

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

JUNE 2011

If you're "here", you've gotten to the latest web version of the *NALC BRANCH 782 E.A. BAKER UNION UPDATE*. Thank you for taking a look!

For context, our web version augments material published in our regular monthly newsletter. And, we build on that to let you explore some additional insights provided by other Letter Carriers around the country.

It is prohibitively expensive to publish our newsletter with so many pages. However, *there is just so much relevant information out there that is available in NALC newsletters from around all over this great country of ours!!* So, this format provides us a great opportunity for sharing.

So...what kinds of things can you find as you electronically "flip" through the pages that weren't in the original print version???

Do you carry flats in your arms? Check out pages 4 and 5 for some perspective... Page 5 also has a previously unpublished *color* Fred Acedo "Out There" cartoon for your enjoyment. CSALC District Officer Eric Ellis offers some thoughts about the changing political landscape and how it might impact our futures. Page 11 has some info about COLCPE that will probably makes sense to you. Although we are not on any schedule for FSS, pages 14 and 15 presents articles by both the Branch President and the Vice-President of NALC Branch 25. JARAP is an important process which is being used on a daily basis on your route—even if you don't even know it and you can find out more about it on pages 15 and 16. Pages 20 - 22 offers an excellent NALC Branch President summary of a variety of issues.

Electronically Yours,

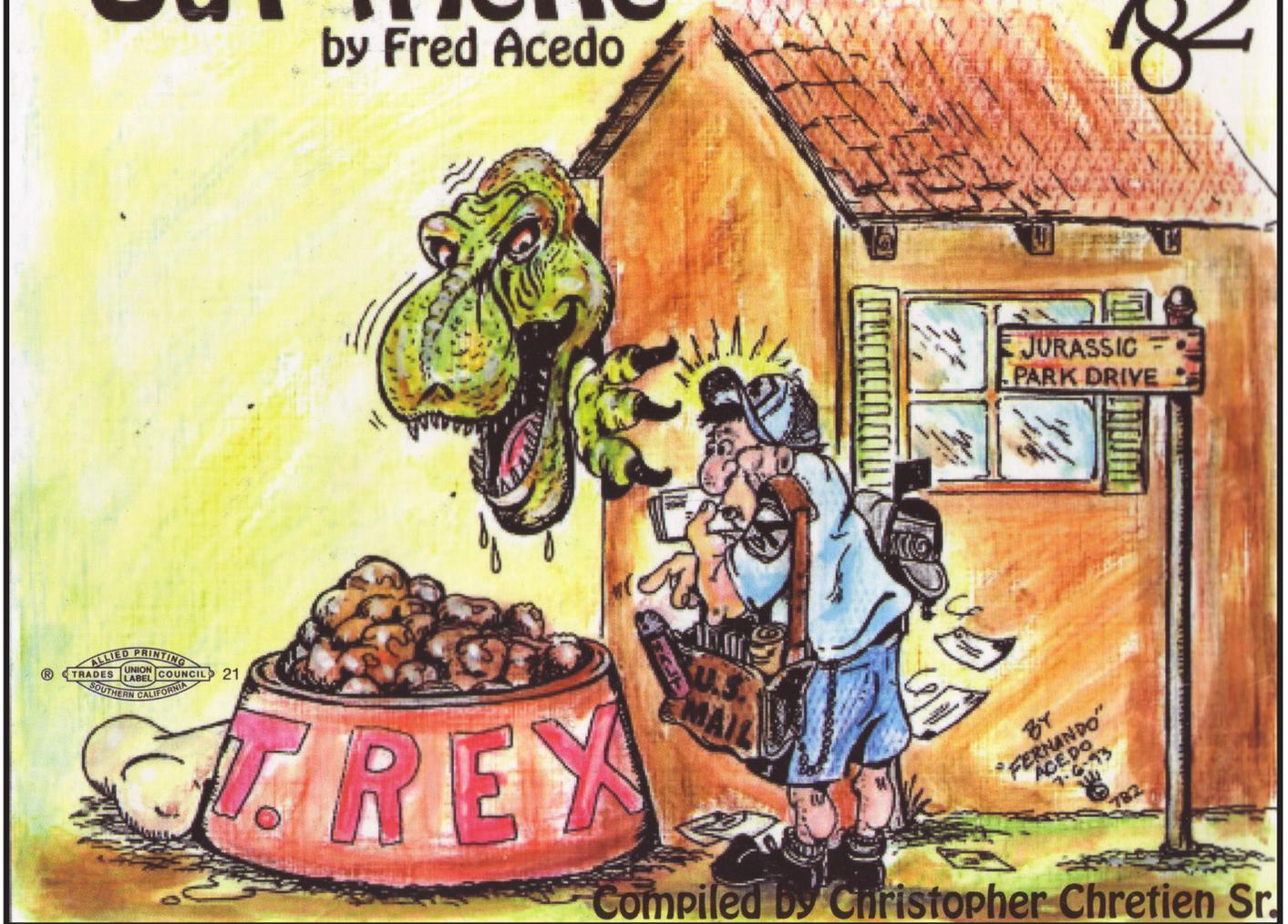
Basil Zuniga
Branch 782 Editor-guy

But First! An Adversisement for a great, great, GREAT book that you can buy...

"Out there"

by Fred Acedo

BRANCH
782



Compiled by Christopher Chretien Sr.

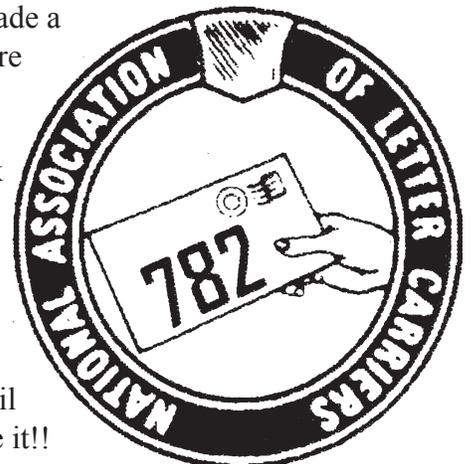
So what is this advertising message about? **THIS** is an MDA fundraiser. We are asking for your help.

We envisioned that all 2,500 copies of this book would be sold at the national NALC Convention in Anaheim in 2010. Didn't happen. We still have about 1500 copies of this book waiting to be sold before we can make our anticipated MDA donation. And—to add a little twist—a member made a motion at our general meeting that we had to sell **ALL** of the books before we could make our donation...

