

# 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**



WEB VERSION @WWW.782NALCCOM

MARCH 2011

at the  
**Mike:**



**If there was ever any doubt about the true agenda of some politicians, it should now be obvious. Events taking place in Wisconsin show their real intent.**

Their real agenda is not to balance a state budget but to strip collective bargaining rights from the hard working middle class.

NALC President Rolando has stated that “Leaving aside the deceit and the bad faith bargaining displayed over the past several days, what the Wisconsin GOP and Governor Walker did last night was shameful,” Rolando said, “Using a state budget crisis caused by a great recession created on Wall Street to attack the fundamental rights of Wisconsin public employees to bargain for middle-class wages, benefits and working conditions is just plain wrong.”

We all heard during the last election campaign how the candidates wanted to create jobs. It is obvious that the only jobs they want to create are minimum wage jobs with no collective bargaining rights.

If you are wondering what Wisconsin has to do with Letter Carriers in our Branch, I would ask that you read the article titled “I Smell A Rat in Wisconsin” written by NALC Branch 25 President Paul Desmond. His remarks follow my message to you.

Why is what he says so important to you as Letter Carriers?

Without a middle class that has decent paying jobs, the country will not be able to recover from the Great Recession.

*That* is why we encourage Branch members to donate to COLCPE. Listed in the February 2011 *Postal Record* were twenty-six Branch 782 members who donated over \$4,700 last year to protect our Rights. I want to give a special thanks to all of them. They understand that our collective bargaining rights can be easily taken away by an act of Congress.

*Continued on next page...*



(l-r) Brian Dame, Trona; and Mike Eberhart and Chuck Morris as they take in the info and the pizza.

If every single person in the NALC would donate five dollars each pay period

to protect our rights and jobs, we would be able to protect our hard-won gains. I urge each of you to do your part in giving the NALC National Officers the best possible chance of success on our behalf!

Our Branch members have also voted to send three representatives (John Ortega, Diana Herrera, and Pam Smith) back to Washington D.C. with the California lobby delegation headed by State Association President John Beaumont. They will be there to lobby Congress. They will join with activists from other Western states to present our case to our elected officials.



(l-r) Jorge Gamboa, Michele Thompson, Cathleen Gonder and Steward Lynnel Howell (all from Ridgecrest) listen intently.

I applaud the fact that they have chosen to become involved. I appreciate everyone who makes the time to learn how to protect our jobs. I especially thank those Carriers who attended the Area meeting in eastern Kern County on March 9 in Ridgecrest.

Let me, for the record, congratulate and thank Shari Sharpe and Norma Hamer on their success generating support to have Clay Farr's name placed on the Wall of Valor! On behalf of everyone, thank you!!

Don't forget to read this next article by Paul Desmond. It is an excellent article and one which you need to keep in mind as the NALC enters into negotiations with the Postal Service on what our future will look like.

We will be discussing these important issues, the lobby trip, and other items of interest to Carriers at the next General Meeting on Tuesday, March 22nd.

I hope to see you there!

MIKE TOWERY  
Branch 782 President

## I Smell a Rat in Wisconsin...

by Paul Desmond, President  
NALC Branch 25

How many times have we ALL heard it? How many times have we ALL been told that anything that we earn through collective bargaining can be taken away by an act of Congress?

How many Letter Carriers have thought that such a statement was just a scare tactic to make them contribute to COLCPE out of fear?

How many union members in Wisconsin thought "It couldn't happen to me?" Better yet, how many union members and/or public workers in Wisconsin voted for Scott Walker?

That's right, this month I'm writing about Wisconsin. Why?

I'm writing about Wisconsin because we are FEDERAL employees and what happens anywhere in the U.S. has a potential impact on us: Us—as in *we*—the Letter Carriers of the United States Postal Service.

It's not the Massachusetts Postal Service, it's not the New York Postal Service, it's the United States Postal Service.

There is the potential in this country right now for the events in Wisconsin

to ignite and gain momentum and spread throughout the country. If that happens, I doubt that those that fan the flames will be satisfied with teachers and custodians and others that are being targeted in Wisconsin.

No, they will most likely target anyone who earns a wage that they arbitrarily have determined is too high. Chew on that one...

I suppose I shouldn't assume that everyone reading this is up to speed on Wisconsin, so I'll give you the "Reader's Digest" version.

Scott Walker got elected as Governor, after years of attacking Unions in prior government posts. He inherited a state government that (as of January 31 of THIS YEAR) reported

they would end the fiscal year with a \$121.4 million balance: *A SURPLUS.*

Then, Walker pushed through special interest spending to the tune of \$140 million...thereby creating a deficit. A deficit that he is planning on recouping out of the paychecks and benefits of public workers.

How? There is legislation awaiting a vote that strips the collective bargaining rights that Unions in Wisconsin have had for over a half century.

Wages of many public employees will then be subject to a vote. A vote taken by politicians put into office by the private sector. The legislation would also eliminate the ability of Unions to collect dues directly from state paychecks. The legislation would put the burden of collecting the dues directly onto the Union. Further, the legislation would require that EVERY YEAR employees would have to vote to determine if they even wanted to have a Union.

If you are thinking that such radical legislation won't pass, think again.

It requires 17 votes, and there are 19 Republicans. There are only 14 Democrats and things are so heated right now that the Democrats fled over state lines into Illinois in order to avoid being taken by the police back to the State House and forced to vote.

This is real. Not a dream, it is very real and scary...

***This is happening in the United States, not in a third world country. Politicians are fleeing in an ill-fated attempt to preserve benefits for those that have bargained for them—for those who have earned them!***

I really don't know what to say at this point. There are actually Union members, even Letter Carriers, who support such legislation. Believe me, I spoke to one.

There are things that are just wrong; but, somehow, the public is stirred up into thinking that they are right.

How else would you have a talk radio host (who conservatively speaking must make at least \$100,000/year) preaching to the "masses" that are making maybe \$10/hour with no benefits. These hate-mongers are convincing the \$10/hour masses to hate the middle class, and support the ultra rich.

Imagine if things were happening in reverse. Imagine if the vast majority of Americans formed a grass roots

movement to take over the government and to then grab up all the properties of the ultra rich by eminent domain.

Sure, they could claim the homes of the health insurance companies' CEO's and put up cell towers, or windmills, or public facilities for the "good of the people." That's absurd.

Well, so is stripping collective bargaining rights and voting on wages.

It could never happen to us? Wrong! Prior to 1970 that is exactly what we had. Learn about our history...

Prior to collective bargaining, Congress set our pay and benefits. Read *Carriers in a Common Cause*. Come to the next meeting and sign up for "Gimme5" and the Branch will give you a copy. After you read it, not only will you give to COLCPE, but you'll tell others to do the same!

This abridged article courtesy of the March 2011 Massachusetts Northeast Merged Branch *25 Wake Up!*



Cartoon courtesy of the February 2011 Royal Oak, Michigan NALC Branch 3126 *New Vision*

# “WALL OF VALOR”

Three guests attended our February General Meeting. Leon Thomas, President of the Kern County Veterans Memorial Foundation brought two other board members to share their mission. He brought with him Ken Hooper,



Branch 782 Retiree Pat Farr shares his appreciation for the actions of our members on behalf of his son, Clay.

the Foundation Historian and Don Clark. Many of you may remember Don from his years appearing on local television.

A highlight of the evening came with the presentation of \$300, on behalf of Branch 782 members, by Shari Sharpe. She and Norma Hamer were appointed by Branch 782 President Mike Towery to form a committee. Their mission: To generate the necessary monetary support to have the name of Clay Farr placed on the Foundation’s “Wall of Valor”.

Clay’s father, Branch Retiree Pat Farr, shared emotional memories of his son’s last days before being killed in an explosion. He was also extremely grateful that the members chose to band together to take this action for Clay.

The final highlight came at the end of Leon Thomas’s presentation. Spontaneously, and with a great sense of pride and dedication, many members approached to personally donate even more money. The total presentation amounted to over \$500!



Shari Sharpe presents money collected to place Clay Farr’s name on the “Wall of Valor” to Foundation President Leon Thomas.



Don Clark, former local television personality speaks to us.



Ken Hooper, the Kern County Veterans Memorial Foundation Historian shares project context.

## VFW Post 97 Info from Branch Trustee Danny Blair

- March 26, 2011—Men’s Auxiliary Piggy Ribs Dinner
- March 29, 2011—Ladies’ Dinner Pork Loin
- April 2, 2011—Men’s Auxiliary Steak Dinner
- April 5, 2011—Tammy’s Chicken Fried Dinner
- April 12, 2011—Ladies’ Dinner (call for info)
- April 16, 2011—Commander’s Breakfast (open to everyone)
- April 17, 2011—Mens’ Auxiliary Breakfast
- April 19, 2011—Ladies’ Dinner Chicken Cacciatore
- April 23, 2011—Men’s Auxiliary Piggy Rib Dinner
- April 26, 2011—Ladies’ Dinner (call for info)

**Richard W. Woodward VFW Post 97**  
**5350 South Union Avenue**  
**Bakersfield, California 93307**

## Holiday Planner

<b>May 30, 2011</b>	<b>Monday</b>	<b>Memorial Day</b>
<b>July 4, 2011</b>	<b>Monday</b>	<b>Independence Day</b>
<b>September 5, 2011</b>	<b>Monday</b>	<b>Labor Day</b>
<b>October 10, 2011</b>	<b>Monday</b>	<b>Columbus Day</b>
<b>November 11, 2011</b>	<b>Friday</b>	<b>Veterans’ Day</b>
<b>November 24, 2011</b>	<b>Thursday</b>	<b>Thanksgiving Day</b>
<b>December 26, 2011</b>	<b>Monday</b>	<b>Holiday for the Christmas Day</b>

It’s not just “chance” that we celebrate certain days. Our holidays honor the sacrifice and toil by many who went before us. Remember *that* on these days...

Information submitted by Mark Ramirez

# Johnny on the Spot

I write this article as I prepare to attend the NALC West Coast Lobby Trip March 14 - 17, 2011. The purpose of this trip is to inform and educate Congress on what the facts are concerning Letter Carriers in their respective Districts. This is the same Congress that can change delivery days from six to five. All political differences aside, each and every one of us is in this together.

