published 1995

The West Station has 4 stupidvisors and one mismanager. On four days of the week there are only 3 stupidvisors working. I haven't worked a Sunday. But, I believe that only one stupidvisor works on that day. That leaves just one day when all four stupidvisors are working.

So, if the station can get by with just three stupidvisors on most days, then —when all four of them are working at the same time — there is only one conclusion you can make: There must be at least 8 hours or more of downtime when these idiots are not working productively. Stands to reason, doesn't it?

## THE OTHER SHOE

Of course, the opposite of this issue is overtime. Managers are always confrontational when Carriers request overtime to get their routes done.

But, the idiots who manage us use overtime themselves to get their own work done! The mismanager works 10 hours a day to get his work done. Saturday 12/10, the stupidvisor who opened was still working when I got off work at 6:45 pm. If they can't get their paperwork done in an 8 hour shift why do they expect us (who do the real work of moving the mail) to be done in 8 hours then?

## CHANGING POLITICAL LANDSCAPE

Last month. I got a lot of positive comments on my December column as well as one negative one.

Along with the compliments I got many Carriers' views on the election. Most of them mirrored mine. Out of all the comments and viewpoints that were given to me, one theme emerged: Trump and the Republicans in Congress will attack our pay and benefits.

And, when that happens, the ones who voted for Trump will be the most vocal in how the NALC isn't doing enough to protect us and our jobs.

But keep this in mind:  
**Protecting your job starts with you!**

## RETIREMENT

The Branch is sponsoring a retirement seminar on January 15th. The National put together a video and PowerPoint and sent it to all the NBA offices. St. Louis is sending Mike Weir, a former

NBA, to give us this presentation. Many of us are close to retiring. It's been some time since our Branch has done this, so it would be beneficial *even for those who are not nearing retirement* to also attend.

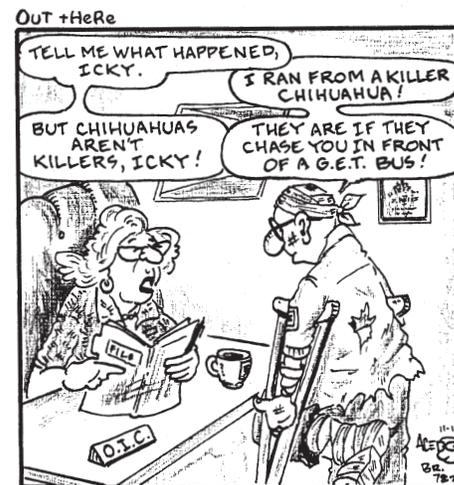
## BACK TO OWCP

I am currently helping a Carrier work through the OWCP process. Management made several errors. Because the Carrier called and got help right away, the Union is able to file grievances within the 14-day time frame.

I have said this before but it needs repeating.

It is extremely important that you call me or your union rep right away when you have an on -the-job injury! There is information you need to help your claim get approved. Plus, management routinely makes errors in getting you medical attention and in filing the required paperwork.

Don't take the chance that OWCP benefits could be denied to you because of management error. Just Call!!



## A NEW YEAR

Granted, I came off a 20-month CDRAAP detail so I was not expecting the huge amount of parcel volume we are seeing. Coming back in August and working through the fall and Christmas season, I found getting all the parcels delivered a challenge with the now antiquated LLVs.

If parcel volume continues to grow — *and I hope it does for the good of our company* — it is going to be a difficult year for Carriers with the equipment we have to work with.

I have no crystal ball to see what the new year will bring. But, whatever it does, I wish you all a Happy New Year!

This article courtesy of the January 2017 Branch 373 Eastern Iowa Reporter

# 2017 NALC HBP Info

## At a glance...



NALC Health Benefit Plan 1-888-636-6252  
 \*Hospital Pre-Certification 1-877-220-6252  
 Mental & Substance Precertification 1-877-468-1016  
 Prescription Drug Program 1-800-933-6252  
 CVS/Caremark Specialty Pharmacy 1-800-237-2767  
 Durable Medical Equipment 1-855-511-1893  
 "24/7 Nurse Hotline" 1-877-220-6252  
 CVS/CareMark Pharmacist 1-888-636-6252  
 Solutions for Caregivers (24/7) 1-877-468-1016  
 CIGNA PPO Locator Line 1-877-220-6252  
 CIGNA Organ Transplant Approval 1-800-668-9682  
 Quit for Life (Tobacco Cessation) 1-866-784-8454  
 CIGNA Health Rewards (Discounts) 1-800-558-9443  
**CIGNA Plus (Dental Discount)** 1-877-521-0244  
 Disease Management Program 1-800-227-3728  
 OPM Retirement Info Center 1-888-767-6738  
 Federal Information Center 1-800-333-4636  
 Social Security Administration Info 1-800-772-1213  
 PostalEase Human Resources USPS 1-877-477-3273  
 Quest Lab Services (Bakersfield) (661) 631-8520  
 LabCorp Lab Services Bakersfield (661) 631-9258  
 Shared Services Option 5 live person 1-877-477-3273

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

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

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

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

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

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

**PPO Deductible: Per Calendar Year**  
**\$300 "Individual" a prescription from the Doctor.**

### NALC Health Benefit Plan Members:

The NALC Health Benefit Plan does not cover "Dental" except in cases of accidental injury to teeth. See plan brochure for coverage.