The book (about, for and by members of the NALC) chronicles the work of Branch 782 S.A.N.E Fred Acedo through the first nine of his nineteen years producing outstanding glimpses into who we are.

So...you may ask, what can you do? **ORDER A BOOK!!!**

Contact Kim Gerdes at (661) 301-9676; or, try her at the following e-mail address: "kgerdes91@hotmail.com". Please help us out. We'd appreciate it!!



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There *IS* life after retirement...

A portion of Taft Highway near Bakersfield was officially renamed in 2006 to honor veterans of the Vietnam War...but you wouldn't know it by driving it.

That's because road signs to mark the change—between Highway 99 and Enos Lane—have never been erected. Now some local veterans and others have raised money for the signs, to make sure motorists become aware of the Vietnam Veterans Memorial Highway; and more importantly, *that people in the community remain aware of the sacrifice made by those who served.*

"We want to honor ALL Vietnam veterans in the Kern County area," said Mario Muniz, who was a U.S. Marine in 1968 when he was awarded his third Purple Heart after taking a bullet in the back during combat operations. Muniz was a member of the now-defunct Veterans of the Vietnam War, Post 1, when Post Commander Barney Cadena led the effort to have a highway in Kern designated for Vietnam veterans.

But Cadena didn't live to see the signs go up.

"Tragically, he was killed in a motorcycle accident a few years ago," Muniz said of his longtime friend and fellow Marine. The veterans post folded, and money that had been raised to erect the monument was taken by the national organization, Muniz said.

"All I want to do is finish the effort started by Barney Cadena," he said. "Marines take care of their own."

Nicolas Esquivel, who coordinates signage efforts for Caltrans District 6, said the green signs with white lettering are approximately 10 feet wide by 3 feet high. Total cost, including materials and installation, is expected to be between \$3,000 and \$4,000, Esquivel said.