I believe that, together, we will be successful and overcome the challenges facing our Craft. But, it is going to take a concerted efforts by **all** of us...and this isn't just rhetoric. It is a fact.

So, what are some issues you should be aware of?

Democrats and Republicans in the U.S. House of Representatives have said that they do not believe changes to the US Postal Service pension funding arrangements would be enough to give

the the Postal Service future financial stability.

Members of the House Subcommittee on the Federal Workforce, US Postal Service and Labor Policy held a hearing on the financial crisis at the USPS. The hearing was held as Congress seeks to work with USPS management to address multi-billion dollar losses at the USPS as it continues to face up to declining mail volumes. While unions and USPS customers have said that the big issue in tackling USPS losses at the moment are "overpayments" in federal pension and retirement health benefit systems, the Congressional subcommittee said more substantial reforms were needed.

Congressman Dennis Ross, the chairman of the subcommittee, said in his opening remarks to the hearing that modifying pre-funding requirements for USPS retiree pension and benefit funds "do not address the long-term systemic problems and solvency issues" the Postal Service faced. He said work force reductions had to be the "primary focus" of the Postal Service, its unions and Congress to improve financial stability. And, noting that negotiations between the Postal Service and its unions were

currently underway, he added that in his opinion it was not enough to cut staff numbers by attrition and early retirements. "These efforts simply have not resulted in the changes necessary to maintain a self-funding Postal Service," the Congressman from Florida said. "Realigning the work force by re-examining labor agreements must be part of the strategy to improve the Postal Service fiscal foundations."

This is the same Congressman Ross who earlier this year admitted in an interview to the Washington Post, that he knows little about the federal workforce. The same Congressman Ross who stated on Fox news that Postal workers pay on the average about \$32 per month for health care while other Federal workers pay \$125.

It appears that Congressman Ross—who I will mention again is the **CHAIRMAN OF THE SUBCOMMITTEE**—is not going to be a friend to us

Respectfully,

JOHN ORTEGA  
Branch 782 Vice-President

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## Saving the Postal Service

As I head out to Washington, DC on March 12th, my thoughts on the Postal Service are everywhere. The United States Postal service is in a major crisis in its history. It expects to lose 6-7 billion dollars in 2009.

The main cause of the financial crisis is the decision advanced by the Bush administration in the Postal Reform Law of 2006 to require the USPS to prefund its future retiree health benefits—a 75-year liability—in just 10 years. *No other business is required to do this!*

The cost of this unaffordable prefunding payment (\$5.4 billion in 2009) accounts for most of the projected loss this year. The annual cost will rise to \$5.8 billion by 2016.

While the NALC is working with postal management to address the crisis with the Interim Route Adjustment Process, Congress must take action to relieve this prefunding burden to preserve affordable, universal service.

One way Postal management want to handle the crisis is eliminating Saturday delivery. The proposed five-day delivery plan cannot be implemented unless Congress changes the law. This is part of the reason we will be walking the halls of Congress and visiting our Congressman and Senators! The USPS has requested an advisory opinion from the Postal Regulatory Commission (PRC)

and it's with utmost importance you contact the PRC.

A survey was conducted by the Rasmussen Report survey of 1,000 Americans by phone. The majority want to keep USPS public but cut Saturday delivery.

I wonder out if of the 52% were all residents, and were any of the calls to businesses? I think not!

Go to [www.nalc.org](http://www.nalc.org). Find "Departments", and then "Legislative". Find out how to contact the PRC to help save Saturday delivery. See other fact sheets on all important Legislative issues. Look up some fact sheets on H.R. 22, S. 1507, and H.R. 5746 to name a few. Do your homework Save your job and your family's livelihood!

If you have not joined the E-Activist network, what are you waiting for??? After the Thunderstorm hits will be too late! Don't turn a deaf ear when politics comes up. Saving the Postal Service may mean saving **your** job...

In closing, I hope that my words won't be in vain. This is another battle in what is becoming a long, drawn-out war.

In Unionism,

DIANA HERRERA  
Branch 782 Legislative Liaison

# Minutes of the February 2011 General Meeting

The regular meeting of Branch 782 was called to order by President Mike Towery at 7:00 p.m. on the 22nd day of February, 2011 at the Branch office, Bakersfield. The flag salute was led by Sargeant-at-Arms Darryl Holderman. All members of the Executive Board were present. The Stewards were present from Arvin, Avenal, Brundage, Camino Media, Downtown, Hillcrest, Oildale, Shafter, South, Stockdale, Taft and Wasco. Also present was the Newsletter Editor Basil Zuniga; S.A.N.E. Fred Acedo; Photographer Anita Holderman; OWCP Representative Rick Gerdes; Legislative Liaison Diana Chavez; and Emma Gonzalez and Frank Martinez of the Social and Recreation Committee.

**APPLICATION FOR MEMBERSHIP:** An application was received from Teresa Garcia.

**REPORTS OF STANDING AND SPECIAL COMMITTEES:** Basil Zuniga reported that the newsletter folding went well. He thanked Shari Sharpe for the great article. Next month will Stockdale Station's turn. Mabel Bullis reported that we have 1563 books left. Only two were sold in February.

**UNFINISHED BUSINESS:** Mike Towery discussed the importance of the DC Lobby trip. It is very important to meet with legislators, there is a movement to get unions out of the private sector.

**NEW BUSINESS:** Norma Hamer introduced Don Clark who spoke about the "Wall of Valor". The Wall of Valor is the second phase of the Veteran's Memorial that was dedicated in November 2007. It will honor all of those killed in action from World War I to the present. Don Clark then introduced Leon Thomas who is the head of the Veterans Memorial Foundation and Ken Hooper, BHS history teacher. Mr. Hooper gave a presentation about Kern County Veterans and how his senior archive class has helped locate Kern County veterans who were killed in action. Pat Farr thanked the branch for sponsoring his son Clay Farr on the Wall of Valor. He talked about Clay and the five year anniversary of his death. Mike Towery thanked Norma Hamer and Shari Sharpe for all their work. He suggested the sponsorship of Clay Farr to the Wall of Valor and then Shari and Norma ran with it and made it happen. Molly Biggar discussed the Budget. She then made a motion that we transfer \$1400.00 from budget item Newsletter printing to budget item Office equipment. Seconded by Jerry Patterson and passed. Molly then proceeded to inform the members that the refreshment provided by the Branch at the meeting are to be consumed at the meeting. She asked that members not take sodas or food when leaving the meeting. If we continue to have this happen the Branch may not be able to continue

to provide refreshments.

**GOOD OF THE ASSOCIATION:** Basil Zuniga informed the members that today is Tony Acedo's birthday. The members sang "Happy Birthday". Basil also talked about Linda Evans who passed away recently. She was the first female Carrier in Bakersfield.

**FINANCIAL SECRETARY'S REPORT:** Anita Holderman reported that \$12,372.28 was collected for the month.

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

Beginning Balance	\$68,727.72
Dues and Income	\$19,292.10
Interest Income	\$9.23
Total Balance	\$88,029.05
Total Expenses	\$12,945.42
Ending Balance	\$75,083.63

The MDA 50/50 Drawing was won by Deven Patterson.

The General Meeting Drawing for \$50.00 would have been won by Connie Crimmins if she had been present.

There were 38 members present.

The meeting adjourned at 8:02 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

KIM GERDES



\* SPECIAL ASSISTANT NEWSLETTER EDITOR

# NON-MEMBER LIST FEBRUARY 2011

**DOWNTOWN STATION**  
D. Pearce  
J. Cruz

**BRUNDAGE**  
D. Kinglee

**SOUTH STATION**  
*100% Union!!!*

**DOLE COURT**  
S. Hancock

**EAST BAKERSFIELD**  
*100% Union!!!*

**STOCKDALE**  
A. White  
J. Oh  
G. S. Saran

**HILLCREST**  
*100% Union!!!*

**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

## INSURE YOUR JOB!!!

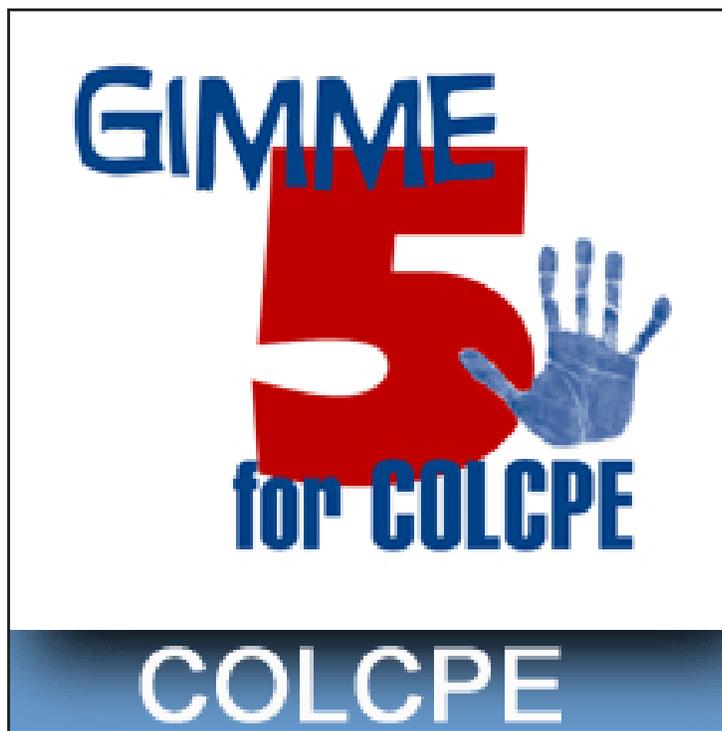
Hello everyone! I am back writing this article to impress upon you the importance of COLCPE (Committee on Letter Carrier Political Education).

By the time you read this John Ortega, Diana Chavez, and I will have gone to Washington, D.C. to lobby Congress. We all know that the future of the USPS is in jeopardy and the outcome is anyone's guess. We have so many issues we are facing and our jobs *are* at stake. Contracting out has not gone away and with the FSS machines people could be excessed up to 900 miles. The phrase in our stations is "Where's the mail!"