### But we do have a Dental Discount Program!

Members covered under the NALC HIGH OPTION PLAN must enroll BY PHONE ONLY! The member must call 1-877-521-0244. The cost is \$3.75 per month for "Self Only" \$5.50 per month for "self and family". The savings/discount is around 25%.

Once you have enrolled in Dental Discount Program, you will log on to [www.CignaPlussavings.com](http://www.CignaPlussavings.com). On this site (in the right corner), it will show "FIND A DENTIST". Type in your city and zip code, and select a dentist. Or print the page/pages and call the dentist you have selected to make sure they are accepting new patients and, that they are STILL ENROLLED in the CignaPlussavings dental program.

### 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**

Prescription Drug Program is excellent. Retail (Network) Mail Order Medicare (Primary) See Brochure Too Extensive to List All.

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

Preventive Care Children/Adults Available (See Brochure) Prevents Serious Illnesses, Flu, Tetanus, Pneumonia, Shingles  
 Many immunizations are Free (Adult/Child) when administered at a PPO pharmacy/facility.  
 Some will require a prescription from the Doctor.

## PREVENTIVE HEALTH CARE WILL ALWAYS PAY DIVIDENDS

How many of us only see our doctor when we are ill? And, of course, that is a reason to see our health care professional. BUT? *It is recommended that we have a complete physical along with lab work at the start of each new year.*

Our NALC Health Benefit Plan pays for a complete check up (one a year) through a PPO physician. And, if we utilize Quest Labs or LabCorp, there is almost no out-of-pocket expense.

Preventive care also includes a number of vaccines that protect us from illness at NO COST to our members. We all know the words "EARLY DETECTION SAVES LIVES," and this is the reason our NALC Health Plan covers these services.

As adults, we make decisions that affect our health, like tobacco, alcohol, fast foods, too much processed sugar, salt, and lack of a good night's sleep. All the more reason to have that yearly physical!

It is a good idea to write down questions you may have about illness that runs in your family, or problems you are experiencing, and don't be afraid to ask your doctor.

We work hard and look forward to a long healthy life and retirement. Protect your health, and the health of your family, and HAVE THAT YEARLY PHYSICAL CHECK UP!

MARK RAMIREZ  
 (POST- MARK)

NALC Health Benefit Representative and Retiree  
 The Golden Empire Branch 782

OUT THERE



This cartoon is available in **Volume II** of Fred Acedo's cartoons. It is a collection of 1100 of his submissions which were published in our newsletter from 2003 - 2016. **BUY A COPY!**

OUT THERE



Originally published September 2003



# Health Prescription: Some Thoughts from Mark Ramirez!!!

"Those who think they have no time for exercise, will sooner or later have time for illness".

**Edward Stanley**

"Life expectancy would grow by leaps and bounds — if green vegetables smelled as good as bacon."

**Doug Larson**

"If you can't pronounce it, don't eat it."

**Common Sense**

"In order to change, we must be sick and tired of being sick and tired."

**Author unknown**

"Health is like money, we never have a true idea of it's worth, until we lose it."

**Josh Billings**

"Take care of your body. It's the ONLY place you have to live."

**Jim Rohn**

"True healthcare reform starts in the kitchen, not in Washington."

**Author unknown**

"The doctor of the future will no longer treat the human frame with drugs, but rather will care and prevent disease with "Nutrition."

**Thomas Edison**

"A man/woman too busy to take care of their health, is like a mechanic too busy to take care of their tools."

**Spanish proverb**

"It's bizarre that the produce manager is more important to my children's health than the pediatrician."

**Meryl Strep**

"I have removed all the bad food from my house, and it was delicious!"

"Yes, I am gaining weight! Lets just say I am currently "Under Construction." Thank you for your concern!"

"Isn't it a bit unnerving that doctors call what they do 'Practice'?"

**George Carlin**

"Today, more than 95% of all chronic disease is caused by food choice, toxic food ingredients, nutritional deficiencies and lack of physical exercise."

