

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

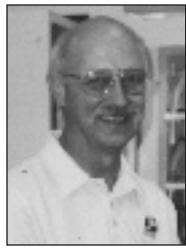
CHARTERED FEBRUARY 25, 1891



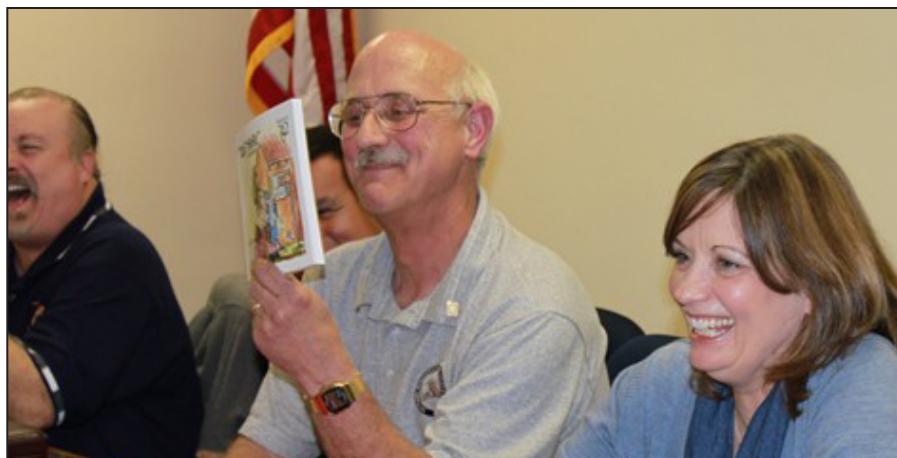
VOLUME LXXXII NUMBER 2

FEBRUARY 2011

at the
Mike:



As I start the new term as President, I would like to say that it has been both an honor and a privilege to work with all of the members of the Executive Board.



(l-r) John Beaumont, President of the California State Association of Letter Carriers and V.P. John Ortega, who is tucked in behind the Fred Acedo cartoon book that Mike Towery is getting ready to present to NALC Secretary Treasurer Jane Broendel, all appear to be having a good time at January's General membership meeting.



They make my job much easier.

Without the members, there would be no meetings....and there would be no Branch 782.

Continued on next page...

Many members of the Executive Board have been involved with the Union for twenty years or longer. They each bring a tremendous amount of energy and dedication to the jobs that they do for each member of Branch 782.

I also want to thank both National Secretary-Treasurer Jane Broendel and California State Association President John Beaumont for being at our January meeting. Each provided good information about issues relevant to all Letter Carriers.

A special note of appreciation is also due to Darryl Holderman, Jerry Patterson and Bill Curtis. Darryl did an excellent job as the Branch 782 Vice-President. He stepped up when there was a vacancy and I appreciate all of his help and support. I know he will maintain his effort in his new role and as he continues as South Station Shop Steward. Jerry Patterson, out-going Sergeant-at-Arms, always made sure that he took care of Branch business entrusted to him. Bill Curtis took his role as Branch Trustee very seriously for over twenty years and he was appreciated.

One of my main goals when I took over as President in 2007 was to get more of the younger Carriers involved in the



Union. I was hoping for involvement from many who might never have considered getting involved before. I am happy to say that many have stepped up and made an investment of their time and energy.

John Ortega, our new Branch 782 Vice-President, is one example. Stewards Mike Meza, Paul Salazar, Mabel Bullis, and Norma Hamer are only a few of the others who have stepped up to the challenge. In fact, Mabel Bullis has also been elected to be a Branch Trustee.

The Union is all of us. It is not just the President, the Executive Board or the Shop Stewards. Unionism is the binding together for the good of the whole.



There will come a time when the current Union officers and Shop Stewards will be gone for one reason or another. The platform for our future success has to be built today. I look forward to more of you asking me how you can help.

I would like to congratulate Bill Bricker on the occasion of his recent retirement. He'll be way up on the hill way above the fog down here in the Valley.



Also, I want to wish success to Dan Vasquez in his new venture. Dan decided to resign after twenty years to start a career as a Correctional Officer. Best of luck to both of them!



We will be discussing the Kern Veterans Memorial Foundation "Wall of Valor" at this month's meeting on February 22. We anticipate that we will have some guests there to address this very worthy project.

MIKE TOWERY
Branch 782 President



The Installation of Branch 782 Officers



(l-r) Mark Ramirez, Anita Holderman, Kim Gerdes and John Ortega reacting to some of Jane Broendel's comments leading into the installation of the Branch 782 officers.

John Beaumont watch as Jane Broendel outlines Mike Towery's presidential duties.

Johnny on the Spot

I would like to thank you, the members of NALC Branch 782, for allowing me the privilege of serving you as Vice-President.

I've quickly learned that a great amount of responsibility comes with that title. I look forward to the challenges.

My predecessor, Darryl Holderman, did a fine job for us as Vice-President. I had to laugh during last month's general membership meeting. Darryl couldn't seem to wait long enough for the meeting to end before he was trying to officially end his tenure as Branch 782 Vice-President.



As NALC HBP Mark Ramirez, Recording Secretary Kim Gerdes, and CSALC President John Beaumont look on, Darryl works really hard to remove his name as V.P.

Maybe, once I get into the role a little more I'll more fully understand how eager he was to relinquish the job.

Branch 782 has a great leader in Mike Towery. He sets the course and establishes the atmosphere we function in. All of our other Branch officers and Stewards know what is expected of them and know that he is always there to support us as we try to protect your interests.

As I look back on that evening, I realize how important our positions as elected representatives are. Two top leaders in the National Association of Letter Carriers invested their time and energy to ensure that we would take our oaths of office seriously and be committed to you—the members of NALC Branch 782.

It was inspiring to be joined at our meeting by national officer Jane Broendel, NALC Secretary-Treasurer. She served as the installing official. California State Association of Letter Carriers President John Beaumont, was also in attendance that night and provided insight.

Both guests educated us on the condition of the Postal Service and pledged to do what is right for the membership.

We *all* need to do our part in all of this. Come to a meeting and get involved! We're all in this together!!

Once again, I want to thank you and look forward to serving the members of Branch 782 as we go forward together.

On a sad note, local NALC members know that Brundage Station Manager Robert Nicholas suddenly passed away on January 28, 2011.

I first met Robert on the softball diamonds on Jewetta Court. We played together on a team with some other postal buddies. Boy, were we terrible!

We didn't win a game for what seemed forever, and I still remember our first win—it was because the other team didn't show up...

Good old Robert didn't care. He still called it a win and said it was something to build on. He was right. Eventually, the teams we played on became the best in our division and we were even division champs a few times.

We were planning on playing again this spring... I will miss my team mate, and I will never forget him.

JOHN ORTEGA
Branch 782 Vice-President

Minutes of the January 2011 General Meeting

The regular meeting of Branch 782 was called to order at 7:00 p.m. by President Mike Towery on the 25th day of January 2011 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, Hillcrest, Lamont, Oildale, Shafter, South, Stockdale Taft and Wasco. Also present was the Newsletter Editor, Basil Zuniga; Webmaster Rick Plummer; Branch Photographer Anita Holderman; OWCP Representative Rick Gerdes; and, Emma Gonzalez and Frank Martinez of the Social and Recreation Committee.



South Station NALC Branch 782 member Danny Blair was happy that NALC Secretary-Treasurer Jane Broendel showed up at the meeting and pulled his name "out of the hat". He won the \$500 drawing and was he was extremely appreciative!