The only way we can insure our future in the USPS is through Congress, and we are going to have to fight for everything. Okay, this is where you come in, if you are not giving to COLCPE I urge you to do so. With our last election there was a shift in the House of Representatives, so whatever your excuses are for not contributing, we need to level the playing field. With this money in the last election we were able to keep much needed Harry Reid, Jerry McNerney, and Jim Costa plus I am sure others that I do not know. A big portion of this money is to release letter carriers like yourself to work on the campaigns. In the last election, Diana Chavez was released two days to work on Jim Costa's race which was a very close race.

There are no more excuses for not doing this. If you were to say I already have 2 allotment, well now we have 3. This is the easiest way to do this. If you were to say you only give money to the democrats, that would not be true. we give money to whoever will support our needs. Twenty three percent went to Republicans.

What could we do with more friends in D.C.?



1. Repeal or phase out the Windfall Elimination Act; 2. Pass the Employee Free Choice Act; 3. Stop contracting out permanently; and, 4. Create an America that works for working families.

This is so important to protect our jobs and retirement benefits. Isn't your job worth 50 cents a day???? The pay increase and COLAs will more than take care of it. **NO MORE EXCUSES!**

I urge you to contact me @ 661-979-5854, and I can sign you up.

PAM SMITH  
NALC Branch 782 COLCPE Coordinor

# Brundage Biggest Loser 2011...2nd Month

Laura Gordon of Dole Court has WON this 2nd Month with a percent weight loss of 7.3%. She's on a roll! Robin Richard of Stockdale came in 2nd with 4.3% weight loss.

We have been doing this competition for almost 4 years now. The repeat competitors have, unfortunately, been up and down the scales during the duration. It is hard to keep that unwanted weight off and I am one of them. The hard work and dedication you put into this competition for 3 months feels so great when you lose that weight. You feel more confident and healthier and over all it's a self esteem booster.

I lost 26 pounds one time, repeat ONE time. Boy was I ecstatic. I ran and ate right because my husband was motivating me. It was a hard 2 month work out. By the 3rd month, my motivation was dwindling and that was it. I was like, "Wow! I lost 26 pounds, I can "slow" it down". Boy was that a thought I should of kicked out of my head right away! I have NEVER won a competition as of this date, not even 1 month. I gained back ALL the weight I had worked so hard to lose.

Obesity is a never ending battle for some people. We have different obstacles to keep us from completely breaking free. Lifestyle is

most definitely one of them. When you're so use to the day to day eating habits and non-exercise routine, you will stay in your rut. Unfortunately, for some people, it's not even about looking good. It's about your health. Obesity is the cause of more health problems such as high cholesterol, high blood pressure, diabetes, joint pain due to the excess weight we carry, the list can go on and on.

Being a Letter Carrier is a physically demanding job, it's EXERCISE! What's so funny is, the calories I burn day to day doing my job, I intake double the calories when eating. Does that make sense? Um, NO.

The BIGGEST loser of all time was Jeff Honors of Dole Court. He lost an astonishing 70 pounds. *The best thing about it is he has kept off ALL of his weight loss and packed on muscle. He CHANGED his lifestyle.* He moved to Oregon and when I spoke with him, he stated that it's all walking routes up there and he is now motivating his fellow co-workers to lose weight. AWESOME!!!! This competition changed his life completely.

*That's a success story that I will always*

love to share. For those repeat competitors that use this competition as a motivator... *DON'T give up!* I opened this competition out to all Postal workers because it's important to be healthy, not only for yourself but for your family who depend on you to continue to be apart of their lives—ALIVE!

The rules are simple (Honor System): Lose weight the healthy way. Diet and Exercise! Buy in \$25, weigh in month to month. You can win \$25 each month by weight loss percentage, and then.....JACKPOT!!!! You not only win \$\$\$\$ you win double by losing the unwanted pounds.

Keep up the good work. Motivate yourself and others to live healthier.

MABEL BULLIS

OUT THERE



## from the editor-guy

Technology has meant some amazing things. Specifically—this month—this newsletter has been really impacted.

First, I received the first text article from a member. (This isn't the first time ever. Another NALC editor already shared that he'd received an article "via text" from one of his members.)

"Hey, this is Andrew Garcia. Just wanted to say that we had fun at the football tournament. We played three games. The first was

against Stockdale. They smoked us 28-0. Our second game was against Camino Media and we got a win against them. Our third and final was against Dole Court "Pineapple Express". It was a good game. They beat us out by two points.

I hope more teams come out next year. I had a lot of fun, then I was sore for about three days and really couldn't walk that well."

I'm glad that Andrew followed through with his promise to send me some info about the football tournament. I've got to ask you something: In the future, if you can write out an article or even e-mail it to me, it makes my editor-guy life a little much easier.

Finally, I want to share something really pretty exciting about this month's newsletter. If you take the time to look through the pages, you'll see a lot of pictures. You might see yourself.

And? *There are a whole lot more pictures available to you!!* Also, there are more articles that I thought were interesting. I hope that you get something out of them, too. And? Check out the March 2011 "Web Version" at the Branch 782 web page. Go to "www.782nalc.com" to see the "big" issue. Moreover, the pictures really "pop" in color!

BASIL ZUNIGA



## The voice of the employee

**M**any years ago, management made an inquiry claiming that it wanted to know what your needs were. The results of that inquiry led to what the USPS labeled "The Voice of the Employee." Management heard your voice say that productivity and accountability must improve, but it ignored the voice that objected to abusive and disrespectful management pushing you harder.

Management didn't get it right. That's where you come in!

The real voice of the employee is heard every day on the workroom floor. It is heard and most often ignored by management; it is heard and many times ignored by employees from our craft and others, and it is also heard when it is repeated while union officers visit you on the workroom floor, at union meetings or when you call asking for help.

If the membership objects to a hostile work environment, then it becomes your responsibility as an officer

Many years ago, following a very sad event in our history, the national parties drafted and signed off on a commitment to improve the quality of our working conditions. That document, titled the Joint Statement on Violence and Behavior in the Workplace, offers answers to what we believe to be the real voice of the employees (M-1242).

**When the union is called upon to do something about abusive managers, we need evidence of our challenge to their improper behavior. You, as shop stewards, as branch officers, and as letter carriers on the front line are responsible for the enforcement of the rule through labor management forums and/or the grievance procedure.**

Management must, at all times, maintain an atmosphere of mutual respect. Those words are found in Section 115.4 of the *M-39*. They are supposed to be the model of appropriate behavior in the workplace. They have no legitimate excuse, as they are responsible for making sure that the environment does not become hostile and/or antagonistic; therefore, when they cross the line, you need to protect your brothers and sisters.

There is no simple formula to proving violations of the Joint

Statement on Violence and Behavior in the Workplace. What does not offend or affect you might offend and/or affect another employee. We have to use judgment as grievance handlers. It is all based on hard work, investigation and putting a solid grievance together.

Please contact your branch officers and, if necessary, your national business agents if you need assistance on this serious subject.

**Lastly, if you have dealt with an abusive manager who has been moved outside of your city or branch, I would appreciate it if you would send me a complete copy of relevant grievances (joint statement violations and/or mutual respect violations) and their settlements so that they may be used, if necessary, to protect the next carrier in the next city from further harm by that same manager.**

Protect each other by keeping an eye on each other. When you are asked, be honest and state what you saw and what you actually heard. ☒

### "The real voice of the employee is heard every day on the workroom floor."

and/or shop steward to look into the situation and deal with it.

If we bring this problem to management's attention, is it willing to listen and work on the problem? If so, then roll up your sleeves, place the situation on the agenda for your "joint labor-management safety and health committee" or the "labor-management meeting." In either of these forums, we should identify the problem and then discuss how to solve it. If our counterparts are interested and committed, then we will be able to find a solution that takes care of the problem.

If, however, management is not interested in tackling such an issue jointly, then the burden shifts to you as a union representative to act on the problem by investigating the situation and determining if it is a possible violation of the National Agreement, a handbook or manual, an applicable regulation or the law. We need to identify what happened, then what rule was violated, and then a remedy.

# Voice of the Vice-President

by Beki Serwach,  
NALC Branch 4374



A Letter Carrier in Novi, MI was fortunate to have escaped unharmed when a fire broke out inside her FFV Monday, February 7th, 2011. She was stuck on some ice or snow when she saw the flames and immediately exited the vehicle. The entire contents of the truck was lost, the mail, her purse, cell phone, everything.

The USPS will contact all the patrons on her route and notify them of the loss of mails. The only mail they can be sure of is anything that was being tracked like Delivery Confirmation, and other accountable mail that would be scanned.

While it's a good thing no one was harmed in this situation it is disturbing to know just how frequently this happens. As stated in the Observer and Eccentric hometownlife .com "Shannon LaBruyere, communications specialist for the USPS, "It's a rare thing to have everything in the vehicle destroyed" *Supervisor Bulbuk said this is the fourth vehicle in the district to get stuck in the snow and catch fire, and encourages residents to do their part to help by clearing the area in front of their mailboxes.*"

As is happens, I searched further on the web and discovered that indeed this is no rare occurrence. Quite frankly, I'm wondering why this hasn't been a topic of discussion at the District Safety or Accident Reduction Meetings? In fact, at



<http://www.postalmag.com/llv.htm>  
you can read all about the frequency of such fires in LLV's as well as the FFV's and thoughts on the various causes from VMF Technicians across the country.

It got me thinking about the day of the big snowstorm last week. I was training a new Carrier in our station that week. Our OIC gathered the

Carriers together after having driven the streets and informed us that many were likely going to be impassable. However, if we felt we wanted to attempt delivery we could, but to be very cautious before turning onto the residential streets at the corners because that's where a lot of the snow was plowed from the main roads into high mounds.

Jody and I agreed to make an attempt. We did okay for a little while, almost got stuck a few times but managed to avoid it. I was thinking to myself, what kind of trainer am I if I don't put safety first, so I kept asking Jodi how she felt, to be sure she felt safe to continue. We agreed that as long as we both felt safe we would stay out, if either of us felt it was getting too rough we would go back in. When we got to the high end of the street and my truck got stuck

and it took some maneuvering to get out we decided that was enough.

Getting stuck in the snow, with no one to push you out, can take a toll on the engine while you're trying to get yourself out. I can see how a fire could start. What I don't understand is why this isn't in a service talk or video; especially if this is the fourth in the district?