**Mike Adams**

MARK RAMIREZ  
(Post-Mark)  
NALC Health Benefit  
Representative  
Retired Carrier  
The Golden Empire Branch 782

OUT THERE



# YOU ARE WHAT YOU EAT...YIKES !!!



*A few scenes from  
2016 and the 10th  
Battle of the Stations*

**We hope YOU  
will be there on  
February 19th!**

Anita Holderman, thanx for the pix!  
Do it again this year, okay?



# We Letter Carriers like to eat!

All of these photos are courtesy of Branch 782 Photographer Anita Holderman!



## South Station Thanksgiving Potluck



## Christmas Potluck



# Have you been asked for “Medical Documentation”?

by Ken Mayfield, Vice-President  
NALC Branch 458

I have been getting a lot of questions on documentation for unscheduled absences lately.

**Remember!** Listen closely to what kind of documentation Management is requiring from you. If they are simply requiring “documentation”, that could be as simple as having your six-year-old write on a piece of paper in crayon: “My Mommy/Daddy was sick on 11/25/2016.”

If Management is requiring you to provide “medical documentation,” this is where we must turn to the Employee and Labor Relations Manual (also known as the ELM). Section 513.364 states the following:

## Medical Documentation or Other Acceptable Evidence

When employees are required to submit medical documentation, such documentation should be furnished by the employee’s attending physician or other attending practitioner who is performing within the scope of his or her practice. The documentation should provide an explanation of the nature of the employee’s illness or injury sufficient to indicate to management that the employee was (or will be) unable to perform his or her normal duties for the period of absence. Normally, medical statements such as “under my care” or “received treatment” are not acceptable evidence of incapacitation to perform duties.

Supervisors may accept substantiation other than medical documentation if they believe it supports approval of the sick leave request.

“Such documentation should be furnished by the employee’s attending physician or other attending practitioner who is performing within the scope of his or her practice.”

Read this as “*must* be furnished by the employee’s attending physician...” **Get documentation from a doctor, physician’s assistant, nurse practitioner.**

“The documentation should provide an explanation of the nature of the employee’s illness or injury sufficient to indicate to management that the employee was (or will be) unable to perform his or her normal duties for the period of absence.”

Medical documentation does not require diagnosis; but, it *must* give a general nature of illness or injury. For example, if you suffer from Plantar Fasciitis, your medical documentation could say something like, “severe foot pain.”

“Normally, medical statements such as “under care” or “received treatment” are not accepted evidence of incapacitation to perform duties.”

Medical documentation should say, “Unable to perform his/her normal duties.”

“Supervisors may accept substantiation other than medical documentation...”

“May” is an awfully permissive word and I do not know of any Supervisors that will accept anything other than medical documentation when it is required.



Originally published August 2005

A good example of medical documentation should be something like (substitute in the underlined portion what is appropriate for your situation):

**Due to severe foot pain, \_\_\_\_\_ will be unable to perform his normal duties from beginning date through ending date.**

One more thing to remember, medical documentation *is* required when an employee is on Restricted Sick Leave and/or absences of more than three days. If you are required by Management to provide medical documentation — and you are not on Restricted Sick Leave and/or your absence was three days or less — provide the medical documentation as required, then ask to speak your Steward. (Be sure to keep track of the round-trip mileage from home to the doctor as well as the amount of time spent from the time you leave home until the time you return home and provide this information to your Shop Steward.)

I hope everyone has a Happy Holidays and I look forward to seeing and hearing from you next year!

Article courtesy of the Oklahoma City, Oklahoma NALC Branch 458 December 2016 *SOONER SCRIPT*



# We Should ALL Resolve to Save the Postal Service in 2017... and Beyond

by Eric Ellis,  
CSALC District 4 Officer

For City Carrier Assistants, the main concern is making Regular and not having to work seven days every week. For former CCAs, the main concern might be a negotiated national agreement in which the base salary is nudged closer to what they made as transitional employees.

However, I have no doubt that ALL Letter Carriers and postal employees face numerous challenges going forward.

An incoming administration, headed by anti-union people like pro-privatization Newt Gingrich, puts all of us at risk of losing our jobs and pensions.

So I resubmit a list of New Years' resolutions that I wrote at the end of 2010 and 2013 and still apply today. If you choose to do the following things, you prove that you are serious about saving your job, benefits, and/or retirement.