REPORTS OF STANDING AND SPECIAL COMMITTEES: Teresa Ortega reported "we're good" regarding the picnic. Basil Zuniga reported that the turnout from Brundage was not that good but they got it done. Next month will be Dole Court's turn. He discussed the article about Mickey Cameron in the newsletter. Lucinda Martinez reported that there are approximately 1500 books left to sell. Basil sent letters to NALC editors across the country and is starting to see some response in the newsletters. President Mike Towery recognized special guest Jane Broendel, NALC National Secretary-Treasurer. She is the first female on the National Executive Board. Also present was CSALC President John Beaumont and past-Branch 782 President Paul Alexander.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS: A discussions was held regarding the number of delegates we will send to the state convention. A motion was made that we send 15 compensated delegates. Seconded by Teresa Ortega, the motion passed. Mike Towery reported that we will be sending three members to the Washington, DC Lobbying Trip. John Ortega, Pam Smith and Diana Chavez will be representing our Branch. CSALC President John Beaumont reported that, with the changes in Congress, it is very important to meet with the Republican Congressmen about retaining 6-day delivery.

NEW BUSINESS: CSALC President John Beaumont introduced the Officers of Branch 782. Secretary Treasurer Jane Broendel then installed the Officers. Mike Towery thanked Darryl Holderman for serving as Vice-President, he stepped up when needed and did a fine job. He also wanted to let Jerry Patterson know how much he appreciated all his work. And, he also thanked Bill Curtis who has been a Trustee for almost 20 year and has always worked for the good of the membership.

GOOD OF THE ASSOCIATION: There will be an Audit and Budget Meeting following the Steward Meeting on February 16. Mike Towery reported on the Presidents' Meeting. The meeting was held in Van Nuys so that they could tour the facility with the FSS machines. As of this time, we are not scheduled for FSS. Mike Towery presented Jane Broendel a copy of the "Out There" book. Mickey Cameron discussed the advantages of saving sick leave and annual leave when retiring. For every year of sick leave you save, another 2% is added to your retirement. Annual leave is the only leave that you can cash out when retiring. It comes on your last check. It is good to have this since you will not receive a full retirement check for three months. Mickey thanked Basil for coming to his house to interview him. He also told the membership that he stayed past the 41 years 11 months because he enjoyed what he was doing. He then told the members that he will get all the money back he paid into retirement after the 41/11 plus interest. Mike Towery let him know about this and he thanked Mike for the information. CSALC President John Beaumont discussed Safety. A Carrier in Oroville was attacked and bitten in the neck by a pit bull. The State Association is working on legislation to help protect Carriers

against dog attacks. John discussed legislative issues. Jane Broendel talked about working with NALC President Fred Rolando. She has worked with Presidents Sombrotto and Young. She says that President Rolando is in the media more than past presidents. The new editor of the *Postal Record* works to get the NALC and President Rolando in the media to get the messages important to Carriers out to the public. Jane applauded Treasurer Molly Biggar for her great work. She then thanked the Branch Officers, knowing that it is not easy doing this job and still carrying mail.

IMPROVEMENT OF THE ASSOCIATION: Mickey Cameron thanked Veterans. He feels that the Veterans preference is great and well deserved.

Pictures by NALC Branch 782 Photographer Anita Holderman

FINANCIAL SECRETARY'S REPORT: Anita Holderman reported that \$12,186.49 was collected for the month.

TREASURER'S REPORT: Molly Biggar reported:

Beginning Balance	\$69,325.07
Dues and Income	\$12,300.74
Interest Income	\$8.52
Total Balance	\$81,634.33
Expenses	\$12,906.61
Ending Balance	\$68,727.72

The MDA 50/50 Drawing was won by Kim Gerdes. The \$500.00 Drawing WAS WON by Danny Blair!!!!

There were 52 members present.

The meeting adjourned at 7:59 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,

KIM GERDES
Branch 782 Recording Secretary

NON-MEMBER LIST FEBRUARY 2011

DOWNTOWN STATION

D. Pearce
J. Cruz

BRUNDAGE

D. Kinglee

SOUTH STATION

100% Union!!!

EAST BAKERSFIELD

100% Union!!!

HILLCREST

100% Union!!!

DOLE COURT

S. Hancock

STOCKDALE

A. White
J. Oh
G. S. Saran

CAMINO MEDIA

F. Medina, Jr.

ARVIN
100% Union!!!

AVENAL
S. R. Bejarano
BORON
V. L. Johnson

CALIFORNIA CITY
100% Union!!!

DELANO
C.V. Quebral
L.A. Campos

EDWARDS
100% Union!!!

LAMONT
100% Union!!!

McFARLAND
100% Union!!!

MOJAVE
100% Union!!!

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

SHAFTER
I. M. New
M. D. Voights

TAFT
B. W. Krier
K.J. Hughes

TEHACHAPI
V. I. Johnson

TRONA
100% Union!!!

WASCO
100% Union!!!



Basil, 389 of the 412 employees are NALC members—a total of 94.4%!

KIM GERDES, Branch 782 Recording Secretary

Membership Meeting Drawing—\$50!!

Drawing starts out at \$50. If no member wins, next month, it will be \$100. We add \$50 a month until the max amount of \$500. BUT, there is a small little “catch”—you have to be present at the meeting to win the money. Ask Danny Blair if it was worth it to be at the meeting...



The Combined Federal Campaign (CFC) is a great opportunity to give to those in need and to help fund a multitude of organizations

that are working so hard to find cures for a variety of diseases. My son has Neurofibromatosis; therefore, one of the organizations that I give to is looking for a cure for those diagnosed with that.

South Station was presented with a CFC goal of \$3500.

WE FLAT BLEW BY THAT GOAL! With the reported 80% participation, South Station's total amounted to a whopping \$6,438!!! Interestingly, four extremely generous individuals at South Station accomplished our goal all on their own. Between the four of them, they donated a total of \$4056! (I'll mention no names as their reward is great in heaven.)

I just received a call today from CFC letting me know that South Station won an award for our generosity. *Way to go everyone at South Station!! THANK YOU SO VERY, VERY MUCH!!!*

Next year, CFC will hit a great milestone. CFC will celebrate a 50 year anniversary! Let's keep our hearts soft and continue in this gift of giving and do even better next year...

DENISE DILLEY
South Station CFC Representative

2011 NALC HBP Info

At a glance...



NALC Health Benefit Plan	1-888-636-6252
*Hospital Pre-Certification	1-877-220-6252
Mental & Substance Precertification	1-877-468-1016
**Drug Prescription Retail	1-800-933-6252
CareMark Specialty Pharmacy	1-800-237-2767
Durable Medical Equipment	1-888-636-6252
NURSE ASSISTANT (24/7)	1-877-220-6252
CareMark Pharmacist	1-888-636-6252
Enhanced Eldercare Services (24/7)	1-877-468-1016
CIGNA PPO Dr's & Facilities	1-877-220-6252
CIGNA Transplant Approval	1-800-668-9682
Quit Power (Smoking Cessation)	1-877-521-0244
CIGNA Health Rewards (Discounts)	1-800-870-3470
CIGNA Dental Discount Program	1-877-521-0244
Disease Management Program	1-800-227-3728
MEDICARE Managed Care Plan	1-800-633-4277
OPM Retirement Info Center	1-888-767-6738
Federal Information Center	1-800-688-9889
Social Security Administration Info	1-800-772-1213
PostalEase Human Resources USPS	1-877-477-3273
Quest Lab Services (Bakersfield)	(661) 631-8520
LabCorp Lab Services	(661) 631-9258

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

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

Some Websites for You...