*Every* Carrier should be aware of the dangers should they find themselves stuck or even if they suspect their truck is overheating. I was waiting to hear a service talk this morning in my office about the fire, but none were given.

So, consider this your safety talk. This is your union trying to keep safety at the forefront, walking the talk, considering your safety first so you can go home the way you came in... Isn't that the motto?

Safety begins with me, you and all of us looking out for each other. Check out the website. Tell your friends. Be safe!

Article courtesy of the Martch 2011  
Branch 4374 *Front Lines*



# Who Needs GPS? Just Follow the Smoke!

I'm sure you're all wondering about this month's cover photos.

The story I got (which is unofficial and from a source who spoke on condition of anonymity) is that Don Perry at the MPO had an electrical fire in his GPS equipped LLV. Don was uninjured and—in true, professional Letter Carrier fashion—managed to save all the mail.

Sadly though, a scanner was sacrificed to the destructive forces that engulfed the LLV.

Keep that in mind this is just what I heard. It's just, shall I say, "The scuttlebutt."

Doug Arnold, Editor  
NALC Branch 245

Original article and pictures were originally published in the Rockford, Illinois January 2011 *NALC Branch 24 Newsletter*



## SAFETY

by Phil Lenzi,  
Branch 25 Safety Officer

“...Everyone should be aware that in the past few weeks I've been informed of multiple issues with gas pedals sticking in the accelerated position. I spoke to the VOMA at the Woburn DMU and was told that the accelerator cables were freezing at the firewall of the LLVs.

The cable has a hard rubber coating on the outside with a steel cable on the inside and either water or condensation is causing the cable to freeze and not allowing the gas pedal to return to the up position.

Fortunately, there haven't been any accidents that we know of due to this issue as the affected vehicles were brought under control by the Carriers at the wheel at the time of each incident. The Carriers were able to brake, put the vehicle in park and turn off the ignition. The problem is addressed by heating the cable with a propane torch at the firewall and it seems to fix the problem for that day...”

This is an excerpt of an article published in March 2011 by Massachusetts Northeast Merged Branch 25 in the *Wake Up!*



**Mail truck catches fire**

A mail truck caught fire in Brunswick Acres (NJ) and was completely destroyed Thursday.

**Photo: Ken Gleason**



Shown in the two pictures above are Canada Post LLVs...



And, you thought, an LLV is just an LLV??

I thought you might enjoy just some of these pictures...

# One Size Fits All

-Don Nokes-

Management has their job to do. It's simply not as labor intensive as ours. From their viewpoint our tasks are a mere matter of number wagging. They are like operators of an abacus, floating beads along a threaded line...where our jobs are to do the real work: sort, lift, haul, climb, and deal with hostile pets and postal patrons. Confronting customers, irate at cutbacks in service and miffed about the mail arriving at their door more near midnight than midday, is always fun.

With the USPS attempting to do more work with less people, it's to be expected, I suppose, that the frontline nabobs can get highly excited and more than a bit agitated as they attempt to mix and match their everyday work schedules. Can you blame them if during the meltdown they start to resemble compulsive gamblers playing the ponies, racing around trying to pick the daily double, or in more and more cases lately, the trifecta? It's actually somewhat comical, however; allowing them to act as operators of an abacus – that's ok! But to treat the workforce as if management were operating an abattoir – that's just plain wrong! We may have to work like pack mules, but no one should be treated as if they're being trotted off to the knackers because of a lack of staffing by management.

Of course, everything seems easier from the other side of the clipboard - where you are never chased by dogs, harassed by unruly customers, tripped-up on stairs, or have to worry about roll-aways, DPS errors, illegible scans, et cetera, as we workers must. Sure managerial personnel have to watch out for lead poisoning from sucking too long on their No. 2's, or scalding themselves

on the coffee pot, or incurring a paper cut while performing their morning DOIS prestidigitations in preparation of bilking some unsuspecting newbie out of 15 minutes of street time, but into each life some rain must fall.

It's the workforce that must constantly contend with a here and now that's littered with external pitfalls as listed above, so please don't let them bully you into thinking that you've got it easy. Our jobs are never easy, and so we should apply the KISS principle whenever possible.... "Keep It Simple, Silly". 8 hours of work for 8 hours pay.... One half hour of each day is yours, not the company's time, and you need to take it. Take your breaks as well. If you're not on the ODL, then work given to you to do, whether it's on the route you're assigned to, or another route which has been "gifted" to you for the day because of hallucinatory and/or illusory "undertime", needs to be done on Auxiliary Assistance. A PS 3996 should be filled out, and "gifted" back to the supervisor so he/she can do their job, which is to "manage" the mail, and so your Shop Steward has a record.

If they have managed to gift you too large a slice of undertime and it takes you into overtime, that's a violation of Article 8. A grievance needs to be filed and penalties paid. Add enough of those too many, too long and too often undertime/overtime slices together, with penalties paid, and management soon learns how to curb their appetite for being overly generous. Too long and too often we do their work for them, sadly because they lead us to believe that "One Size Fits All" and that taking everything can fit within an 8 hour work assignment simply on their say-so.

Keep it simple, silly. They get paid the big bucks for handling the stress of managing the mail. We get paid the lesser wages for doing the simpler, yet more labor intensive task, of hauling the mail. We get paid by the hour, everything past 8 hours is OT, and past 10 hours is VT. If you are on the ODL, and your supervisor says, "Take this, that, those, them, these and pivot two hours on another route." That's fine, however, the supervisor is not allowed to add stipulations to your task, such as, "And be back by 5 pm."

Those are two different managerial directives. Don't let the supervisor play Catch 22 with you. It's either – or; not both. If the last managerial direct order is to be back by 5 pm, then show up at the door with what's left of the hours-on-end, endless array of this, that and the other at 5 pm. Place it on the supervisor's desk and badge out. Do as you are told, but don't get caught up in the parlance of doublespeak.

I know, when you ask for "clarification of their dissemination" you're going to get "Forrest Gumped" for your trouble. Leered, sneered, scoffed, and mocked at, to where the supervisor's face begins to resemble an entrant in a gurning contest. However, if you've just been given an assortment of tasks to do, then you have the right to clearly understand the parameters. Be polite, be professional, be safe, and know when to say, "Come again?" They are like sorry shoe salesmen, trying to cramp a size 8 shoe onto size 10 foot. If the shoe pinches, don't wear it. Tell them right then and there, this is not going to fit within the limits of my workday. One size does NOT fit all.

"He who passively accepts evil is as much involved in it as he who helps to perpetrate it. He who accepts evil without protesting against it is really cooperating with it". -Martin Luther King Jr.-

Article courtesy of the January 2011 79'er published by Branch 79 Seattle, Washington

# 2011 NALC HBP Info

*At a glance...*



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

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

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

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

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

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

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

## Some Websites for You...

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

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

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

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

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

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

## Coinsurance? Copayments? Deductables? CONFUSING? When In Doubt, Call The Plan! Everyone's Case is a Little Different...

These may be familiar issues: Why didn't our Plan pay more on this (EOB) explanation of benefits? I thought I had met my yearly deductible! (Hint—In quite a few cases, a person or family has not been ill for most of the year, then in October or November, there is a severe illness in the family.)

Because there have not been charges incurred for illness, your deductible, or coinsurance must be met. Sometimes it seems like it's the price we pay for being healthy most of the year. I hope this will help by explaining some familiar insurance terms.

The Deductible is the amount you pay toward certain medical expenses, before our plan starts paying a share of the costs. PPO plans generally have separate deductibles and out of pocket limits for (in-network) and (out of network) providers.

Coinsurance is the percentage of cost you pay AFTER you have met your deductible, the plan always pays a higher percentage when you utilize an (in network) PPO provider. Copayment or Copay is a FIXED amount you pay, when you see a PPO primary care doctor, have a prescription filled, or admitted to a hospital. The NALC mails an (EOB) explanation of benefits to its members after a medical expense has occurred, and this form will show your portion of the expense that is applied to your, or your family's deductibles. Our members can access their Personal Health Record by logging on to <http://www.nalc.org/depart.hbp>.

Here are only a few additional terms that might help "decipher" medical insurance terminology that you may encounter:

👉 **Brand-Name Drug** - prescription drug which is marketed with a specific brand name by the company that manufactures it. May cost insured individuals a higher co-pay than generic drugs on some health plans. (see "generic.")

👉 **Claim** - a formal request made by an insured person for the benefits provided by a policy.

👉 **Co-Insurance** - the percentage of covered expenses an insured individual shares with the carrier. (i.e., for an 80/20 plan, the health plan member's co-insurance is 20%.) If applicable, co-insurance applies after the insured pays the deductible and is only required up to the plan's stop loss amount. (see "stop loss.")

👉 **Co-Pay/Co-Payment** - the amount an insured individual must pay toward the cost of a particular benefit. For example, a plan might require a \$10 co-pay for each doctor's office visit.

👉 **Credit for Prior Coverage** - any pre-existing condition waiting period met under an employer's prior (qualifying) coverage will be credited to the current plan, if any interruption of coverage between the new and prior plans meets state guidelines.

👉 **Deductible** - the dollar amount an insured individual must pay for covered expenses during a calendar year before the plan begins paying co-insurance benefits. dependents - usually the spouse and unmarried children (adopted, step or natural) of an employee. effective date - the date requested by an employer for insurance coverage to begin.

👉 **Exclusions** - expenses which are not

covered under an insurance plan.

👉 **Explanation of Benefits (EOB)** - a carrier's written response to a claim for benefits. Sometimes accompanied by a benefits check.

👉 **Generic Drug** - chemical equivalent to a "brand name drug." These drugs cost less, and the savings is passed onto health plan members in the form of a lower co-pay.

group insurance - an insurance contract made with an employer or other entity that covers individuals in the group.

👉 **Health Maintenance Organization (HMO)** - An alternative to commercial insurance that stresses preventive care, early diagnosis and treatment on an outpatient basis. HMOs are licensed by the state to provide care for enrollees by contracting with specific health care providers to provide specified benefits. Many HMOs require enrollees to see a particular primary care physician (PCP) who will refer them to a specialist if deemed necessary.