1. I will join the Carrier Corps and donate ten hours a year to such things as phone banking, precinct walking, and attendance at union and labor-sponsored activities.
2. I will become an e-Activist so that when action is needed, such as a phone call or letter to an elected official, I will respond.
3. I will donate at least five dollars a pay period to the Letter Carrier Political Fund through payroll deduction, so that we can support our friends in the House and Senate and so that we can deploy more full-time volunteers in the field to elect more pro-letter carrier politicians.
4. I will regularly attend my monthly branch meeting, so that my local officers can keep me updated on all issues affecting me on the workroom floor and in the legislative arena.
5. I will pay all bills the old-fashioned way, putting a postage stamp on an envelope.
6. I will send out at least 100 Christmas or holiday cards, again the old-fashioned way. If you don't have that many friends or

acquaintances, send some to people on your route. Note-this is a great way to get new business for the postal service-some of these people will send you a return card.

7. I will give eight hours work for eight hours pay. This means if I have overtime, I will work overtime; if I have undertime, I will give undertime. I will take my 30-minute lunch break and two 10-minute breaks.

8. I will work in a safe and efficient manner. By doing this, I will save the postal service money by avoiding injury.

9. When a supervisor abuses a brother or sister letter carrier, I will provide a statement to the steward. And who knows, when you are in trouble, that same carrier may provide testimony that saves your job.

10. Every once in a while, I will thank my steward for the fine job he or she does. When someone takes on the job of steward, that person puts his or her job on the line.

11. Every time I order a product to be shipped to my house, I will insist it be sent through the postal service.

*...I have no doubt that ALL Letter Carriers and postal employees face numerous challenges going forward...*

12. I will take the time to read all union publications sent to my home, such as the Postal Record and our local newsletter. And maybe write an informative and educational article occasionally.

13. I will mind my own business. I will do my job in an honest manner, over which I have control. I have no business judging a Brother or Sister Letter Carrier over the length of his or her route, his/her manner of dress, religion, marital relationship, etc. If someone acts in a dishonest or unethical manner, he or she will eventually answer for it in one way or another. I will not cross crafts and attempt to do management's job.

No one wins, except our enemies, when certain people pit Carrier against Carrier. **WE ARE STRONGER WHEN WE STAND — UNITED — TOGETHER!!!**



# Do you know who your Beneficiaries are?

by Craig Bishop,  
Senior Vice-President  
NALC Branch 133

## Are Your Designations of Beneficiary Current?

### When was the last time you checked your designations of beneficiary?

Most employees and annuitants don't realize that they have several designations to keep current. If you don't have a designation on file, then the funds will be distributed according to the order of precedence.

That may be OK with you, but maybe it isn't.

*Worse yet is an out-of-date designation giving the money to someone that you no longer wish to give it to.*

Now is a good time to review your beneficiaries or submit new forms to designate your beneficiary; the latest form on file is what will be honored, should you pass.

Also noteworthy is that if one mails a designation of beneficiary form to either their employing agency or Office of Personnel Management, then pass away prior to the agency/OPM receiving the form, it will NOT be honored.

*One must still be alive when the form is received by the agency/OPM for it to be valid.*

Here are some of the designations one may wish to make. (The forms are available at OPM.GOV or on liteblue.usps.gov for active employees.)

### Standard Form 1152

This is the Designation of Beneficiary form to submit for Unpaid Compensation of Deceased Civilian Employee. This form designates the payment of a deceased employee's last pay check to include the payment of earned annual leave and any

other miscellaneous monies payable to beneficiaries.

### Standard Form 3102

This form is for FERS covered employees).

**Standard Form 2808** is for CSRS covered employees.

Each of these two forms designates the lump sum beneficiary for the deceased employee's retirement contributions *in the event that no entitlements exist* for a surviving spouse and/or dependent unmarried children under the age of 18, or under the age of 22 if a full time student, or unmarried and incapable of self-support (regardless of age, provided the disability was established before age 18).

### Standard Form 2823

This form designates the payment of the value of an employee's life insurance benefits based on the coverage in effect at death.

If you assigned ownership of your life insurance to another person — or if you did not assign your life insurance but there is a valid court order that governs payments of your benefits — then those have priority over any FEGLI designation of beneficiary form you complete, as explained on the form.

### Form TSP-3

Both active employees and retirees send the **TSP-3, Designation of Beneficiary** to: Thrift Savings Plan Service Office, P.O. Box 385021, Birmingham, AL 35238

The **ONLY** document the TSP will use to distribute death benefits is **TSP 3, Designation of Beneficiary**. By law, the TSP must pay your properly designated beneficiary, or beneficiaries, under **ALL** circumstances.

Active employees may submit any of the listed forms, EXCEPT the **TSP-3 Form** to: HRSSC, PO Box 970500 Greensboro, NC 27497-0500.

Retirees may submit the **Standard Form 2823** to: Office of Personnel Management, Retirement Operations Center, PO Box 45, Boyers, PA 16017-0045.