Center for Disease Control	http://www.cdc.gov
National Library of Medicine	http://www.nlm.nih.gov
American Public Health Assoc.	http://www.alpha.org
American Cancer Society	http://www.cancer.org
American Heart Association	http://americanheart.org
American Lung Association	http://www.lunusa.org
Diabetes Foundation	http://www.diabetes.org
Muscular Dystrophy Association	http://www.mdausa.org
Your Personal Health Record	http://www.nalc.org/depart.hbp
Asthma Information Center	http://www.ama.assn.org/special asthma

Check out this PPO: Concentra Urgent Care
9500 Stockdale Highway Suites 100 & 101
Bakersfield, California 93309
Phone: (661) 282-4900
Hours>M-F 8:00 am - 9:00 pm; Sat & Sun 9:00 am - 7:00 pm

NALC Health Benefit Plan
20547 Waverly Court
Ashburn, Virginia 20149

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

As a Union member and an NALC Health Benefit Plan (HBP) member, it is great to have the option of making choices with our doctors and facilities under CIGNA. The NALC HBP has developed a Preferred Providers Organization (PPO). Each business has contracted with our Plan to provide services to our members in return for discounts.

When a doctor refers an NALC HBP member for labwork, many times they will provide a form to go to a lab that they suggest you use. This lab may not be on our PPO and you may not be getting the savings that you would get if you use one of our PPO labs. You *can* take that form to a PPO lab to lower both your out-of-pocket expense and the cost to the HBP.

Let me use my own experience as an example of how to save money making wise choices.

My doctor gave me a lab slip for blood work. It had another lab's name on the heading, but I took it to QUEST Labs. They perform the same work, but QUEST offers our members—and the NALC HBP—great discounts. (LabCorp Labs also does. And the phone numbers for both organizations are listed on my 2011 NALC HBP information page.) I had my blood work done at QUEST, and I include a copy of the EOB (Explanation of Benefits) that the HBP sent to me showing the detailed cost breakdowns.

My EOB shows that the total billed was \$360.12. QUEST is a PPO that sig-

nificantly discounts the charge to the NALC HBP. In my case, the discount was \$290.54. This left \$69.58—and this amount was paid to the lab by the NALC HBP! If you look at the bottom line on my EOB, you will see that next to the line which says "Patient Liability", the amount is \$.00.

If you also look at the comments explaining the remarks codes, you will see "Thank you for using the CIGNA healthcare preferred provider organization network. This represents your savings, so you are not required to pay this amount. This provider is prohibited from billing the patient for the difference. If you have already paid the full amount, please request reimbursement from your provider."

MARK D. RAMIREZ
NALC Branch 782 Health Benefit Plan Representative

		National Association of Letter Carriers Health Benefit Plan 20547 Waverly Court, Ashburn, Virginia 20149-0001 (703) 729-4677 or 1-888-636-NALC (6252)												
Member: MARK D RAMIREZ Patient: MARK D RAMIREZ Patient Account #: [REDACTED]		Identification #: [REDACTED] Claim #: [REDACTED] Paid To: QUEST DIAGNOSTICS Fed Tax ID #: [REDACTED]										Claim Date: 07/23/2010		
EXPLANATION OF BENEFITS														
Provider/ Description of Service	Dates	Billed Charges	Not Covered	Discount Disallowed	Covered Charges	Copayment	Deductible	Payable	% Paid	Contract Allowance	Coinsurance	Remarks Code		
QUEST DIAGNOSTICS LAB OTHER SERVICES LAB LAB LAB	05/28/10 05/28/10 05/28/10 05/28/10 05/28/10	139.25 19.50 115.00 31.50 54.87		121.06 16.50 89.30 20.64 43.04	18.19 3.00 25.70 10.86 11.83			18.19 3.00 25.70 10.86 11.83	100 100 100 100 100	18.19 3.00 25.70 10.86 11.83			04M 04M 04M 04M 04M	
Patient Liability														
Total		[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	69.58				69.58		69.58				
Claim Summary														
<input type="checkbox"/> Total Billed 360.12 <input type="checkbox"/> Less Discount Disallowed 290.54 <input type="checkbox"/> NALC Paid Provider 69.58 <input type="checkbox"/> Patient Liability .00														
REMARKS CODE:														
04M THANK YOU FOR USING THE CIGNA HEALTHCARE PREFERRED PROVIDER ORGANIZATION NETWORK. THIS REPRESENTS YOUR SAVINGS, SO YOU ARE NOT REQUIRED TO PAY THIS AMOUNT. THIS PROVIDER IS PROHIBITED FROM BILLING THE PATIENT FOR THE DIFFERENCE. IF YOU HAVE ALREADY PAID THE FULL AMOUNT, PLEASE REQUEST REIMBURSEMENT FROM YOUR PROVIDER.														
934 UNDER THE PRIVACY RULE, WE CANNOT RELEASE INFORMATION ABOUT YOU TO ANYONE WITHOUT YOUR CONSENT. THIS CAN BE DONE BY COMPLETING A PERSONAL REPRESENTATIVE AUTHORIZATION FORM. THIS FORM IS AVAILABLE AT WWW.NALC.ORG/DEPART/HBP. VERBAL CONSENT IS FOR ONE TIME ONLY AND MUST BE VERIFIED THROUGH YOU. WITHOUT YOUR WRITTEN CONSENT, WE WILL ONLY ADVISE THE CALLER IF A CLAIM HAS BEEN RECEIVED OR PROCESSED.														
Applied year-to-date: PPO/Non-PPO Calendar Year Deductible PPO/Non-PPO Catastrophic Provision PPO Catastrophic Provision				Patient Family				* The deductible and catastrophic out-of-pocket amounts listed are cumulative totals as of the end of the processing day. If the Plan corrects or voids a claim, these amounts may change. Please contact the Plan if you would like updated information or visit our website: www.nalc.org/depart/hbp						
CONTINUED ON NEXT PAGE														
Keep This Statement For Your Records. No Additional Copies Are Provided. MEMBER COPY														
[REDACTED]														

My Job is Hurting Me—What do I Do?

by Linda Smith, Vice-President
Oregon State Association

You're at work and your elbow starts hurting. You ignore it for a while and hope it will just go away as it always has in the past. Doesn't happen...and pretty soon, you can barely lift your arm to put mail in your case or get to that too high box out on the route.

WHAT DO YOU DO NOW???

DON'T go to your supervisor and say, I have an on-the-job injury." They will simply hand you some paperwork (might be the right paperwork but probably not) and tell you to fill it out and hand it back to them. Big mistake. This will slow down your claim and may result in a denial.

DO make an appointment with *your* doctor as soon as possible. Tell the doctor exactly what you do at work. Very few people (including doctors) know exactly what Letter Carriers do every day. Tell him/her about the time you spend casing mail and how you deliver mail. Get a diagnosis. Ask the doctor, "Do you believe this was caused by my job and are you willing to fill out the paperwork for a Department of Labor Workers' Compensation Claim?"

DON'T fill out the state Workers' Compensation forms which may be offered by the doctor. Your doctor will not have the proper forms.

DO get a CA-2 to fill out. This form may be obtained from your supervisor, the NALC or online.

DON'T just fill out the form haphazardly avoiding any questions when you do not know the answer.

DO request help from your local NALC Branch.

DON'T submit the form to your supervisor without including a narrative about what happened. This is *required* and will help speed up the processing of your case.

DO remember to include a narrative with the form explaining what you do on the job and how this caused your injury. It's not enough to just say that you case mail and deliver a mounted route. Be precise! "I case one foot of letters and three feet of flats into three pieces of equipment with five shelves for approximately two hours every day. I have a mounted route consisting of two hours of box units and four hours of single delivery rural style boxes. I am on the overtime desired list so I work six days per week, eleven hours per day. My arm started hurting three months ago when my route was adjusted from an apartment route to the route I am on now. I spend a lot more time opening and closing mail boxes as well as the door to my

vehicle." You can never include too much detail!

DON'T forget to make a copy of everything you submit. And keep copies of everything that you get from USPS Injury Compensation, the Department of Labor and your doctor's office. Keep it all together in date order so that when you need it you will have it.