But Muniz said he and other organizers would like to raise \$6,000 as they also are responsible for paying for any maintenance and repairs needed throughout the years. The funds will go into a tax-exempt account held by Veterans of Foreign Wars, Post 7216.

All costs have to be borne by private sources, Esquivel said. By law, the state cannot contribute materials or labor to the effort. But Esquivel explained that the stretch between Weedpatch and Highway 99 is not actually state highway and therefore cannot be part of the memorial designation.

That's just fine with Muniz, who wants one of the two signs to be located facing westbound traffic coming off of Highway 99. The second sign will face eastbound traffic near Enos Lane.

Ernest Morin, a non-veteran who is helping Muniz with the fundraising effort, says he watched many of his classmates from East Bakersfield High School go off to serve in Vietnam. Some never came home—and others came home with injuries that were not immediately visible, but were devastating just the same. "That's why I want to help," he said. "For all who made that sacrifice."



Mario Muniz, NALC Branch 782 Retiree, speaks during the recent dedication of the "Vietnam Veterans Memorial Highway" south of Bakersfield on Taft Highway.

Doing it wrong for so long we think it's right

By Bill Thornton, Vice President

Recently, there have been reports of supervisors/managers telling carriers that they should be carrying a certain amount of flats on their arms.

Hello!

There are no requirements to carry any flats on your arm(s).

Looking at Handbook M-41 that provides the work procedures for carriers, it is indicated in Chapter 32, the procedures for foot and park and loop routes.

32 Delivery of Ordinary Mail Matter

321 Foot Routes

321.1 Unstrap the first bundle of mail.

321.2 Verify the street, block, and number with street sign and number on first house.

321.3 Peel off the letters and circulars for the first house from bundle carried in the hand, and the flat mail from bundle standing on end in the



satchel [emphasis added]

323 Park and Loop Routes

323.1 Description

Delivery of mail on park and loop routes is basically the same as for foot routes with relays.

A Step 4 on the issue came in June 11, 1982 H1N-FC-C-1155: *The current instructions contained in Part 321.3 of the M-41 Handbook are **controlling**. [emphasis added] It is not a requirement for a carrier on a foot route to carry 4 inches of flats on his arm while delivering mail. Carriers **may** [emphasis added] opt to carry flats on his arm...*

Carriers are not required to carry flats on their arm on the street.

In another Step 4 agreement April 5, 1984 H1N-1E-C 25147 in a decision related to fingering mail between stops, it was stated that... Flat mail is normally withdrawn from a satchel...

Standard Training Program for Letter Carriers United States Postal Service Delivering Foot Route: When Delivering Foot Routes: When delivering the mail on foot routes, the carrier must unstrap the first bundle, verify the

*street, block and street number with street sign and number on first house. Combine the mail in your hand with the mail from your satchel at each delivery point. **Mail should be carried in the hand and satchel only.** [emphasis added] Delivering park and loop routes: Delivering on park and loop routes is basically the same as for foot routes with relays. The vehicle is used as a moveable relay box from which the carrier withdraws mail, **placing the mail into the satchel before beginning each relay.** [emphasis added]*

Satchel Carts

The use of satchel carts is described in Section 118, M-39.

In reference to the issue of *flats on the arm* for people who use satchel carts, a 1982 case addressed that issue at Step 4 of the grievance procedure, in a letter dated January 5, 1982 in Case Number H8N-5H-C-21012. In dispute was whether carriers had to carry 4 inches of flats on their arms while using a satchel cart... *Part 321 of the M-41 handbook provides instructions on the delivery of ordinary mail by foot route. It does not differentiate between foot routes with or without satchel carts.*

The bottom line is: **With satchel carts the flats would go in the satchel and carrying flats on the arms while using a satchel cart is contrary to the standard procedures as indicated in M-41, M-39, etc.**

More than a technical issue

The issue, especially now, is more than a technicality. As street time increases it becomes that much more important to use procedures that allow the carrier to perform their job in a safe and professional manner.