👉 **Pre-Certification** - an insurance company requirement that an insured obtain pre-approval before being admitted to a hospital or receiving certain kinds of treatment.

👉 **In Network** - describes a provider or health care facility which is part of a health plan's network. When applicable, insured individuals usually pay less when using an in-network provider.

👉 **Lifetime Maximum Benefit** - the maximum amount a health plan will pay in benefits to an insured individual.

👉 **Limitations** - a restriction on the amount of benefits paid out for a particular

covered expense.

👉 **Managed Care** - the coordination of health care services in the attempt to produce high quality health care for the lowest possible cost. Examples are the use of primary care physicians as gatekeepers in HMO plans and pre-certification of care.

👉 **Out-of-Pocket Maximum** - the total of an insured individual's co-insurance payments and co-payments.

👉 **Pre-Certification** - Pre-admission review and approval of appropriateness and medical necessity of hospitalization or other medical treatment.

👉 **Pre-existing Condition** - an illness, injury or condition for which the insured individual received medical advice, treatment, services or supplies; had diagnostic tests done or recommended; had medicines prescribed or recommended; or had symptoms of typically within 12 months (time periods may vary depending on state laws) prior to the effective date of insurance coverage.

👉 **Preferred Provider Organization (PPO)** - A network or panel of physicians and hospitals that agrees to discount its normal fees in exchange for a high volume of patients. The insured individual can choose from among the physicians on the panel.

Remember, these are just a few of the terms that you may run into as you deal with health insurance issues.

If you have questions, contact me!

MARK RAMIREZ

# ALPHABET SOUP

by Jeff Sabbag,  
NALC Branch 4734

A recent story on the evening news grabbed my ears with both hands. The report was about a career criminal who was charged with a very serious crime. Like most everyone, I have become desensitized to the daily tragedies that are broadcast. The horrors are inserted between the weather forecast and the sports report with such ease and familiarity that we barely give the macabre stories a glance. I imagine that is the only way anyone is able to face another day....tune in, then tune out.

But, on this particular night, I heard a term being used that I had never heard before. This left me momentarily baffled. The detective who arrested the suspect in the crime described the man as being “JNR.” I sat wondering what the term meant?

I began to think that, perhaps, I was privy to some secret police code. My hand began to scan back to all the old cop shows I watched in my youth (back then I considered doing any of my homework a real crime!). I immediately threw a dragnet over every one of them from “Adam 12” to “The Untouchables”. I searched for the answer to the mystery with a zeal that would have made the entire NYPD Blue team proud.

Just when I was about to pick up the bat phone and call for help, the answer hit me like a can of spaghetti-o’s! The JNR term the detective used meant that the suspect was “Just Not Right.”

I know I’m not the brightest case-light in the building, but I thought that surely in all my years at the post office I would have heard the initials JNR being used. After all, no company on earth uses more acronyms than the USPS. They are so much a part of our every day life at the PO that they have almost become their own language.

This practice can be traced back to the very first PMG Benjamin Franklin, who gave the first service talk some 250 years ago. In that talk, Mr. Franklin reminded employees that a “syllable saved is productivity gained.” We swim in a bowl of alphabet soup with all the acronyms used at the post office.

I wondered how the JNR term has never been thrown into the pot. All the many acronyms are already there floating around. Carriers check their LLV, or the FFV each morning—unless, of course, they use a POV. Mail is sorted daily into a letter case and strapped out for delivery, unless a patron has submitted a COA for an address. If so, then that piece of mail is separated into the A-Z slot and taken to CMU to be sent to CFS.

The exception would be if the piece of mail is FOE.

Then, in that case, the letter is RTS because it is UTF. Bulk mail that is undeliverable is treated as UBBM (unless endorsed to be forwarded). Veteran employees will remember a time when bulk mail was labeled NOV. Ahh...for the good old days! At this point, postal workers dizzy from the swirling alphabet might want to call EAP. The number is 1-800-HELP....good Lord, does it ever end?

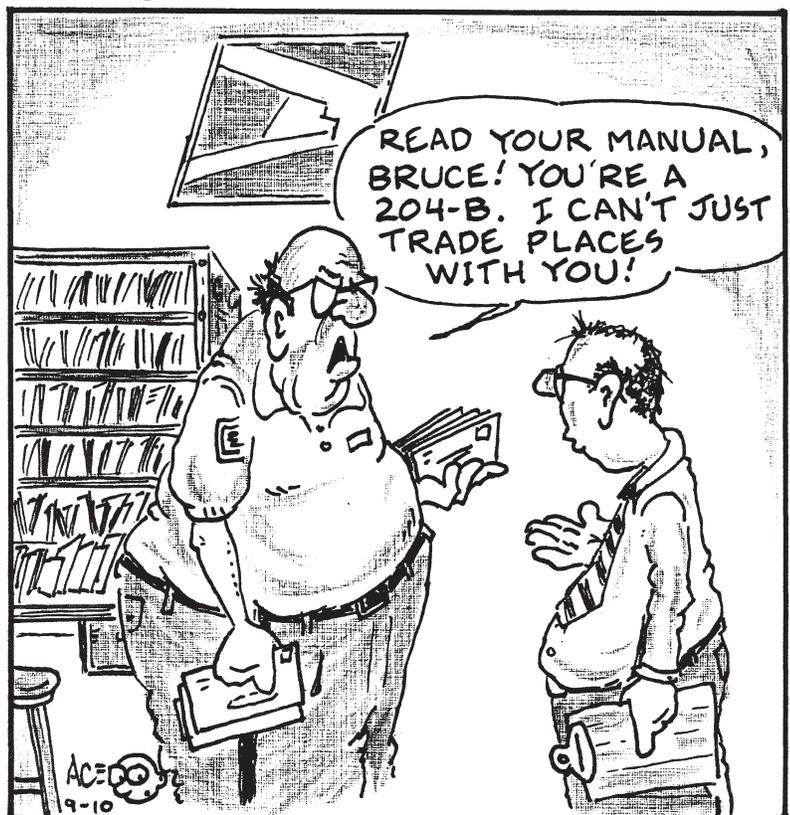
Certainly not when Carriers are heading to the streets. They must pull the DPS letters from the rack; and, in some offices, the tubs of FSS mail, along with all of the parcels that were shipped from the plant in an APC. Lastly, with the daily DOIS numbers still ringing in their ears, Carriers are ready to hit the pavement like a NASCAR driver at the Daytona Speedway.

On the way to the route, each carrier reminds themselves of what the most important task of the day is....making sure that all the MSP bar codes have been scanned. Miss just one of these bar codes and an employee knows that they could be the subject of an OIG investigation. The only thing left to do now is to deliver the route that—thanks to the COR program—has properly been adjusted to eight hours. Using this system has eliminated the need for any OT ever being warranted.....OK, that might be a little BS!

NASA doesn’t use as many acronyms as the post office. Yet, amazingly, JNR was never included. This, to me, is shocking. Because the DNA of the USPS is constantly JUST NOT RIGHT!!

There is not adequate space on this page, nor have the wonders of modern medicine increased the life expectancy long enough to

## OUT THERE



cover all that is JNR at the post office. But, let's briefly look at a few.

Management's claim that the route's are all adjusted to eight hours is JNR. The routes, in this office, were adjusted using the data from last May, The mail volumes from last spring were very low. Subsequently, using the lowest possible basis for evaluating a route means any increase in the day's work load should result in an increase in the time needed to complete the day's assignment. The only fair and accurate way to adjust routes is to take the high and low data to find an average. But, then, the key word in that statement is "fair" which precludes that from being part of any postal equation.

Also, one need not have an IQ much higher than the price of a postage stamp to understand the way employees are treated is counter-productive to this company's success.

For instance, by refusing to ever grant an employee's request for a day off, management only creates unscheduled absences. I am a firm believer in the importance of saving one's leave. It can be dissolved very quickly during an extended illness or injury. However, it is unreasonable to expect people (particularly those with growing families) to never need a day throughout the year that was unexpected due to unforeseen family situations or concerns.

By refusing to grant leave, employees are forced to get an FMLA number just to avoid the hassle and harassment that follows an absence. I imagine the FMLA number leads to more time off than was ever saved by managements always denying anyone's leave request. But, since postal management rarely looks past their nose, it is no surprise the number of times they stumble. In the MVP category of being JNR we have former PMG, Jack Potter.

For the past two years, Mr. Potter went before Congress multiple times trying to persuade it's members to pass legislation to repeal six day mail delivery. If he had put half the effort he gave to this endeavor into abolishing the pre-funding of the retirement health care fund, the financial situation at the post office might not look so bleak.

It doesn't take a PHD with an MBA in economics to understand that this fund (which was put in place in 2006) is crippling the post office. It makes it virtually impossible for this company to ever show a profit. Had this burden been in place during the years of record mail volume and revenue, the post office would still have lost money... Remove this albatross from the neck of the postal -service and this company would have been profitable. in every year except 2009. This, during the deepest recession since the great depression....not too hard to see where the problem lies.

My high school GPA was lower than a great pitcher's ERA, but to me, it appears that the postal hierarchy in Washington does not want to remove this disastrous practice.

Why do you think that could be? Here's one scenario...

## Out there



In my opinion, the more dire the situation management can bring to the bargaining table this November, the better they like it, and the less favorable a contract we can expect. Mr. Potter and all the executives of this company have done a disservice by not spending all their time and energy attempting to eliminate this unnecessary policy which is singular to the postal service. Instead, they cling to it hoping to use it to their advantage this fall.

At least the Chilean miners trapped in the cave had people at the top trying to get them out of their hole! What's the old saying...."cut off your nose to spite your face."

Jack Potter has left this company. He floated away on a golden parachute that was strong enough to support the armored car he drove away in. Generously rewarding this man for his leadership makes as much sense as naming the captain of the Titanic the "Mariner of The Year" for finding the iceberg in the vast ocean.

But, at the post office, being JNR does not matter. There is a new PMG. It remains to be seen if there will be any change under his leadership.

The new Post Master General is named Pat Donahoe. He has added another title to his position....CEO.

GGJS

Article courtesy of the Branch 4734  
Front Lines published in March 2009





This was my first time running this tournament. Everthing seemed to run pretty smooth. Special Thanks to Jeff Harrington for helping out!