### Distribution According to the Statutory Order of Precedence:

If you do not have a Designation of Beneficiary form on file with the TSP, your money will be distributed according to the following order of precedence required by law: To your spouse; If none, to your child or children equally, and to the descendants of deceased children; If none, to your parents equally or your surviving parent; If none, to your appointed executor or administrator of your estate; If none, to your next of kin who is entitled to your estate under the laws of the state in which you resided at the time of your death.

**How to Designate a Beneficiary:** To designate a beneficiary, or beneficiaries, for your TSP account, follow these steps:

Complete Form **TSP-3**, You can also contact the Thrift-Line or ask your agency or service for a copy of the form.

Sign and witness *each* page of Form **TSP-3** according to the directions.

Return the completed form to the address indicated on the form or fax it to the number provided. You must send the Form directly to the TSP. DO NOT submit Form **TSP-3** to your agency or service.

*Be aware that your beneficiary designation will not be valid unless it is received by the TSP on or before the date of your death.*

You will receive a confirmation letter in the mail after the TSP receives your Form **TSP-3** and processes it. You will also receive a letter from the TSP if there are errors on your form that prevent it from being accepted.

Any beneficiary forms that you might have on file with your agency or service (including FEGLI, etc.) are not valid for the TSP and cannot be used to determine the distribution of your TSP account after your death. No matter how long the TSP has had your most recent Designation of Beneficiary form, they will continue to consider it valid unless you send them a new form requesting that they cancel or change it.

Article courtesy of the Sacramento, CA  
December 2016 NALC Branch 133  
*Swing Room Gazette*

*You may not want to think about this. But, you really should...*

# Injuries and the CCA

by Jeanne Larch,  
NALC Branch 4374

Many new City Carrier Assistants are coming to the job without any health insurance.

There are many changes waiting in the wings as you gain relative standing with the USPS. But, if you are a CCA without insurance you do **NOT** have to worry about being covered if you suffer an on-the-job injury. *The FECA, Federal Employees Compensation Act covers you as well as any other federal worker.*

In fact, you have the same basic right all federal employees have to choose your own doctor; and, these benefits provide payment of medical related expenses due to an on-the-job injury.

However, there **ARE** some steps that you need to take if this should occur.

When reporting a traumatic injury (such as a trip and fall) you need to fill out a **CA-1** after requesting it from your supervisor. This form asks for some detail of the incident and you are asked at the bottom of the form to choose between COP (Continuation Of Pay) at your normal postal service wage *or* the use of your Sick Leave or Annual Leave.

As a CCA, you do not earn Sick Leave and may not have enough Annual Leave to support your time off work if your doctor requires it.

*Checking the COP box entitles you to 45 days of regular pay after the 3 day waiting period.*

***Getting care from a qualified physician of your choice is also a Right that YOU have!***

You may be instructed to see the postal “clinic” doctor if your supervisor requires it. However, that doctor does not have to be your doctor of record. (“Doctor of Record” is a very important stipulation that can protect your Rights.)

Tell your supervisor that you want to see your own doctor and make an appointment as soon as possible. (Do not return for a second visit to the postal clinic doctor. If you do, *THAT* doctor will become your “Doctor of Record”.)

You must be treated by a physician, not a physician’s assistant or a nurse practitioner. ***THIS IS VERY IMPORTANT.***

If you are told the doctor cannot see you at that time, ask that the medical report be counter-signed or endorsed by the doctor. The Department of Labor, Office of Workers’ Compensation, and (OWCP) will **NOT** accept documentation from anyone other than a qualified physician regarding your injury (i.e. OWCP will not pay).

After filling out the **CA-1** for a traumatic injury, your supervisor should give you two forms for the initial visit to your doctor: a **CA-16** AND a **CA-17**.

The **CA-16** helps to move the claim to approval with authorization of the medical treatment by your doctor and guarantees payment by OWCP (Office of Workers’ Compensation Programs) to insure that you do not have any expenses for an on-the-job injury. The reverse side of the **CA-16** is filled out by your doctor to show OWCP an immediate and timely medical report. **It is important for medical reports to be submitted accurately and timely at the beginning of every claim.** This will move your claim closer to an approved status. Acceptance of your claim is vital to payment of the future medical bills and for wage compensation to be paid.

The Form **CA-17** is to report any work restrictions due to the injury.

***DO NOT HESITATE TO REPORT AN INJURY TO MANAGEMENT.*** In fact, you are advised to report your injury immediately!

If you decide to finish the route and return to the office, report when you get back to the person in charge and request to fill out a **CA-1**. **Fill out the claim form as soon as possible.**

Do not be afraid to report the injury even if it seems insignificant or you think that you will feel “fine” the next day. The **CA-1** will show that you were injured — *even if it seems minor* — especially if it subsequently proves to be a serious work injury.