Many carriers, contrary to what is stated in the manual, have become comfortable with carrying flats on their arms. But at what cost? This is particularly true for people that have medical limitations, especially involving hands, arms, shoulders.

Carriers should not be doing anything that is beyond their medical work limitations.

Ergonomics to be considered

But even if a carrier does not have current work limitations, there is the danger of new injuries resulting from practices that are ergonomically questionable. While there are requirements to carry multiple bundles within certain guidelines, there is no requirement to carry flats on your arm. Multiple bundle handling may increase the possibility of injuries, especially relating to arms, hands, wrists, shoulders, etc.

Why add to the mix of possible injuries by doing something potentially hazardous?

There certainly are variations in the way carriers deliver mail but some consistency that allows for a continuing safe and healthy method is desirable.

Confusion by a supervisor

When a supervisor tells a carrier to carry a certain amount of mail in their arm they are confusing it with the office requirement to have a certain amount of inches of flats on the arm when casing mail.

Some carriers may find that carrying flats in a satchel may create other problems, e.g. turning your neck/shoulder to remove flats.

But certainly, this would not be the problem when using the satchel cart.

The Step 4 gives carriers the option of carrying flats on the arm but it is not required.

Management has over the years conveniently ignored this section of the M-41 and one can reasonably speculate

**As street time increases,
carriers should work in a safe
and professional manner.**

that has to do with the general speed up and attempt to reduce labor costs.

Carriers may want to reexamine methods of street work and reconsider 321 of the M-41 as it relates to the safe and professional performance of street duties.

Article courtesy of the *Voice* of the May-June 2011 published by San Francisco, Ca Branch 214

OUT THERE



I Don't Care If Taxes Pay Your Salary or Not, You Are Still A Public Employee!

by Eric Ellis, Legislative Officer/Steward Zones 1/21

Here's a question for you. Do postal patrons still tell you, "my taxes pay your salary" or something to that effect? It happens to me every once in a while. My reply goes something like this, "No sir, your taxes don't pay my salary. You pay my salary when you buy a stamp." So given that taxes don't pay your salary, benefits, etc., does it matter what happens to tax-payer supported public employees, such as state, county and municipal workers?

It does matter. We are public employees. The general public sees us as such. Our employer's name, United States Postal Service, denotes our status as public servants. We serve the American people. We provide a public service. We generally belong to the middle class. We enjoy a lifestyle which allows us to support a family and own a car, home, etc. We can retire at a certain age and while public service may not make us gazillionaires, our earned retirement benefits support a continuation of a middle-class lifestyle in our mature years. Our benefits, as I describe them, put us in the same boat with other public employees such as teachers, firefighters, cops, etc.

Similarities don't end there. Republican-controlled state legislatures presently busy themselves attacking collective bargaining rights for our fellow union-represented brothers and sisters. Meanwhile, Senator Jim DeMint (R-SC) wishes to take collective bargaining rights away from federal and postal employees. State, county and municipal employees are constantly represented by anti-labor politicians as being overpaid. Similarly, Rep. Darrell Issa says that postal employees are 35 percent overpaid. Teachers and firefighters in some places are being forced to pay more toward their health care. And on cue, Sen. John McCain (R-AZ) just introduced an amendment to S. 493 (a small business bill) that if enacted, would force an active letter carrier to pay from \$25 (self-only) to \$50 (family) more per pay period for health insurance. And the hits just keep on coming! Don't think you pay enough for your pension benefit? Well, you're in luck! Just as Wisconsin forced its state employees to pay more for their pensions, Rep. Paul Ryan, in his budget plan, proposes that you pay from \$100 to \$150 more per pay period for your pension. And for good measure, if you are a current employee under the Civil Service Retirement System (CSRS), you will not get a cost of living adjustment (COLA) until you turn 62 (as opposed to current law, you get a COLA when you retire, whether you are 55 or 62 or anything in between).