DO give a copy of the CA-2 and the narrative to your doctor. The doctor needs to submit his/her own narrative including a diagnosis and an explanation of how the injury was caused by your job. This is why your narrative is so important. The doctor will refer to it to make his/her comments.

DON'T ignore correspondence from the Department of Labor. You will most likely get a "development letter" asking for more information about your claim.

DO take the letter seriously. Whey they say they want answers in thirty days, they really, really mean thirty days. Answer their questions immedidately even if you have already answered them in your narrative. Take a copy of the letter to your doctor and tell him/her that you need them to respond to the medical questions withing the thirty day time frame. Your claim acceptance depends on this information.

DON'T let management push you to work beyond your limitations. You will only get hurt worse and nothing is more important than your health.

DO take care of yourself and ask for help if you need it.

This article originally appeared in the Seattle, Washington NALC Branch 79 *Seventy-Niner* published in January 2011.



The National Active *and* Retired Federal Employees Association (NARFE) was established in 1921 to protect our benefits and provide for the ability to educate all federal employees about those benefits.



Membership is both a choice and an investment. Just one benefit of that investment is the automatic subscription to the monthly national magazine which addresses a variety of topics crucial to all federal employees—whether they be retired or active duty.

Q&A

This is just a sample of the kinds of things you can discover.

What is the best date for me to retire in 2011? What is the best day to retire in order to maximize my lump-sum leave payment and get a tax break? Would it be better to elect a survivor's benefit for my spouse upon retirement or elect to give my spouse a lump-sum amount from my FEGLI? I am still working and was told I could apply for Social Security benefits since I have reached my full retirement age and that the Social Security benefit will not be decreased, is this true? Etc. and Etc...

The following Questions and Responses were compiled by Retirement Benefits Service Department staff. These are real questions received by the Department and real answers, based on the members' personal circumstances. The answers are not universal and may include information that is relevant to the respondent's particular situation. NARFE does not provide legal advice or assistance, does not provide financial planning advice or assistance, and does not provide tax advice or assistance. For legal, financial planning or tax advice/assistance, NARFE recommends members contact an attorney, financial planner or certified public accountant/tax advisor.

QUESTION: I am trying to decide if it would be better to elect a survivor's benefit for my spouse upon retirement or elect to give my spouse lump-sum amount from Federal Employee's Group Life Insurance (FEGLI). My annuity will be about \$20,000 per year, and, if I elect full survivor's benefits for my spouse, it will cost me about \$167 per month. My spouse will receive about \$833 a month upon my death. The value of my life insurance policy is \$50,000 and will cost me about \$108 per month until I reach age 65 and then reduce to about \$92. Since I play less for the FEGLI benefit, wouldn't it be better to provide my spouse with \$50,000?

RESPONSE: Here are some things to consider before you make a decision. Your survivor election reduces your taxable annuity. The survivor benefit is a lifetime annuity that will last until your spouse dies.

The survivor annuity will be increased by any Cost-Of-Living Adjustment (COLA) each year until you die and continue to be applied to your spouse's annuity after you die. Therefore, the monthly annuity of \$836 will increase each year with any COLA.

You'll need to project the amount of money your spouse would receive each month from your life insurance policy of \$50,000 and how long the \$50,000 would last. Remember: \$50,000 will go a lot further today than in 20 years. But, most important, if you do not elect a survivor's benefit, your spouse will not be eligible for continued health insurance coverage under the Federal Employees Health Benefits Program plan, should you pre-decease her.

Survivor's benefits are a good deal, given the built in COLAs. However, you need to take a look at your financial situation and make the decision that will work the best for you.

QUESTION: I resigned from the USPS in October 1990 and was reinstated in July 2001. I left with about 900 hours of sick leave. Is there any way I can get credit for this sick leave?

RESPONSE: An employee who had a break in service is entitled to re-credit of sick leave if he/she returns to federal employment after December 2, 1994, unless the sick leave was forfeited upon re-employment in the federal government before December 2, 1994. This is the rule in Subpart E (630.502) of Title 5, Code of Federal Regulations. You may want to see your human resources office to determine if this applies to you as a postal employee.

These are examples of questions contained in the February 2010 *NARFE* magazine. Only two, they have been reprinted for your simple consideration of a very basic question...

How In the Heck Do I Sign Up for NARFE???

The Belden Factor

Denny Belden, Shop Steward
NALC Branch 1091—Orlando, Florida

Recently, we had Carriers do some irrational things in order to keep this 5 o'clock goal management has been hammering down your throats. **Everyone** needs to understand that **safety** and **delivery** of the mail is **your control**!

Do not rush and skip your breaks in order to make what they tell you is your time. You are playing into their hands.

You prove them right when you are trying to make their times and then do it. Do you really think if you make their time for them they will leave you alone? Absolutely not!

Why?

You just proved to them that they can intimidate you to run your route and make THEIR estimate, not yours. And this is **WRONG, WRONG, WRONG!** Now, you have opened the door to harrass you all the time. Because you did run the route, you've proven them "right". Their thought is always: If it worked one time, let's do it again!

And whose fault is it that you now have to make their time? It is not the Union's fault or management's fault—**it is squarely on your shoulders.**

Learn the contract on how you are to make *your* estimates.

The M-41 is the Carriers "Bible". It tells you exactly how to be a professional Carrier. It states exactly what you should or shouldn't do. How many of you even know what an M-41 is? How many of you have read it? The M-41 is the back of your route book... So, what is in that M-41 about this topic?

Section 131.4 Reporting Requirements It is your responsibility to verbally inform management when you are of the opinion that you will be unable to case all mail distributed to the route, perform other required duties, and leave on schedule or when you will be unable to complete delivery of all mail.

Section 131.42 Inform management of this well in advance of the schedule leavint time and not later than immediately following the final reciept of mail. Mangement will instruct you what to do .

Section 131.43 Complete applicable items on Form 3996, Carrier-Auxiliary Control, if overtime or auxiliary assistance is authorized in the office or on the street.

Section 131.44 Report on Form 1571 all mail undelivered—including all mail distributed to the route

but not cased and taken out for delivery. Estimate the number of pieces of mail.

Section 131.45 Do not curtail or eliminate any schedule delivery or collection trip unless authorized by a manager, in which case you must record all facts on Form 1571.

Section 131.46 Before you leave the office, enter on Form 1571 the mail curtailed; when you will return, add any mail which was not delivered and which was returned to the office. Follow any special local procedures set up to identify errors and corrective actions for mail returned because it was out of sequence.

Now, if you follow the instructions in the M-41 on how your are to make your estimates, no one will be in trouble.

And, remember this: The filling out of the forms is not for management's protection, **IT IS FOR YOUR PROTECTION!**

These forms (the 3996 and the 1571) prove the auxiliary assistance you requested and how much mail you were told to curtail.

Understand that management—not you—have the only power and responsibility to curtail mail. A Carrier never curtails mail on their own. You must always have instruction from a supervisor and your 1571 should always state "per supervisors instructions".

YOU SHOULD ALWAYS KEEP COPIES OF THESE FORMS.

They prove that your route is overburdened. This might qualify you for a special count and inspection. You may ask your Steward

OUT THERE



on what the qualifications are for the special count or you can go to the M-39 at NALC.ORG and look up Section 271.g.

Anyway, some Carriers have been so rushed that they are jeopardizing their jobs by violating safety and delivery rules to make management's 5 o'clock goal. There is no reason to be delaying mail or hiding mail to make the 5 o'clock goal. If you cannot make 5 o'clock with the mail you have, call in and let management know. There is no such thing as "unauthorized OT" if they tell you to carry the mail: They have inherently authorized the OT to do so! They cannot put you in the position of working into unauthorized OT by ordering you to carry the mail.