***ALWAYS*** get copies of **ALL** forms submitted for your injury, and ***KEEP A COPY OF ANY AND ALL MEDICAL INFORMATION SUBMITTED TO MANAGEMENT.***

When you sign and complete a **CA-1** you should receive a receipt portion signed by your supervisor. **This is important to show the timeliness in filing the claim form.**

After the **CA-1** is completed by management you should receive a copy of that completed portion. *It is important to check the information completed by management.* If you question any of this contact your Shop Steward. Stewards are knowledgeable in the process and can check for accuracy and help to prevent delays in your claim. The receipt for your **CA-1** and copies of the completed form are contractual obligations that the USPS must abide by. Your Steward needs to know if you did not receive your Rights under the Contract.

Please inform your Shop Steward whenever injured! **This is VERY important... and it bears repeating. PLEASE INFORM YOUR SHOP STEWARD WHEN YOU ARE INJURED ON THE JOB!**

I have encountered many instances of intimidation and harassment when a CCA is injured on the job. This even happens to the Regular Letter Carrier; however, a CCA who is vulnerable within the first 90 days (or even after probation) — and who does not know where to turn — can have undue stress and delay in paperwork due to management’s failure to meet their contractual obligations.

Tell your Steward when you are injured — *especially* if your supervisor is treating you badly or disrespecting your questions and who seems to be deliberately ignoring the proper handling of your claim information! If you are not getting any straight answers, talk to another Carrier who has had an injury, ask whether you are being treated correctly by your supervisor. Finally, call the union office. We can make the connections with the Department of Labor, the USPS injury compensation specialist at the District office, or with your Steward to deal with whatever the issues are regarding your injury and your claim.

Article courtesy of the Center Line, MI December 2016 NALC Branch 4374 *Front Lines*. Thank you, now-retired, Jeanne Larch! Enjoy your “new normal” and stay healthy!!

# Yo! Are you a CCA?

Feel there is no way you are going to learn every single thing that you need to know about being a Letter Carrier??? Well, you know what? *You won't be the first or the last to feel this way!*



Originally published in our newsletter in 1997

Do these cartoons make sense to you?

One was published *twenty* years ago and the other in 2007. The point is **WE** know how frustrating it all can be. You are a member of a union of Letter Carriers who understand and want to give you a chance to survive. Wearing a uniform can be a big help in giving the public confidence in you. *We have uniforms members have donated for you!*

Do you have questions about what your supervisor is telling you? Come to one of the monthly meetings. We are even willing and able to schedule a CCA meeting where we can address questions you don't even know enough to ask. **Let us help you.** Call your NALC Branch 782 President at (661) 331-9171 and let him know how we can help you!



Originally published in our newsletter in 2007

# The CCA Whisperer



by Ramon Lawson,  
NALC Branch 78



**oliday Greetings, fellow Letter Carriers! This edition of the CCA Whisperer is going to be very short and sweet.**

Let me start by saying that I appreciate you for all your hard work and dedication. I know this is a hard time of year to work!

With all the packages, the weather and mail I know sometimes it can be overwhelming. Know that your fellow Carriers applaud you for all your hard work, even if they don't show it sometimes.

The main reason for this edition is to have you be aware of getting paid for ALL the time you work.

When I started over ten years ago, a senior Carrier told me to write down the hours that I worked **EVERY** day. *To this day, I do that very thing EVERY single day!*

Some of you may know that I am a Formal A representative for the Branch. While working in this capacity I have found several cases of CCA's not being paid for the hours they work. By the time that I find these issues the pay period has already closed and the problem can't be corrected easily.

I encourage **EACH** CCA to write down how many hours you work each day on a calendar! **Check your pay stubs to make sure you are being paid for ALL the hours you have worked!**

If you find that you were not paid for all of the hours that you have worked, inform your union Steward or call the Branch office immediately. The issues that I have found have been resolved... but I'm sure there are more.

Our National Agreement states that we are to be paid for ALL hours worked. **YOU** need to keep track of your time to make sure this is happening.

When you use your time card we can see your time. If you use a Form 1260, your time has to be input by management. **If your work hours are not input by management, you will not get paid.**

I encourage you to use your time card at all times. If you don't have one, ask your management team to get you one. If they don't get you a time card within a week, inform your Shop Steward.

Here in Columbus, we have a big issue with this. The **ONLY** way to fix it is for **YOU** to keep track of **YOUR** time and to make sure that **YOU** are being paid for **ALL** of the hours that **YOU** work.

Until next time..... Peace, Love and safe City Streets!!!!