But wait a minute, your retirement benefits are paid for (and then some), right? Taxes don't pay your salary, right? The USPS is a self-sufficient agency, right? Well, apparently most Republican congressmen and senators did not get the message and it did not stop them from proposing a thirty percent pay cut, as well as up to \$200 more in pay cuts as previously mentioned. It did not stop Sen. DeMint from proposing an end to your collective bargaining rights. And these collective bargaining rights stand between your middle-class lifestyle and the poorhouse. I do not care if you have the JCAM memorized line for line. No collective bargaining means no contract, which means no shop steward. Contractual knowledge, as important as it is, does not mean jack if you're on the unemployment line.

So we are all in the same boat. An attack on a teacher's benefits is an attack on our benefits. Anyone who would vote to privatize waste pickup would vote to privatize the postal service. Their fight is our fight.

Article courtesy of the Fresno, CA Branch 231 *Postman's View* published in June 2011

Minutes of the May 2011 General Meeting

The regular meeting of Br. 782 was called to order by President Mike Towery at 7:01 p.m. on the 24th day of May at the branch office, Bakersfield. The flag salute was led by Trustee, Danny Blair. All members of the Executive Board were present with the exception of Darryl and Anita Holderman and Lucinda Martinez. The stewards were present from Arvin, Avenal, Brundage, Camino Media, Dole Ct., Downtown, East Bakersfield, Hillcrest, South, Stockdale, Taft and Wasco. Also present was Newsletter Editor, Basil Zuniga, OWCP Rep., Rick Gerdes and Legislative Rep., Diana Chavez. The minutes of the April 26, 2011 meeting were read and accepted with no additions or corrections. The communications were read.

REPORTS OF STANDING AND SPECIAL COMMITTEES: Basil Zuniga reported that the Newsletter folding went well even though no one from Downtown attended. Downtown Steward Kim Gerdes asked that they be given another opportunity next month since she forgot to let the station know it was their turn. Basil has only received five articles from convention delegates; he asks that the other delegates get an article to him for the next newsletter. He informed the members that there is a color version of the newsletter on the website. The color photos really "POP" on the website. There are also reprinted articles from other branches. Teresa Ortega reported that Molly will book the park in June, so we will have a date then.

NEW BUSINESS: Treasurer, Molly Biggar presented the Budget for 2011-2012. A vote on the Budget will be held at the June General Meeting.

GOOD OF THE ASSOCIATION: Mabel Bullis reported that 8 books were sold at the State Convention. There are 1554 books remaining. Alan Smith reported that approximately 76,000 pounds of food and cash equivalent were collected during the Food Drive. Last year the food and cash equivalent were 83,000 pounds. Basil asked for the total from last year along with this year so he can publish them in the newsletter. Kim Gerdes asked that all delegates who have not done so please turn in hotel receipts. She needs to contact the hotel on some discrepancies and needs all the receipts to do so. Molly Biggar that the branch is having a company come and shred files at the office on June 6. Any member who has personal papers that they want shredded should bring them to the office. Mike Towery discussed the APWU contract; the PMG predicts that he will be able to get a similar contract

with the NALC. Diana Chavez and Pam Smith met with Ben McFarland, assistant to Kevin McCarthy, and felt as though he was more receptive to the NALC issues in support of HR-1351. Diana thanked Mike Towery for the newsletter article in support to HR-1351 and HR-5746 regarding 6 day delivery. Diana stressed that carriers need to do our part. She passed out a letter addressed to Congressman McCarthy and asked that members send a copy of it to the congressman. Mike Towery thanked Diana and Pam for all their work on legislative issues. John Ortega reported on the convention. He asked that any delegates who have not do so yet get their articles to Basil for the newsletter. He then discussed the JARAP (Joint Alternate Route Adjustment Process) training he attended in Santa Clarita. He should receive a detailed report on June 6 on which stations and/or routes will be adjusted. Mike Towery reported on the FSS adjustments in Southern California. Managers from Bakersfield were sent down to verify street times after the CORE adjustments. Some routes have a 9 hour street time. Another route was out until 6:30 p.m. after giving away a 1 ½ hour swing. Grumman, the company that builds the FSS machines has told the USPS that they will not build any more and the USPS is accepting bids for another company to build the machines. Mike reported that the work load hours are to be posted in each station every day for the previous day so that Carriers can check their volume. Volume can be changed if it is incorrect from the previous day. Management locally is doing 3999 on routes. A discussion should be held with the Carriers after the 3999 is complete.