I'm glad that everybody seemed to have a good time.

More thanks also go to DJ "Sixxx", who provided the music, and many special thanks go to the workers at Southwest Lanes who did everything possible to make this event succesful!!



## *The Champions!!!*

**"Kentucky Street Kids" 681 Average  
East Bakersfield (93305)**

**Greg Barraza  
George Vaquera  
Brian Shelcross  
Jeff Harrington**

**Thank you to Jasveer Brar! He was the only manager out there!  
Also, thank you, Porterville! This was their first time at the tournament. And, thank you South Station! You had five teams entered!!!**

### RALPH RAMIREZ

#### Top Male Bowlers

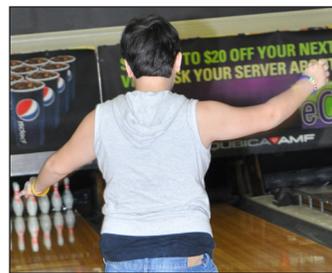
- 1) Greg Barraza - 93305 (206 Avg)
- 2) Ralph Ramirez - 93304 (200 Avg)
- 3) Joe Dangler - 93397 (188 Avg)
- 4) Brian Shellcross - 93305 (165 Avg)
- Tie 5) Jorge Vaquera - 93215 (163 Avg)
- Tie 5) John Rosso- 93304 (163 Avg)

#### Top Female Bowlers

- 1) Bernadine Maestas - 93306 (160 Avg)
- 2) Annette Meza - 93304 (153 Avg)
- 3) Pam Smith - 93306 (149 Avg)
- 4) Norma Hamer - 93263 (144 Avg)
- 5) Lana Lewis - 93301 (144 Avg)

**Highest Male Game: Ralph Ramirez (236)  
Highest Female Game: Bernadine Maestas (178)**

- 2nd Place (580 Avg): "We 'N Trouble" (93304) John Rosso, Tommy Herrera, Darryl Holderman, Richard Kramer  
 3rd Place (578 Avg): "South Station Strikers" (93304) Ralph Ramirez, Andrew Garcia, Les Shaw, Kris Ortega  
 4th Place (577 Avg): "Sick of the Split" (93306) Roel Alaniz, Pam Smith, Ralph Clyburn, Ronnie Mireles  
 5th Place (553 Avg): "Prestige Worldwide" (93308) Glenn Ryder, Aaron Witherspoon, Kevin VanDiver, Diane Ryder  
 6th Place (550 Avg): "Downtown Diamond Divas: (93301) James Flores, Lana Lewis, Lorraine Clemons, Steve Freidle  
 7th Place (549 Avg): "The Eliminators" (Plant) Herry Davis, Jason Johnson, Teresa Pflieger, Deanna Garrett  
 8th Place (544 Avg): "X-Pin Dables" (93307) Joe Dangler, John Ortega, Enoch Moya, Ruben Gonzalez  
 9th Place (535 Avg): "Split Happens" (93263) Norma Hamer, Israel Cedillos, Carmen Vizzard, Clay Davis  
 10th Place (516 Avg): "3 Stikes & A Spare" (93308) Teresa Garcia, Jeff Honor, Cindy Jimenez, Sabrina Bonilla  
 11th Place (508 Avg): "Uninvited" (93215) Jorge Vaquera, Cindy DeLeon, Gracie Silva, Serina Ornelaz  
 12th Place (503 Avg): "Dangerous Dames" (93304) Denise Dilley, Vi Garcia, Kellie Martinez, Tatia Boone  
 13th Place (500 Avg): "Last Year's 3rd Place Team" (93311) Cesar Rivera, Mike Meza, Ray Moya, Everett Jennings  
 14th Place (499 Avg): "The Franchise" (93308) Dean Looker, Francisco Herrera, Albert Sanchez, Whitney Moreci  
 15th Place (486 Avg): "Spare Me The Details" (93306) Bernadine Maestas, Patti Arismendez, Manuel Martinez, Sherry Coronado  
 16th Place (475 Avg): "4 Chicks With Balls" (93304) Annette Meza, Judy Kiyoshi, Melissa Kelly, Sheila Wiley  
 17th Place (468 Avg): "Lucky Strikes" (Plant) Maria Rosales, Sara Owens, Paul Pineda, Jonathan Ebreo  
 18th Place (466 Avg): "Lucky Sevens" (93307 Rurals) Kimmi Gardea, Lisa Munoz, Stacy Castillo, Sonia Camacho  
 19th Place (451 Avg): "Dolls Rollin' Balls" (93309) Manuel Davis, Tina Harbour, Frankie Davis, Darlene Medina  
 20th Place (448 Avg): "Amazingly Average" (93268) Paul Olivarez, Tina Phillips, Shelly Mizener, Christina Sanchez  
 21st Place (441 Avg): "559'ers" (93257) Joleen Bratton, Mike Fillipi, David Vance, Jamie Gubbins  
 22nd Place (440.66 Avg): "Cowgirls & Indians" (93304) Debra Harvey, Sarbjit Sodhi, Jasveer Brar, Devon Patterson  
 23rd Place (440.33 Avg): "Arvin Kool Katz" (93209) Jeri Jimenez, Christina Ford, Roy Rosales, Christine Leal  
 24th Place (419 Avg): "Nuckin' Futz" (93308) Jason Munoz, Paul Hernandez, Jennifer Gonzalez, Lucinda Martinez  
 25th Place (417 Avg): "L'il Angels" (93307) Maria Gutierrez, Karen Mills, Dawn Rimmer, Rosie Padilla  
 26th Place (394 Avg): "The Four Locos" (Mixed) Mario Marin, Tony Cerantes, Yolanda Agredando, Melissa Wiles









**Where:**  
**Southwest Lanes**  
 3610 Wible Rd.  
 Bakersfield, CA 93309  
 661.834.2695

**When:**  
**February 20, 2010**  
 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 your 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.

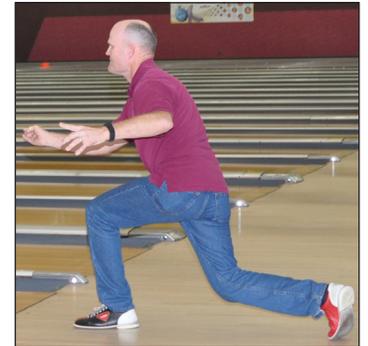
**First to pay, first to play** - Last year 3 teams were turned away!

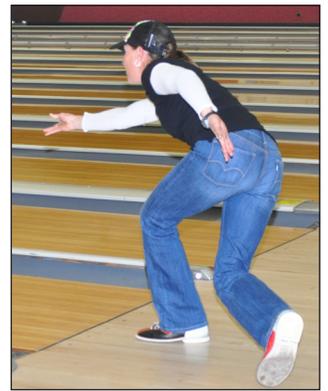
**PAST WINNERS**  
 2007 Stockdale Fab4  
 2008 Dole Ct. BowlFrogs  
 2009 EB Kentucky St. Kids  
 2010 EB Kentucky St. Kids



**Contact:**  
**Ralph Ramirez**

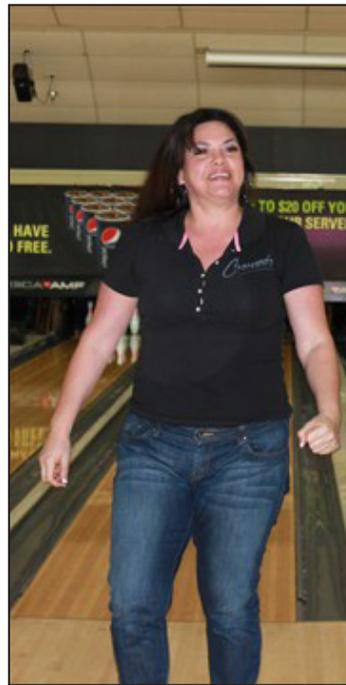
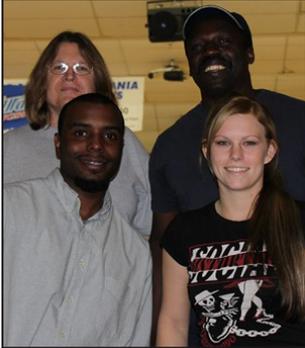
For more info: 872-8025 after 4 pm  
 Send everything to 2408 March Ave, 93313

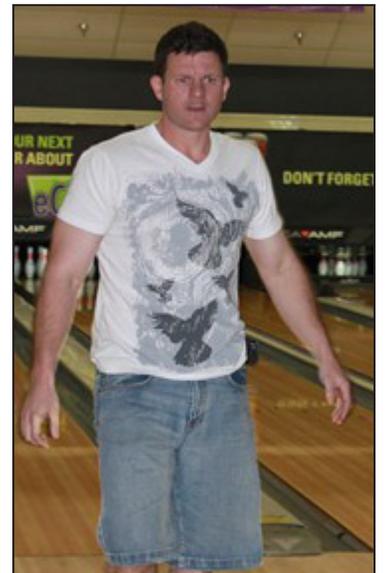
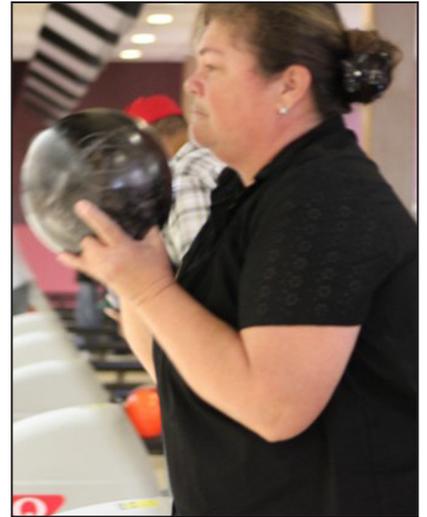


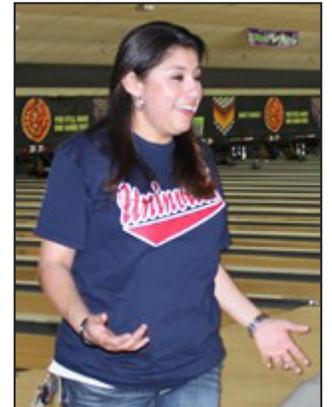


*Let's Do It Again Next Year!!*

# *Does it look like we had fun? We did!!!*





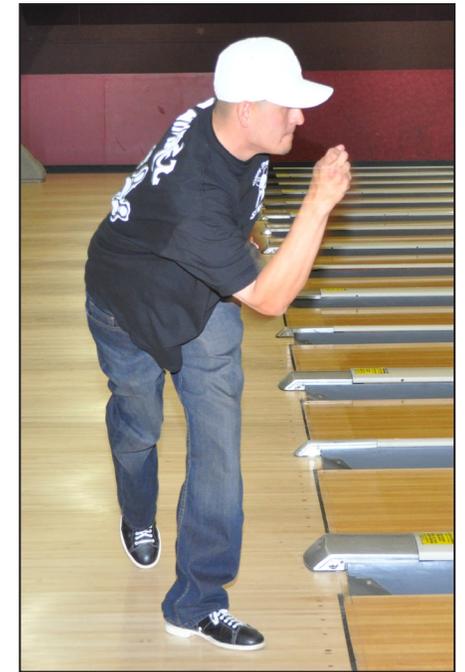




*Will we have a set of new Champs next year?*

*Time will tell...*





*Everybody was a winner! Really!!!*



# “OUT tHeRe”

These are “bonus” cartoons that have never appeared in any other format.