If you carry mail into "unauthorized" OT, you can be disciplined for that; however, if you do not keep delivering the mail, then you are not following management's instructions and can be disciplined for that. What!!??!!

Management **cannot** put you into a position of no matter what you do, you will violate a rule or instruction. That is conflicting instructions! That is not permitted and can be easily won at the B-Team level. That is also backed up by a Step 4 decision (M-00326).

Why am I writing about this?

Carriers are doing bizarre things with some of the mail that they are carrying.

If you have standard mail on your route, deliver it! You are paid to deliver those items. *That* is your job! Do not play management on your route and try and decide what to deliver and not deliver. If you took it out, deliver it...**ALL OF IT!** Remember, you do not have the authority to delay or curtail any mail. Only management can do this! So, don't try this on your route!

The only one who knows the estimate for what time you will leave for the route and return from the route is you.

Don't be intimidated with the DOIS crap or that you have established a "track record". Make your estimate based on the mail you received that day to carry and anything left at the case should have a curtailed slip on it. If it is at your case, it should go out that day. Make management tell you what to curtail. It is not your job to make the decision. If there is any blame to come down from doing any improper curtailment of mail, then the supervisor must answer for it and not you.

Understand this: If someone is going to get chewed out for improper curtailment of mail—and you do not have a 1571 sitting in the tub—instead of the supervisor getting chewed out, guess who will get the royal screws put to? That's right...The Carrier.

The same goes with the 3996. If you estimated an hour of OT and you take an hour of OT, but you didn't fill out the form, management can claim that they didn't authorize the OT. They can issue discipline like a Letter of Warning.



How will you defend yourself? If you had a copy of the 3996, you can show your estimate and that any OT was authorized. But...with no 3996, it's just all talk. This then becomes hard to prove.

The forms (3996 and 1571) are for **YOUR** protection. Make the copies and protect yourself. The one time you don't is when they will make an issue of something...*and there will be no document to back you up.*

Get in the habit of doing this each day. It only becomes a habit if you make yourself do it *every* time. Then, it gets easier.

Good luck and remember that it is up to you to make your estimates and to justify them. Their DOIS numbers mean nothing other than they have something to read other than comic books!

DOIS sets no standards for you and is not recognized by the contract. So, the next time they talk about "percent to standard", ask them when they did the 6-day count to determine that. Many of you have not gone through 6-day counts and this is why most "percent to standards" mean nothing.

More importantly, DOIS estimates mean nothing anyway since management cannot hold you to those percentages.

Only documentation of unsatisfactory effort can result in discipline. Keep up the good work and "Do It By The Book!" They hate that—and they wrote the book!

This re-printed article from NALC Branch 1091 in Orlando, FL is courtesy of the Cedar Rapids, Iowa NALC Branch 373 Parlor City News published in January 2011

Living his Dream!!

If you looked at the Bakersfield seniority list for Letter Carriers, you would see Bill Bricker's seniority posted as July 1994. This is his *local* seniority... Add ten more years to see how long he worked as a Letter Carrier!

Bill's career started in July 1984 in San Jose. So, you know that he did a lot of walking up in the Bay area and then a whole lot more down in Bakersfield.

But, his travels started well before then...

Bill's family was originally from the Grand Rapids, Michigan area. He lived there until he was twelve and then his family moved to Southern California. Following his graduation from high school, Bill decided to move up to Berkley—U.C. Berkeley. He was there long enough to graduate with a degree in Philosophy in 1966!

Apparently, that specific academic field didn't translate into very much in the way of cash; and, after spending a lot of time doing a lot of different things, he saw an advertisement in the newspaper.

They were looking for people to be Letter Carriers in San Jose *and* they were willing to pay \$10.50 an hour!

Bill spent his first 90 days during probation trying to survive. (Sound familiar?) And then he did a little more travelling.

He was sent from San Jose to Cupertino where they needed help. This was around the time that the "Silicon Valley" influx was beginning and Cupertino was the hub of the Apple Computer operations. He was there for about three months and then went back to work in San Jose.

After about four or five months as a sub, he made Regular and got a route that he stayed on until he started to get that itch to travel...

The story about how he got to Bakersfield is actually pretty interesting.

When Bill was nineteen, his dad died. His mother eventually remarried a really good guy and they would both travel together. They were in Las Vegas one time talking to a bartender. The bartender told them that he had property in a place called Walker Basin and he told them that it was just a beautiful place.

They drove there to check it out, fell in love with the scenery, bought some property and built a house.

Up in San Jose, Bill just continued to work. He lived a couple of miles away from his work location at Blossom Hill. But, it was always a nagging resentment that he was always having to be a renter.

When Bill visited his mom, he liked the Walker Basin area, too.

He liked it so much that he bought two and-a-half acres with a double-wide on the property. While he was working in San Jose, he rented out the house and the rental income pretty much paid for the property.

Eventually, some of that Philosophy, Logic and Higher Learning background that he'd assimilated at U.C. Berkeley must've kicked in. He decided that there must be a way to get closer to his property so he wouldn't have to keep giving away his money as rent. Problem: There are no City Carriers in Walker Basin.

Hmmm...closest city is Bakersfield.

Fortunately, in 1994, he came across another advertisement. This one was in the back of the NALC magazine, *The Postal Record*. The USPS was looking for people to transfer to Bakersfield as Regulars.

Hmmm... He wouldn't have to be a PTF all over again. He would be guaranteed forty hours and would be close enough so that he could live in a place that he owned.

And so, Bill found himself travelling again.

It was interesting when he got here.

It was the same Post Office, but some things were different.

One thing that he liked had to do with time off. In San Jose, if you needed a day off, you had to sign up for the whole week. In Bakersfield, the local memorandum provided a much better way of just getting a day off to take care of personal business. It didn't seem to be that big a problem since all the supervisors and managers seemed to be able to manage the operations without too much problem if someone got that day off.

Bill was first assigned to Stockdale and he worked there for awhile until he was moved to Hillcrest. This is the one unit that he always wanted to work at. It is the closest station to Highway 178 and made his commute to Walker Basin just a little shorter.

One of the first supervisors that he remembers working for was Karen Bert. He also remembers that Station Manager Allen Connor has not been at Hillcrest for only a short time during the entire time that Bill has worked there. (It was probably the time that Allen was on a detail to Chicago.) The rest of the time, Allen Connor was the only station manager that he had in over twenty-five years as a 93306 Letter Carrier.

Bill wishes there was a better way of training new employees how to handle "nixie" mail better.

His advice: "If you don't know where the mail goes, bring it back and let the Regular deal with it!!" Too many times, Bill has had to deal with mail that subs just send to CFS. There is no record of a change of address and mail comes back that Bill knows that he would have dealt with appropriately if he had had the chance.

On other occasions, subs bring back mail and have not endorsed why there was no delivery. If a customer tells the sub, "These people don't live here," that means something. If there is no endorsement, the next person will deliver that same piece of mail again *and* the customer is going to get more than a little peeved.

He also wonders why some Letter Carriers have so much trouble dealing with supervisors. He knows that people tell him that they hate "negotiating" with the supervisors when



they are establishing when they are going to leave the office and return from the street.

In Bill's opinion, there is no "negotiating". You just have to have a professional knowledge of what you are supposed to do. If you look at your mail, you tell your supervisor that your "estimate" of how long it is going to take you is based on how much mail you have left to case. If you know how long it takes you on the street, you estimate how long it's going to take you based on how much mail you have. Simple.

This is not negotiating. You tell the supervisor your estimate. If the supervisor tells you that he thinks you can be faster, you can agree or not.

This is not negotiating. YOU tell the supervisor how long it is going to take you. He/she tells you how long they want you to take. You give your estimate and then try to do the best you can. If you discover it is going to take longer, call the supervisor up and ask what you are to do: Bring the mail back, keep delivering...or what?