FINANCIAL SECRETARY'S REPORT: Anita Holderman is on Annual Leave this week so her report will be given at the June meeting.

TREASURERS REPORT: Molly Biggar reported:

Beginning Balance	\$77,907.37
Dues and Income	\$11,702.25
Interest Income	\$ 9.17
Total Balance	\$89,618.79
Expenses	\$14,932.08
Ending Balance	\$74,686.71

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

The Drawing for \$200.00 would have been won by Thomas Maxwell if he had been present.

There were 28 members present.

The meeting adjourned at 7:43 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,
KIM GERDES
NALC Branch 782 Recording Secretary

Membership Meeting Drawing—\$250!!

Fine Print: YOU have a chance to win \$250 this month!! But, you have to be present at the meeting when names are drawn...

Dollars and Sense...

Do you have loans piling up? Do you need a loan for remodeling? Does this sound like a commercial? Well just send \$39.95 and... Just kidding!!

Seriously, do you need a loan? You *can* get a loan for up to \$50,000.00 depending on your Thrift Savings Plan (TSP) account balance; a very low, one-time fee of \$50.00; and, virtually no interest. Sound too good to be true? Well, it *IS* true!

I am a very simple person when it comes to money investments so I will try to spell this out as easy as possible. (Darryl* helped me to understand the concept and and to put this on paper.)

You can take a loan against your TSP contribution balance in your TSP account. You can take from 1 to 5 years to pay off. The payments are deducted from your paycheck every pay period. There *is* interest on the loan...but here is how it works: The loan rate will be whatever the G Fund rate is at the time the loan is funded. Each payment you make to the loan is a payment back to your savings account. So the interest you are paying on the loan is being paid back into your savings account. (...So, no interest!)

If your TSP savings account is in another fund such as the F Fund or others, you need to determine if the interest you would/could

have earned in those accounts is worth the difference in the G Fund. (It is, if you are paying off loans like credit cards with HIGH interest rates!)

Let me give you an example. The G Fund is currently earning 2.5% interest.(Not good for a savings account, but great for a loan!) The higher risk funds such as the F Fund could be earning, say 12.5%. You could be losing a potential 10% in interest by borrowing against your account... *But*, if you are paying off a loan such as a credit card with an interest rate of, say, 22.5% interest, you could be saving 20% in interest!

You can have only one TSP loan at a time. If you get a loan now, and two years later you want another loan. What then? If the first one is still open, you cannot get that second loan. However, you can pay back the loan early *with no penalties...* and the *best* part? You can use the money for ANYTHING!!!

Go to "www.TSP.gov" to get more information. There is also a loan calculator that can give you how much you can borrow, and what your payments could be. It's worth thinking about.

ANITA HOLDERMAN
Branch 782 Financial Secretary

(*Darryl Holderman is Anita's husband and former Branch 782 Vice-President and current Branch 782 Sargeant-at-Arms.)

NON-MEMBER LIST MARCH 2011

DOWNTOWN STATION

D. Pearce
J. Cruz

SOUTH STATION

100% Union!!!

EAST BAKERSFIELD

100% Union!!!

HILLCREST

100% Union!!!

BRUNDAGE

D. Kinglee

DOLE COURT

S. Hancock

STOCKDALE

A. White
J. Oh
G. S. Saran
P.M. Russel

CAMINO MEDIA

100% Union!!!

ARVIN

C. J. Brown

AVENAL

100% Union!!!

BORON

100% Union!!!

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

100% Union!!!

TRONA

100% Union!!!

WASCO

100% Union!!!



Basil: We have 394 total Carriers in the complement assigned to all of the cities represented by our Branch—and, of those, *only 18 are non-members*—that means that we are 95% organized!

KIM GERDES, Branch 782 Recording Secretary

HAPPENINGS ON THE HILL



Hello Brothers and Sisters!