The color doesn't reproduce well in the black-and-white format which is used for the newsletter. But...in an this Branch 782 web version format, they *really* do “pop”!

So, hopefully, you'll enjoy the fact that Fred Acedo can really be quite a colorful character...

OUT THERE



OUT THERE



So, if you have an idea for a cartoon that Fred might draw, take a just a few moments to write down your thoughts and send them to Fred.

How can you reach him?

**Fred Acedo**  
**P.O. Box 6532**  
**Bakersfield, CA 93386-6532**

But, you never know just what in the heck you might get...  
Dealing with Fred really is an amazing adventure. Ask his wife, Toni!

## Secretary's Scribbles...

# *Time for a Route Adjustment?*

by John Serwach\*,  
NALC Branch 3126 Secretary

*Have you thought about your next route adjustment yet?*

*I know what you're thinking: "Not Again!"  
Nevertheless, the last several years as winter ends and  
spring approaches, our thoughts have been forced  
to turn to route adjustments.*

*If you're in one of the offices that's been forced to  
contend with the ill-advised, much delayed FSS project,  
odds are you're in the process of receiving a  
route adjustment now; if not, odds are good that  
the next route adjustment is just around the corner.*

*First, let's take a look at how we got here...*

In the past, the route inspection process could be described as "uncomfortable" for the typical Letter Carrier. Six-day counts and one-day walks were used to determine the size of a route for what—in many cases—proved to be years between inspections.

Letter Carriers would accuse management of "hiding" the mail and "redlining" the Carrier for alleged improper or perceived "excessive" activity. The end results were grievances. And, in a growing volume environment, routes were soon out of adjustment anyway.

In 2008 (in response to an unprecedented drop in mail volume) management began preparing for a massive amount of full-blown route count and inspections in order to capture "undertime". Postal management indicated that it was their intent to use the computer based COR (Carrier Optimal Routing) wherever and whenever they could.

The NALC responded in many ways, eventually entering into an agreement for a new "Interim Alternate Route Adjustment Process" (IARAP). As a result of this, almost every route in the country was jointly adjusted at the same time by local representatives of both the USPS and the NALC.

Following the IARAP process, NALC then entered into an agreement for MIARAP—Modified Interim Alternate Route Adjustment Process.

The hope was that the process would allow Carriers to receive better adjustments and Management would save the huge financial burden attached to conducting six-day route counts and inspections. COR was utilized more widely than in the past and, because the process began so quickly, both Carriers and local management had little time to prepare.

## UNDERSTANDING COR

Realizing that your route is going to be adjusted utilizing COR, you should know a little about it.

COR is a software application designed for realigning territory within a zone (zip

code). COR runs with another software application called Mapiitude (in other words, COR is a program within a program). Mapiitude is a geographic information system sold commercially and used for such things such as creating school districts, sales areas, Congressional re-districting, and other uses where custom maps and routing information are necessary.

Before COR is utilized, it is prepped by loading route data into the programs. For example: 3999 data, DPS volumes and caseable volumes.

## OPTIMIZATION

During the MIARAP process two areas where Carriers lost substantial times were the adjustment of the travel pattern (the way you drive to, from and on the route); and, through the elimination of "Allied Time". Allied Time is non-delivery functions we do on the street such as loading the bag, delivering parcels, customer contacts, comfort stops, etc.)

COR calculates route times based on 3999 data collected during the 3999. It then uses a process known as "optimization" to "maximize efficiency". To put another way, this is where COR attempts to make time disappear...

COR uses inputted volumes (including DPS data) to set a supposed bag weight (we used 25 pounds in MIARAP). COR then attempts to set the size of the relay to maximize this bag weight and make every relay of such a size that you have 25 pounds of mail in the satchel.

The result of this optimization process is that in many cases—though not all—COR eliminates relays and therefore the time associated with those relays.

For example: A Carrier has a park-and-loop street that consists of 90 stops. Currently, he carries the street in four loops (two loops of say 25 and two of 20). COR will adjust the way the street is carried into either two or three loops (instead of four) *based on the calculated bag weight.*

So, now you have three loops of thirty or two loops of 45 or thereabouts. COR then eliminates the associated Relay time (the time you use to load your bag and prepare the mail before each loop).

On a route that has 400 stops and nineteen loops, COR might reduce that to twelve or thirteen loops. If your average demonstrated relay time is one minute and thirty

seconds—and COR eliminates six relays, COR eliminates nine minutes of street time...

## HOW CAN I COMBAT THE ELIMINATION OF MY RELAY TIME?

Well, on the day of inspection (or the day a 3999 is completed) you can maximize the size of your loops as much as you can and minimize your park points. COR can't take away anything that isn't there to begin with and COR never removes time actually used making deliveries. COR only tries to eliminate Allied Times.

## TRAVEL TIME

Each route has "travel to", "from", and "within the route" time. COR calculates a time from one point on the route to another. COR usually attempts to remove travel time.

Example: You currently park at 100 Main, do two loops and then drive to 200 Main and do two loops. COR adjusts your route so that you now only park at 100 Main—and you will now lose the travel driving from 100 to 200 Main.

That's pretty straight forward.

But, if on the way to your next loop, you still have to drive past 200 Main, odds are you shouldn't lose this time.

Another way in which COR deducts travel time is the difference between what COR calculates and the way that the inspecting official recorded the time on your last 3999.

Example: You finish delivery at 100 Main and start walking to your vehicle to drive to the next loop. Your supervisor hits the "Travel Within" button when you leave the porch, or when you put your key in the lock of the vehicle. You're not travelling, but your time is being recorded as if it was...

Why is this important? Think about it. After unlocking the vehicle, you reach for a Kleenex and blow your nose, then you look in your mirror to check for traffic. You finally start the vehicle and wait to ease into traffic.

The inspector put you on travel time within one minute ago; it takes you twelve seconds to drive to 200 Main. Your supervisor waits until you park and walk to the

back of the vehicle and unlock the door. Then he puts you on "Relay Time" and this is another 48 seconds of elapsed time.

So, it took you two minutes of actual travel time that COR will reduce to twelve seconds because it only took twelve seconds to travel from 100 to 200 Main.

***The inspector needs to know (and I would tell him when you begin your next 3999) that you SHOULD ONLY BE ON "TRAVEL WITHIN" TIME WHEN THE WHEELS OF YOUR VEHICLE ARE MOVING*** not before and not after the wheels stop moving!

After your 3999 is done, ask to review it. Look carefully at the "Travel Within" times. COR is typically set to calculate travel times by using a speed of 10 miles per hour less than the posted speed limit and calculating the time over the distance travelled. (The lower speed limit is used so as to allow for stop signs, acceleration, deceleration and traffic lights.)

Using a residential side street, with a speed limit of 25 mph (which COR would reduce to 15 mph), your vehicle should travel 1320 feet per minute. If your 3999 shows you using 4 minutes to move one block, you know the Supervisor screwed up and needs to edit the 3999.

## PROTECT YOUR ROUTE

This is not the end all, be all to COR or any route adjustment process. But, in the meantime (by using the above strategies) you can help to protect your route in the current COR-driven environment.

## SO, NOW WHAT???

Some very important things to remember:

1. Review your 3999 after the examiner (usually your Supervisor) walks with you. If your Supervisor doesn't give you a copy of the 3999 within 48 hours, consult with your Steward.

2. For a proper adjustment, the 3999 MUST be "representative". If you

have a business route and they walk with you on a Saturday—when most businesses are closed—that's not representative. Ask the examiner to note this on your 3999. If your route is going to be adjusted, bring this up.

This is just one example. If you have any reason that you feel the 3999 was not representative of the route, bring it up to the examiner to note on the 3999 and during any consultation that you may have.

3. Note and address any anomalies when reviewing your 3999. Ask the examiner to add your comments and bring them up during any consultation process.

4. Minimize your travel patterns and your relays to the extent possible. As winter comes to a close, take some time and think about your route and the way that you do it every day.

While we can't guess what form the next route adjustment process will take, one thing's for certain: There's always another adjustment up ahead.

\*\*\*

\*John Serwach is Branch 3126 Secretary and a Steward. He has been in on the JRAP, MIRAP... and was the NALC lead on the last round. John is also an NALC Leadership Academy graduate. A good investment !!

Article courtesy of the Royal Oak. MI

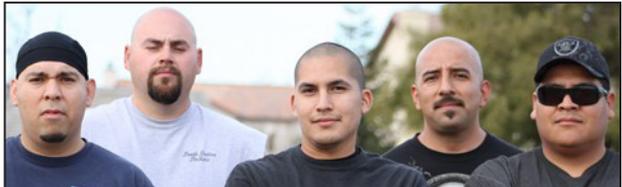
### OUT THERE

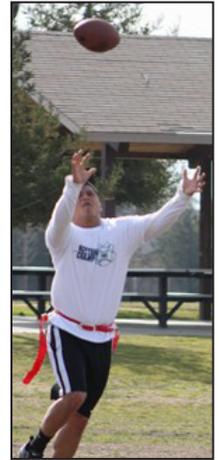


# "1st Annual 4-on-4 Flag Football Challenge"



The Champs! Stockdale Station!