Article courtesy of the Columbus, Ohio December 2016  
NALC Branch 78 Buckeye Branch 782 Bulletin



from

# Kim Gerdes

## Recording Secretary

We hope you consider ordering the original 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...

This book features Fred Acedo's published works in our Branch 782 newsletter from 1993 - 2002.

### 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 cost **\$10**. (Postage: 1 - 4 books \$6.45 & 4 - 7 books is \$6.80.)  
We ship via USPS Priority Mail Flat Rate. (For larger orders, these are still the best rates.)

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

# IN FRED ACEDO'S WORLD "OUT THERE"

THESE ARE THE DOG DAYS  
OF LETTER CARRIERS



In the real world, dog attacks are serious business. But, Letter Carriers all over will identify with this dog humor in that reality that we live daily...

OUT THERE



OUT THERE



OUT THERE



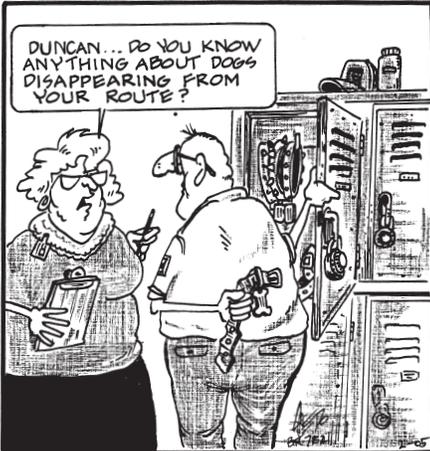
OUT THERE



OUT THERE



OUT THERE



"Out tHere"



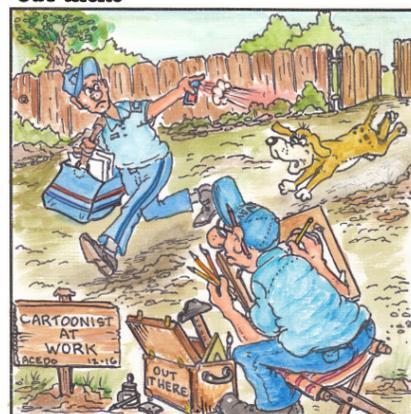
OUT THERE



"Out tHere"



"Out tHere"



OUT THERE



Any  
Cartoon  
Ideas??

Fred Acedo Br. 782 S.A.N.E.  
P.O. Box 6532  
Bakersfield, CA 93386-6532

# **11TH ANNUAL BATTLE OF THE STATIONS**

**February 19th 2017 • Regency Lanes • 820 Real Rd. • Bakersfield, CA 93309**

**A BIG THANK YOU TO THE BAKERSFIELD SOCIAL REC COMMITTEE**

**\$100 PER TEAM**

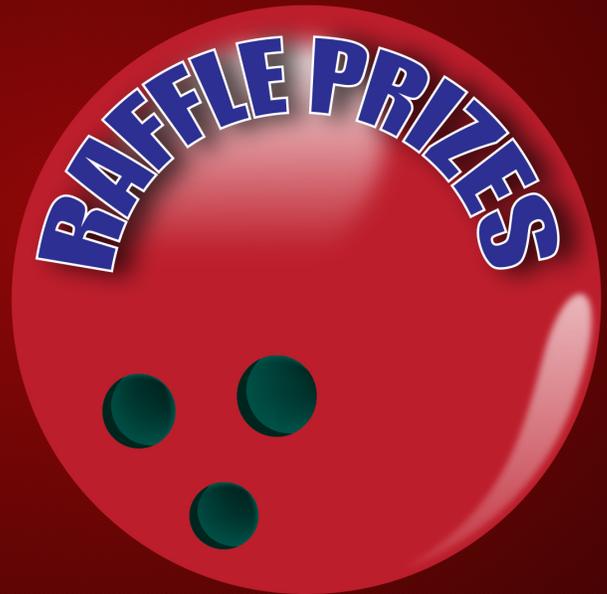
**First to pay, first to play  
Lanes are limited  
Deadline Feb 17th**



**Send Entries To**  
Jeff Harrington  
PO Box 81221  
Bakersfield, CA 93380

**Previous Winners**  
2007 Stockdale  
2008 Dole Ct  
2009-2011 Kentucky St  
2012-2013 Brundage  
2014-2015 Dole Ct  
2016 Camino Media

**More Information**  
Lisa Sanchez 661-747-2888 after 4pm  
Jeff Harrington 661-378-0975  
Ralph Ramirez 661-340-3186  
Deven Patterson 661-444-0147



## **Rules**

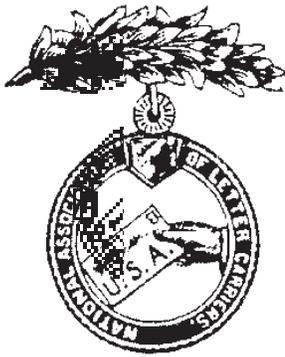
Each station must have at least 2 teams to qualify for Top Station award.  
Team must consist of 3 of 4 players from that station  
Retired employees are welcome.  
Top 2 scoring teams for that station will be used.  
The more teams you have, the better changes you have to win.