It has been quite awhile since I have written one of these articles about station happenings. We just had Carol Newton and Celia (Sally) Herrera retired. Carol's route 634 went up for bid, and by the time you read this Karen Mills from Brundage will have started on it. Welcome Karen. Management proposed to revert Sally's route 609. I didn't agree with that and have grieved it. To all the people interested in that route we will have to wait and see.



This is a little late, but would like to say congratulations to Allen Smith who took over 618, after Don Blanco retired. I am his favorite customer, even though Bill Elms thinks it is him. Congratulations to Melissa Wiles who took over Allen's route 623, she came to us from E.B..

Well now that food drive is over I would like to say many thanks to Allen Smith our station's food drive coordinator. You did an amazing job. I would also like to thank all the carriers who picked up food all day long. I am sure there are many people who will benefit from all your efforts. I would also like to thank some young volunteers. Shontika Wandicks's daughter and Dave Rener's kids came to

help sort food. It was a good day, with lots of food collected.

All for now.

In Solidarity

PAM SMITH
Shop Steward 93306



From Jerry's Pen

I am an NALC Shop Steward in an "associate office". I want to share some thoughts about the world that I work in.

No Bakersfield units have less than ten routes. Many associate offices have no more than ten routes. Although the same Contract applies to all Letter Carriers regardless of where we work, applying the letter of the law to issues can be difficult in offices with less than 200 man hours.

The options available to deliver the mail is impacted by the number of people who are working in a unit. Resolving Article 8 problems is a definite problem area.

Larger units have more people to choose from and have a pecking order that smaller units don't. In smaller offices, it's not realistic to say something like, "Well, we can't use you this time because you were mandated last time. We'll just mandate that person over there." Often, smaller offices don't have another person...

In associate offices, Letter Carriers just kind of suck it up, time and again, because we know that the mail has to be delivered. Management tries to let people off, but sometimes they can't.

In my office, we have five routes and one auxiliary. There are 8 Regulars and 1 PTF. So, you would think that we would have more than enough people.

Well, one of the Regulars is a 204-B. One less person to deliver the mail. The PTF is restricted to six hours. With a scheduled day off, there is one less person on any given day. We are allowed one person off for annual leave...so that means there isn't a lot of margin for something like a sick call.

And, people do get sick. And when that happens, everyone pitches in and pulls their weight to get the job done.

Here is another thing to think about. Our office is about thirty miles away from where mail is processed in Bakersfield. In order to get the mail there to meet the "window of operation", our truck has to leave no later than 4:45. We have to be off the street between 4:15 and 4:30...

What is your cutoff time where you work? Listening to other Shop Stewards, I realized that the units in Bakersfield seem to have a little more flexibility because the GMF is only a few minutes away.

That leads me back to the Contract. There are guidelines that are important, but smaller offices tend to be a little more flexible in applying the Contract.

Our reality is that when it comes to getting our days off or those long weekends that we cherish...it doesn't always happen in a small office. As long as management works with us, it can be very rewarding working where we do. And, in their defense, most of the supervisors and postmasters that I have worked with really do try to work with us to get us the time off to do the things that we need to do.

However, like all other management personnel, they have to do what their bosses tell them. Many times, they face this question: "Do I have enough people to get this mail delivered or do I violate the Contract?"

It is obvious that not all offices are the same. If they were, things would be so much easier. Small offices face different pressures than do larger offices. And, overall, those of us in small offices seem to take many things in stride that would be instant grievances in larger offices.

With that said, increased grievance activity in a small associate office should be viewed as a "Red Flag"!

Normally, disagreements are resolved more informally in smaller offices. If issues have escalated to the point where formal grievances are filed, something needs to be dealt with.

Issues in larger offices have to be addressed in ways which are appropriate to the circumstances in their world. More people, more vehicles, access to help from other units, etc. and etc.

Finally, there is another matter which is also important and makes associate offices different. An associate office is its own separate world. If we don't like the people we work with or our supervisor or our postmaster, we can't just bid to another unit. Letter Carriers in larger cities can bid a route in another station and in an entirely different part of town and—if it need be—can have a fresh start somewhere else.

In a unit like mine with the five routes and one auxiliary, waiting for a route to open up can take a very, very long time. If you are working next to someone that you may not get along with...get used to it and try to make the best of it.