Pictures by Anita Holderman



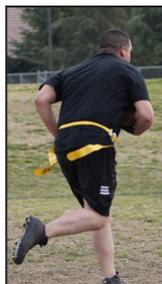
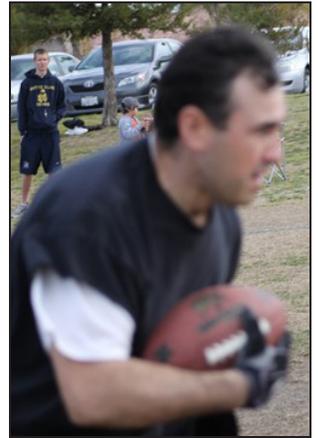
As I write this, I can't remember the last time my body was this sore. There are muscles screaming at me letting me know they were fine sitting on a couch for the past couple months. It is a good ache though...one that comes from a hard fought competition where—for one day—a bunch of postal workers were “gridiron warriors”!

The “First Annual 4 on 4 Flag Football Challenge” was held on Sunday, February 13, 2011. Six teams representing Stockdale Station, Dole Court, Dole Court Rurals, Camino Media, South Station and Pegasus participated in the tournament. Management even participated with Manual Davis, Mark Hutchinson, and Steve Blanton playing in the tournament.

Robert Nicholas' presence was dearly missed. In his honor we were able to raise a total of \$280. We donated this to his family for a memorial bench. Thank you to the Social and Recreation committee for picking up the tab for this event. This allowed us to donate all the team fees to Robert's family. Stockdale Station, led by Team Captain Billy Herrera, took home the trophy by defeating the Dole Court Rurals 20-19 in the championship game. I am happy to report that (other than sore muscles, minor scrapes and bruises) there were no injuries. Thanks to all who participated making this first year a fun and successful event!

“Commissioner” Glenn Ryder





# M 39 Sec. 2 Mail Counts and Route Inspections

## 216 Managers' Assignments and Responsibilities

216.1 Any member of the management team may be used for the inspection of routes. They **must be thoroughly familiar** with the inspection procedures and shall be held responsible for the accuracy and completeness of all data assembled by them and for its proper evaluation.

221.124 Hand-held computers that are used on the day(s) of inspection by the examiner **must** be synchronized with the carrier's timeclock rings for begin tour, leave for street, return from street, and end tour, as appropriate.

221.131 When management performs the mail count the carrier serving the route, upon request, may verify the mail count.

221.133 There should be no changes in normal distribution procedures or clerical schedules during the period of mail counts. The normal cutoff time for distribution should be observed.

221.134 There **must be no** accumulation of curtailed mail on the day preceding the beginning of the count, and **no** mail may be curtailed on the last day of the count.

221.136 All mail distributed to the carriers up to the normal established cutoff time **will** be delivered every day of the count week

232.1 The route examiner **must**:

a. Not set the pace for the carrier, but should maintain a position to observe all delivery points and conditions.

b. Not suggest or forbid any rest or comfort stops but should make proper notations of them.

c. Not discuss with the carrier on the day of inspection the mail volume or the evaluation of the route. These matters must be discussed with the carrier at a later date when all data has been reviewed and analyzed.

d. Make notations on the day of inspection on the appropriate form or separate sheet of paper of all items that need attention, as well as comments on the day of inspection. Also list any comments or suggestions for improving the service on the route, as well as suggestions or comments made by the carrier during the course of the inspection for improvement in delivery and collection service.

e. Make comments and suggestions clearly, and in sufficient detail for discussion with the carrier and for decision-making purposes. The manager who will actually discuss the results with the carrier must have enough facts and figures to reach a final decision on any necessary adjustments to the route.

233.2 Following are some items which could bring about consideration for cancellation:

a. Natural disasters or extreme weather conditions.

b. Unscheduled extended absence of the full-time carrier coupled with the absence of a qualified replacement.

c. Unrealistic mail volume, either abnormal or subnormal, which could prohibit a fair evaluation of the route.

233.3 Any cancellation made **must** be discussed with the carrier concerned, giving the reasons. When the cancellation is for the entire unit, the discussion **must** be with the unit steward.

The M-39 is the "Bible" for your supervisor. The information details the requirements for supervising Letter Carriers.

This information is presented so that you can understand the way that your supervisor is to conduct himself/herself during the time that they are doing the inspection of your route.

This information is presented for your understanding of what is "supposed to happen" when you are being inspected.

See the next two pages for what is—hopefully—more clarification...

The information on this and the next two pages were originally published by Fresno, CA Branch 231 in their March 2011 *Postmans's View*

# JARAP ROUTE INSPECTIONS

by Izaac Navarro, Shop Steward and DEAT JARAP Team

## Your 3999 Day of Inspection Rights

**DO** keep in mind that the examiner **must** synchronize the DCD machine with your move to street in the morning and your move back to office in the afternoon (M39 221.124 see sheet on next page). *For the most part the examiners tend to start the DCD machine minutes after the carrier has clocked to street and end the street time minutes before the carrier has clocked to office at the end of the day, thus cheating the carrier of several minutes that belong to the route.*

**DO NOT** curtail mail on the day of inspection (M39 221.136). *This is a trick that management has used in Fresno to show carriers are delivering their routes with heavier volume in less time. Your Workhour/Workload Report will show you delivered the full volume given to your route on your day of inspection when in fact you may have curtailed 2 ½ feet. Standards management may try to hold you to.*

**DO** everything exactly as you do everyday (M39 234.224). *The carrier must be instructed to serve and travel the route in the same manner as any other day. This also means that if you normally go to a designated area for accountables, do so on the day of inspection (for office counts). Many times on the day of inspection clerks will be told to cart the accountables to the carriers' case to save time. If this is not practiced daily, it shouldn't be practiced during an office count.*

**DO NOT** allow the examiner to set a pace for your delivery of the route (M39 232.1a). *I have heard of many examiners (for walking routes) who will walk a little faster, ahead of the carrier in hopes the carrier will rush to catch up. This is inappropriate behavior that should not influence your speed of delivery and should be brought to your shop stewards attention.*

**DO** take your full breaks, lunch and any personal needs stops you feel necessary to maintain your health (M39 232.1b). *Skipping breaks and shortening lunches only reduces the perceived value of your route thus creating a misconception that more time needs to be added. Our breaks and lunch are factored into our 8 hour day. Also, just because you may have already taken your street break, you are permitted to take a personal needs bathroom break or a comfort stop in the event you don't feel very well and require a little rest. Your health and safety comes first.*

**DO NOT** allow the examiner to offer suggestions or change your delivery methods (unless it's a safety issue) (M39 232.1c&d). *The examiner is there as an observer only. Any habits the carrier has that can be corrected to improve the service should be written in the examiner notes and discussed with the carrier during the 3999 consultation. The evaluation of the route is not to be discussed by the examiner during the inspection.*

**DO** make sure you are notified anytime you are put on 'management time.' *Anytime you are placed on*

*management time, it is assumed you are doing nothing but sitting/standing and listening to instructions. NOT WORKING of any kind. This is something you should probably only see once, before you travel to your route when the examiner checks your license and explains the expectations of the day. Some examiners have put carriers on 'management time' during quick discussions while the carrier is still working. This should be disputed during the consultation.*

**DO NOT** deliver ANY auxiliary assistance on another route before returning back to the station and completing the street time for your route (which includes unloading and outgoing mail separation). *I understand this may be an inconvenience but it is imperative that ALL times for your route be accurate. Once you deviate to provide assistance to another route at the conclusion of yours, you have now made it nearly impossible to accurately determine your travel time back from your route and unloading time. The examiner is not going to ride with you during the time of assistance so you have now cut your inspection short, in turn causing the examiner to be picked up at the end of your route and your travel to the station time and unloading time to be 'guessed' on by management. Don't laugh, this has happened here in Fresno.*

**DO** make sure you get a consultation about your day of inspection in a reasonable amount of time along with an 'unedited' copy of your 3999 (M39 232.1e). *Whatever time management takes out of your 3999 is because it's something that 'they believe' may not occur on a daily basis or practices that do not assist in delivering the route efficiently (ie. talking to customers). There are occasions where customer contact is necessary and warranted (COA's, stamp questions, NDCBU lock issues...etc). That is why the consultation is so important, so the carrier can dispute any unreasonable deletion of time. If no consultation is given then it should be assumed that no issues were of concern thus no time was taken out. Also, when requesting a copy of your 3999, request your TACS clock rings for that day to see how much time was actually spent on the street compared to the time management edited the day to.*

### **\*\*MOST IMPORTANTLY\*\***

**DO** make a note of EVERY day management conducted a 3999 on your route. *As mentioned in my article last month, management WILL go out with carriers multiple times (3-4) to find their 'perfect' number which may reflect poorly for route adjustments. GIVE THESE DATES TO THE JARAP TEAM DURING YOUR FIRST CONSULTATION!! I guarantee all dates that the inspections were done will be given equal consideration regardless if you went overtime that day or the street time was 'too long' in managements opinion. We can't help you if you don't help us by providing this valuable information.*

\* If any of these rules are not followed during your day of inspection or you think something didn't seem right, please inform your shop steward right away. These are your rights to an honest and fair evaluation of your route.

The information on this and the preceding two pages were originally published by Fresno, CA Branch 231 in their March 2011 *Postmans's View*



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<b>Trustee</b>	<b>Danny Blair</b>	<b>(661) 397-8107</b>
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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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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) 331-9171
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**



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

Branch 782 Office  
2628 "F" Street  
Bakersfield, California



If you like cookies, you should come to the General Meeting...  
Ralphie Ochoa makes some very good cookies!

FORWARDING SERVICE REQUESTED

\*S.A.N.E.



Check out all of the pictures in this month's newsletter. You may be in some of them...

# Membership Meeting Drawing—\$100!!

Fine Print: YOU have a chance to win \$100 this month!! But, you have to present at the meeting when names are drawn...