Let your supervisor supervise.

In Bakersfield, Bill was once bitten by a dog. It wasn't really that much of a bite, but he had to get a tetanus shot. It's the only blemish that he had on his safety record in his entire career.

When speaking of his new career, Bill Bricker admits he is "Living His Dream!!"

Walker Basin is beautiful. He added another two and-a-half acres and his five acre spread has good well water and fantastic views. He loves the fact that it's usually sunny up there when it's gray and dreary down in the Valley.

He got a bit of a pay raise when he retired because he no longer has to pay for that daily round-trip commute from Walker Basin to Bakersfield. He was also fortunate that he made good financial decisions with his Thrift Savings Plan and wasn't hurt too badly by the downturn in the economy.

And that itch to travel?

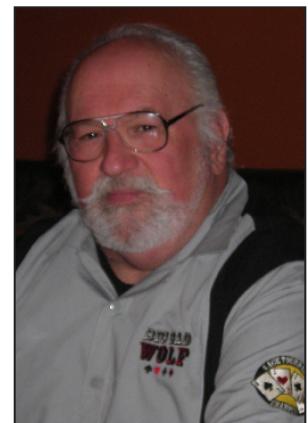
People keep asking him where he's going to visit now that he's retired. Will he go to Europe? Will he go to Fiji? Will he go to Disneyworld?

At this point, if can get there on his quad, that's good enough for him.

Don Blanco had a Party!!!

Retiring in December didn't stop Don from having his party in January.

Although these pictures were too late to make it to the printing of last month's newsletter, here they are now! Congratulations, Don!!



SPONSOR A FALLEN HERO

Phase 1 of the Kern Veterans "Living" Memorial Plaza was completed on November 11, 2007. Located in the heart of Bakersfield, the Memorial Plaza exists to honor men and women of Kern County who served in the Armed Forces.

Now, the Kern Veterans Memorial Foundation's goal is to complete Phase II: "The Wall of Valor".

The "Wall of Valor" is located at Truxton Avenue and "S" Street in front of the Amtrak Station. It consists of eight glass panels. Each panel will honor the sacrifice made by military personnel in a particular war. The names of those from Kern County who were Killed In Action or Missing In Action as a result of their service are to be memorialized on each panel.

A donation of \$300 pays tribute, by individual name, to one of the 1,007 Kern county soldiers, sailors and airmen who—to this date—have paid the ultimate price for the cause of our freedom as Americans.

Be there this month as guests join us at our general meeting. In attendance will be Leon Thomas, President of the Kern Veterans Memorial Foundation. With him will be the historian of the Foundation, Ken Hooper. They want to share with us information about the Foundation and the "Wall of Valor".

As many of you know, NALC Branch 782 has been collecting money to honor the son of Branch member Pat Farr. Clay Farr was killed during action in the Iraq war.

We have met our goal and, at our meeting, we will make a presentation of the money we've collected to have Clay's name placed on the "Wall of Valor". Any extra money which was collected will go towards the Foundation's goal of memorializing **all** of Kern County's fallen heroes.

The men and women who will be named on the "Wall of Valor" deserve to have this memorial. Family, friends, loved ones, and even strangers will be able to honor individuals who put their lives on hold to fight for our freedom and who—tragically—never returned from their battles.

I really hope that people understand how important this is to family members of fallen heroes.

I am the daughter of a fallen hero. My father was killed in the Vietnam war on June 1, 1968. He was a twenty-one year old soldier and I was just two years old.

I understand what an actual memorial can mean to the loved ones all of those fallen heroes. I have travelled to Washington, DC many times to see my Dad's name on the Wall and it is always a very emotional experience. And, I know that each of those names has a personal story and a legacy of lost hopes and dreams.

Try to take a few minutes out of your busy lives and come to this month's general meeting. Show your support to the Kern Veterans Memorial Foundation.

If anyone is still interested in donating for Clay Farr—or for any other Veteran—contact me a (661) 364-5544. You can also visit this website: kernvets.org.

SHARI SHARPE



SPONSOR A FALLEN HERO

Buy—or serve—a cup of coffee for a war veteran

by Cheryl Long

The Veterans of Foreign Wars and its Ladies Auxiliary is a large portion of my life. We have been supporting the VA clinic as far back as I can remember with donations of coffee, coffee cups, stir sticks, creamer, sugar and sugar substitutes. Years ago, the Ladies Auxiliary of the Veterans of Foreign Wars Department of California helped enormously, but with the opening of many other clinics up and down California, funds have gotten a little smaller, making it difficult to spread around enough to help out all of the clinics and hospitals in the Veterans Administration Service Centers.

I was talking the other day to one of our state VFW Service officers about the coffee situation. He told me that at our clinic on Westwind Drive in Bakersfield, they are seeing more than 8,000 men and women per month... Including those coming back from Iraq and Afghanistan—as well as our older vets—that is more than 100,000 people a year!!

Well, that explains why we can't keep up with the coffee situation as well as we have in the past, and why the \$500 per year from our Ladies Auxiliary doesn't

go very far. Granted, during the summer there isn't as much coffee being brewed in the afternoons as there is in the mornings, so we are able to offset there; but, during the winter months—when it is cold and dreary all day—so much more coffee is consumed. Once a month, about 10 to 15 ladies (most of them from Bakersfield, Taft, Maricopa, Wasco and incorporated areas of Kern County) bake cookies, doughnuts and coffee cakes on the last Friday of the month. We set up a table where those men and women can come and get what they want—something to go along with their coffee. It's our way of saying, "Thank you for your service and for the freedoms it helps preserve." I (along with my Ladies Auxiliary sisters) believe this is the least we can do for what they have done for us.

I ran a little blurb about the situation on Facebook and had replies from five of my friends, who volunteered a couple of weeks ago. I love how my friends and our families step up to the plate, but this is a quick fix and we will need help for years to come. Our Ladies Auxiliary has plans to ask local markets and other businesses

to put out boxes for donations to see if we can get some relief that way. But only time will tell if anyone out there in the community would like to help.

In the meantime, please don't hesitate to call me. We will even make arrangements to pick up any donations you might have. You can reach me at (661) 303-0073.

Thank you, in advance! And, God bless the men and women who gave us the rights and freedoms we have today!!!

Cheryl Long is a Life Member of VFW Auxiliary No. 1468 under the eligibility of her father, Warren G. Morrell, Sr. He fought in the Korean War. He died on December 13, 2007.

Branch 782 Editor-guy's note: Warren "Windy" Morrell was a retired postal employee who worked at the old Annex and retired from the GMF. He and his family used to live at 939 Sylvia. They were good people! I delivered mail to them for over twenty-three years. They lived on my first route. I had no idea he had served in Korea... Because of this article, I've taken some coffee over to the clinic. My question to you now is: **WILL YOU?**

This abridged article courtesy of an undated *Bakersfield Californian*

Harrington's Corner: Make this the Best Year Ever

by Michael Josephson

"The tradition of making New Year's Resolutions reflects one of the very best qualities of human nature—the ability to reflect on and assess our lives in terms of the goals we set for ourselves and the principles we believe in.

It's still not too late to formulate a self-improvement plan to make our outer lives and inner selves better by adopting more positive attitudes, living up to our highest values, and strengthening our relationships.

Start with your attitude. Resolve not to sabotage your ambitions, self-confidence, and ideals with self-fulfilling pessimism and cynicism. Don't undermine your happiness or success with negativity. Stop wasting time and energy complaining, condemning, resenting, regretting, and worrying. Replace griping with gratitude. Make a daily conscious effort to approach every problem and opportunity with positive energy, enthusiasm, optimism, and even self-conscious cheerfulness.