## **Categories**

There will be 3 categories (Men, Women, and Co-Ed).  
Awards will be presented to the top teams from each category.  
Top individual female and male bowler awards.

## **Music Provided By**

**TurntableMix.com**  
new music and video mixes featured weekly created by DJ Sixxx



# Branch Officers

<b>President</b>	<b>Mike Towery</b>	<b>(661) 331-9171</b>
<b>Vice-President</b>	<b>John Ortega</b>	<b>(661) 809-8140</b>
<b>Recording Secretary</b>	<b>Kim Gerdes</b>	<b>(661) 834-2059</b>
<b>Treasurer</b>	<b>Molly Biggar</b>	<b>(661) 832-0393</b>
<b>Financial Secretary</b>	<b>Anita Holderman</b>	<b>(661) 487-5353</b>
<b>HBP &amp; MBA</b>	<b>Mark Ramirez</b>	<b>(661) 398-6075</b>
<b>Sargeant-at-Arms</b>	<b>Jerry Patterson</b>	<b>(661) 699-2462</b>
<b>Chief Trustee</b>	<b>Frank Martinez</b>	<b>(661) 703-4212</b>
<b>Trustee</b>	<b>Teresa Ortega</b>	<b>(661) 391-8026</b>
<b>Trustee</b>	<b>Darryl Holderman</b>	<b>(661) 332-9201</b>

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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Dholderman@bak.r.com

## NALC Branch 782 Shop Stewards

Arvin (93203)	Mike Munoz	(661) 304-5516
Avenal (93204)	John Ortega	(661) 809-8140
Delano (93215)	Blanca Ibarra	(661) 725-1526
Lamont (93241)	Mike Munoz	(661) 304-5516
McFarland (93250)	Bonnie Whitbey	(661) 302-7354
Shafter (93263)	Norma Hamer	(661) 619-1465
Taft (93268)	Mike Meza	(805) 625-4541
Wasco (93280)	Joanne Layton	(661) 204-4928
Downtown Station (93301)	Teresa Ortega	(661) 391-8026
South Station (93304)	Judy Kiyoshi	(661) 817-5529
South Station Alternate	Darryl Holderman	(661) 487-5353
East Bakersfield (93305)	Paul Salazar	(661) 322-4813
East Bakersfield (Alternate)	Angie Hernandez	(661) 322-4813
Hillcrest Station (93306)	Pam Smith	(661) 979-5854
Brundage Station (93307)	John Ortega	(661) 809-8140
Dole Court (93308)	Shari Sharp	(661) 364-5544
Stockdale Station (93309)	Randy Courson	(661) 345-0256
Stockdale Station (93309)	Maria Valenzuela	(661) 496-5929
Camino Media (93311/13)	Mike Meza	(805) 625-4541
Mojave (93501)	Delga Loza	(661) 824-8332
California City (93504)	Ryan Gerstl	(761) 373-4180
Boron (93516)	Paula Hogg	(760) 373-8963
Edwards AF Base (93523)	Mike Meza	(805) 625-4541
Ridgecrest (93555)	Lynnel Howell	(760) 382-3030
Tehachapi (93561)	Paula Hogg	(760) 373-8963
Trona (93562)	Lynnel Howell	(760) 382-3030

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

**Rick Plummer, Webmaster**



National Association of Letter Carriers  
 "Golden Empire Branch 782"  
 2628 "F" Street  
 Bakersfield, California 93301  
 (661) 331-9171

Non-Profit Organization  
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 Bakersfield, California  
 Permit Number 32

# General Meeting

## Tuesday

### January 24, 2017

### 7:00 p.m.

Branch 782 Office  
 2628 "F" Street  
 Bakersfield, California

**FORWARDING SERVICE REQUESTED**

## Scenes from NALC Branch 782 at work

These photos courtesy of Branch 782 Photographer  
 Anita Holderman — see more in the web version...



— 10-25-16 General Meeting —



— 12-7-16 Shop Steward Meeting —



— 1-4-17 Shop Steward Meeting —  
 Mike Towery's Birthday

## OUT THERE



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

There was no winner in December, 2016!!!

**This month YOU could win \$450!**

\*The fine print: To win the money YOU have to be present when YOUR name is drawn!

*If you are here, you are checking out the web version of our newsletter. Take the time to see some other past issues...*