Resolve to pay more attention to your moral compass and your beliefs about right and wrong. Promise yourself to be more scrupulous about being honest, keeping promises, and standing

strong against temptations. Commit to doing the right thing even when it may cost more than you want to pay, and be more accountable, respectful, fair and compassionate. Treat your character as your most important asset.

Finally, resolve to improve your relationships. Remember, people always remember how you made them feel. Help people feel better about themselves, not worse. Overcome the impulse to criticize, scold, and condemn, and instead look for every opportunity to praise, encourage, and support. Above all, be kind.

Make this year the best ever!
This is reminding you that character counts."

Just Another Day in Paradise...

JEFF HARRINGTON
93305

Editor-guy's note: This was submitted for the January newsletter. I forgot I had received it and that it was in "unopened" e-mail. Sorry, Jeff!

Where:

Southwest Lanes

3610 Wible Rd.
Bakersfield, CA 93309
661.834.2695

When:

February 20, 2011

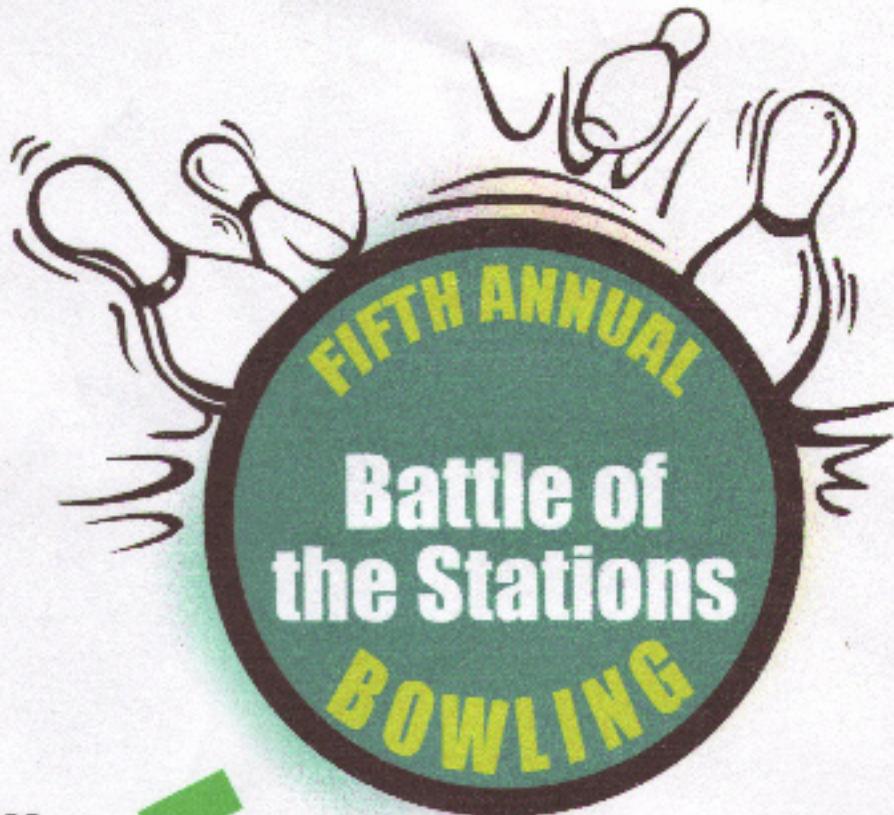
Sunday • 11:30am - 3 pm
(Check-in 10:30 am)

Cost:

\$80.00 per team

(20.00 per person)

Includes 3 games and shoes.



Get your shoes, get your back stretched and your competitiveness spirit ready. Join our Fifth Annual Bowling Extravaganza. Team up with your co-workers at your station and get a shot at having bragging rights on what station truly has the best employees. Remember to pick a name for your team! You will need a 4-person team. (men, women, mixed). The team must consist of postal employees, with at least 3 of your team members from your station to qualify for the championship. Retired employees welcomed.

Deadline: February 6th. I will need teams who want to participate on sending the money, check, money order and the names of each player to me by this date to reserve the lanes. I only have so many lanes reserved.

First to pay, first to play - Last year 3 teams were turned away!



PAST WINNERS
2007 Stockdale Fab4
2008 Dole Ct. BowlFrogs
2009 EB Kentucky St. Kids
2010 EB Kentucky St. Kids

music provided by



**Contact:
Ralph Ramirez**

For more info: 827-8025 after 4 pm
Send everything to 2408 March Ave, 93313

BRUNDAGE	
Stacy Castillo	0.00%
Enoch Moya	-3.76%
Kimmi Gardea	-1.46%
Yvonne Esquivel	-.77%
Sonia Camacho	0.00%
Ronika Hughes	0.00%
Ruben Gonzalez	0.00%
John Ortega, Sr.	-3.09%
Mabel Bullis	0.00%

ARVIN	
Linda Perkins	-5.25%

SOUTH STATION	
Andrew Garcia	0.00%

EAST BAKERSFIELD	
Jeff Harrington	0.00%

PEGASUS	
Debbie Heer	-1.90%
Shondraya Medina	-2.69%
Sam Root	1.76%

CAMINO MEDIA	
Ricky Heer	-1.25%

SHAFTER	
Tina Harbour	-7.10%
Francisca Davis	0.10%
Beatrice Rodriguez	-1.02%
Robin Richard	-6.20%

HILLCREST	
Aylce Nelson	-2.22%
Pam Smith	-3.19%

DOLE COURT	
Glenn Ryder	-3.26%
Lucinda Martinez	-1.65%
Fernando Gonzalez	-3.21%
Jennifer Gonzalez	-1.73%
Laura Gordon	-10.00%
Paul Hernandez	1.43%
Hermi Encinas	-4.05%
Teresa Garcia	0.00%

And...who is the Phase I Winner??

**LAURA GORDON
FROM
DOLE COURT!**

Brundage Biggest Loser 2011 . . .

OUT THERE



After great success with our initial "Biggest Loser" competitions, we are starting another Brundage Biggest Loser for 2011!

This time, we have 31 competitors. This equals \$775 in the pot. The buy-in for the competition is \$25 per person. Winnings will be split 75/25 to the top two "LOSERS!" at the end of the competition with some small bonuses along the way. We still have a great turn out! We have ten stations involved. That's just awesome!!!

HERE ARE THE RULES:

- 1) The beginning weigh-in date is **ON** Monday January 3, 2011.
- 2) The 2nd month weigh-in is **ON** Thursday February 3, 2011. Whoever wins the weight loss for that month, by percentage, will win \$25.
- 3) The 3rd month weigh-in is **ON** Thursday March 3, 2011. Whoever wins the weight loss for that month, by percentage, will win \$25.
- 4) The final weigh-in is **ON** Monday, April 4, 2011. This will be a combined weight loss percentage of all three months. There will be a 1st Place Winner of 75%; a second place Winner of 25%; and, of course, the 3rd month Winner will get their \$25 winnings.
- 5) To be fair, we *are* "mimicking" **THE BIGGEST LOSER** Series. We are doing this on the honor system. No pills, surgery, or other doohickeys—just old fashioned hard work of eating right and exercise.

We have been having fun keeping this competition going for four years now. And, to boot, it has gotten everyone motivated in keeping healthy!

PLEASE REMEMBER: AND THIS IS ABSOLUTELY VERY IMPORTANT!
ACCEPTABLE WEIGH-IN IS ONLY ON OR BEFORE THE DATES LISTED.

Good Luck! Keep it healthy and honest!

MABEL BULLIS
Brundage NALC Shop Steward

from the editor-guy

I first met Linda Evans when she was Linda King. That was in 1979.

In some ways, that seems like a long time ago. In other ways, it doesn't.

About three years ago, I spent an extended time talking with her at her house on Kensington. Terri Hasset was there, too. (If you remember Terri, you can think about that "old-timer" title yourself...) I was there for a couple of hours and the three of us talked about a lot of people and things we remembered.

Then, despite her illness, Linda was just as sharp as she'd been when I first met her. She eloquently described numerous incidents in her early postal career.

Like probably everybody else who walks in the door as a new employee, I was naive about a lot of things. I didn't know that female Letter Carriers were a relatively new phenomena. I also didn't know that Linda was Bakersfield's very first woman

hired as a city Letter Carrier and that she had survived quite a rocky road as a trailblazer.

Linda experienced a lot of resentment as she found herself thrust into the then all-male world of the Carriers. Most of her co-workers were subtle. Others carried their message over the line of harrassment. Almost thirty years later, as she mentioned names, Linda's angry eyes were hard to ignore.

I suppose *that* is one of the first things that made me respect Linda. She had a personal and intense righteous indignation when she felt that someone was somehow being abused. I suppose that is why she gravitated to being an NALC activist.

In 1982, she took me to dinner with then-Regional Assistant Murray Cannon. Murray is the first out-of-town NALC officer that I ever met. He and Linda were on good terms and they didn't seem to mind that I didn't know much about anything.

I was so impressed by Linda that I actually nominated her for the office of Branch 782 Vice-President. She didn't win. Looking back, I realize that there was a whole set of dynamics that I was totally unaware of.



Linda loved to cook food and did not know the meaning of "just a little"—and she often took leftovers to the homeless shelter.

After she married fellow Downtown Station Letter Carrier Phil Evans, her focus shifted. She spent less and less time doing NALC things and more time with Phil in his music world and helping to write his books.

I'm happy that she and Phil found each other. She was "Number 1" in his life.

As I look around the workroom floor, almost half of the people—who are female—have no idea how much they owe to Linda and her tenacious ability to persevere...

BASIL ZUNIGA

A Message from Mabel

Recently, two Postal employees' lives were cut short within the same week. The first one was Brundage Station Manager Robert Nicholas, Jr. The other was the first woman Letter Carrier here in Bakersfield — Linda Evans.

Robert Nicholas came to Bakersfield from the Oxnard area with his wife and two kids. He was in the Postal Service for seventeen years. He participated in numerous activities such as softball tournaments, golf tournaments, and even one time in the Bowl-a-Thon. He contributed his time to our "Brundage Car Wash" to help the NALC Food Drive.



Even though I am a Steward and we had issues to address that we didn't always agree on, he was there to lend an ear for my woes or to give me straight-up advice. He shared his personal experiences to empathize with what I was going through. One time, without knowing what was going on, he helped by just saying, "Everything will be okay." It meant a lot to me.

Another person who passed during the same week that Robert died was Linda Evans. She was 65 years old and had been battling cancer for years. I can't say that I ever really got to know her, but I respected her. The first time I met her was when I started as a PTF working at the Bakersfield Downtown Station. She was a feisty, very head-strong lady. And when I got to briefly know her, she was also a very sweet lady.

Just like many others, they will be missed. Please pray for their families and friends in this time of sorrow and take a moment to reflect on the brief moments we were able to spend with them on earth.

MABEL BULLIS
93307 Shop Steward



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.

Basil Zuniga, Editor-guy
(661) 397-4330
brziii@aol.com

Juan R. Rodriguez, Assistant Editor
(H) (661) 854-0635
(C) (661) 912-7553

The "S.A.N.E."*

Fred Acedo, Cartoonist

*(Special Assistant Newsletter Editor)
P.O. Box 6532
Bakersfield, CA 93386-6532

Anita Holderman, Branch Photographer
(661) 589-1683

Christopher A. Chretien, (Kree-shun)
Branch 782 Special Project Facilitator
(559) 801-8645

Branch Officers

President	Mike Towery	(661) 331-9171
Vice-President	John Ortega	(661) 809-8140
Recording Secretary	Kim Gerdes	(661) 834-2059
Treasurer	Molly Biggar	(661) 832-0393
Financial Secretary	Anita Holderman	(661) 487-5353
HBP & MBA	Mark Ramirez	(661) 834-5011
Sargeant-at-Arms	Darryl Holderman	(661) 487-5353
Chief Trustee	Lucinda Martinez	(661) 327-2898
Trustee	Danny Blair	(661) 397-8107
Trustee	Mabel Bullis	(661) 496-5679

NALC Branch 782 Shop Stewards

Avenal (93203)	John Ortega	(661) 809-8140
Arvin (93209)	John Ortega	(661) 809-8140
Delano (93215)	Gracie Silva	(661) 325-5526
Lamont (93241)	Darryl Holderman	(661) 589-1683
McFarland (93250)	Robert Campos	(661) 805-1034
Shafter (93263)	Norma Hamer	(661) 619-1465
Taft (93268)	Mike Meza	(805) 625-4541
Wasco (93280)	Jerry Patterson	(661) 699-2462
Wasco Alternate (93280)	Mabel Lyons	(661) 900-8892
Downtown Station (93301)	Kim Gerdes	(661) 834-2059
South Station (93304)	Darryl Holderman	(661) 487-5353
South Station Alternate	Judy Kiyoshi	(661) 817-5529
East Bakersfield (93305)	Paul Salazar	(661) 327-7637
Hillcrest Station (93306)	Pam Smith	(661) 979-5854
Brundage Station (93307)	Mabel Bullis	(661) 496-5679
Brundage Station Alternate	Emma Gonzalez	(661) 333-7547
Dole Court (93308)	Mike Towery	(661) 862-8033
Dole Court Alternate	Shari Sharpe	(661) 364-5544
Stockdale Station (93309)	Randy Courson	(661) 345-0256
Stockdale Station (93309)	John Ortega	(661) 809-8140
Camino Media (93311/13)	Mike Meza	(805) 625-4541
Mojave (93501)	Vacant	
California City (93504)	Paula Hogg	(760) 373-8963
Boron (93516)	Paula Hogg	(760) 373-8963
Edwards AF Base (93526)	Larry Beem	(661) 949-2280
Tehachapi (93561)	Mary Morphis	(661) 822-6614
Trona (93562)	Lynnell Howell	(760) 371-1039
Ridgecrest (93555)	Lynnell Howell	(760) 371-1039

**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) 325-5526

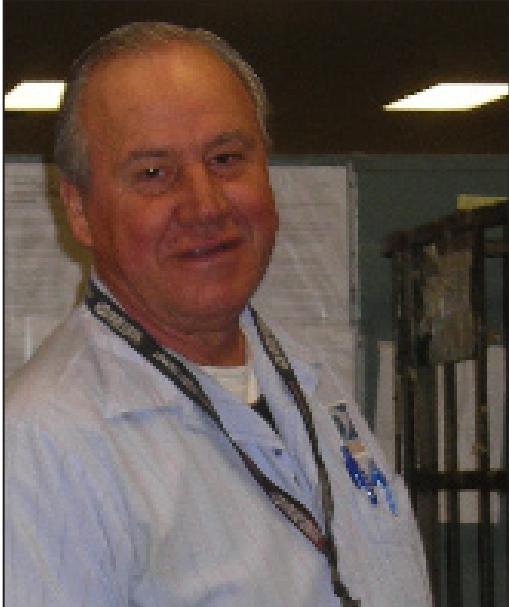
Non-Profit Organization
U.S. Postage
PAID
Bakersfield, California
Permit Number 32

General Meeting Tuesday February 22, 2011 7:00 p.m.

Branch 782 Office
2628 “F” Street
Bakersfield, California

Bill Bricker A Retiree??

Check out pages 12 and 13...



FORWARDING SERVICE REQUESTED

OUT THERE



**COME FIND OUT ABOUT THE “WALL OF VALOR”
AT THIS MONTH’S GENERAL MEETING**



Details on page 14 in Shari Sharpe’s article...