But, there are also good points.

And, maybe that will be in a future article...

JERRY PATTERSON
Wasco Shop Steward

OUT THERE



Chief Shop Steward's Report

Give Give Give

Up until now, I've been closed-mouth about COLCPE as Chief Shop Steward because for whatever reason it always ends up becoming a debatable issue. At times I've even witnessed pleasant discussions involving giving to COLCPE turn into heated arguments which mainly stem from political points of view. And some of you just don't see COLCPE as a worthy cause to donate money to.

Have you ever had someone who tried to take something from you so precious that you made sure that they either never took again or would at least think twice about taking again? When I first heard about COLCPE I had trouble understanding, 1) What it was and 2) Why I needed to give. My dad who is now deceased always told me that understanding what's at stake allows you to make better decisions involving any action or direction you choose to take in life. As time went by, I discovered that giving such a little amount to COLCPE allowed me to have power. What do I mean by power? I want you to look at COLCPE as being a mutual fund that grows larger in veto power as more people buy in. It allows you to buy into having a piece of that veto-power which grows stronger each day as more join. With that power, you get a chance to thwart things or stop things in Congress that may affect your benefits and wages. And for whatever reason, we still don't have 100% participation.

Some of us are walking around in what I call eyes wide shut. We have our eyes open but not wide enough. How many of you read your May 2011 Postal Record? It was an eye opener for me. Nowadays some politicians seem to be focused mainly on taking. TAKE! TAKE! TAKE! Taking from whom? Anybody they can take from, except themselves. And it is these same politicians that if the tables were turned, they would not be willing to accept the same thing that they want to dish out. I often ask myself where will the taking end? I've come to the conclusion that it will end when they have nothing more to take. The article in the Postal Record exposes politicians who want to take. How will they take? They will take by negating labor contracts that unions have worked long and hard to get. Contracts allow us to have a certain lifestyle that stems from our work that we perform and get paid to do. Debates are taking place in Congress, and the subject of these debates is postal employee wages. These members of Congress negatively criticized postal management in their dealings with the union regarding wages and benefits. Why should you care? The reason you should care is because the criticisms of these politicians will affect postal management's decisions in the near future when it comes to negotiations of our contract. If you still think it's not a good idea to become a regular contributor to COLCPE read pages 4-8 of the May 2011 Postal Record. Draw your attention to the Representative's picture at the bottom right corner of page 6. Does the look on Rep. Dennis Ross's (R-FL) face indicate he cares about your job, you or your family? Rep. Dennis Ross (R-FL) engaged APWU President Guffey into a heated argument over a 2-year wage freeze that was agreed upon by both union and management! Here both the union and management agreed to maintain wages at a freeze, and Mr Dennis didn't feel as though a 2-year wage freeze was enough and wanted more. In that same debate Representative Scott DesJarlais (R-TN) jumped in and cited the country's economic climate should've been used to put pressure on postal employees to take lower wages.

And Rep Darrell Issa (R-CA) gave his thoughts about the proposed APWU contract when he stated he believed "savings can't be scored if you can't get rid of people". The truth of the matter is if these politicians have their way, they will negate the contract all together, and it starts with the take, take, take.

Who would have ever thought politicians would start crossing the line criticizing management in their dealings with union officials and attacking labor agreements by demanding more concessions be made by employees. Instead of members in Congress making things financially right by the elimination of the pre-funding burden they are more focused on taking wages from you and transferring more healthcare costs to you which is unfair. Needless to say the Postmaster General during the debate defended the wages of the workforce and praised postal employees for their contributions. If you think the upcoming letter carrier contract that will be negotiated for all carriers in the near future won't be subject to attacks, think again. If you think the anti-labor movement in Wisconsin is just isolated to ONLY 1 state and ONLY to non-federal employees think again. Federal employees and their labor agreements are under attack. And for those of you who seem more worried about abortion rights or gay rights or gun rights or whatever the main issue may be...you won't have to worry when your new job is unemployment. The new issues to worry about with your newly unemployed status will be 1) keeping your mortgage out of foreclosure 2) feeding your family and 3) making your car payment among other things. Usually more so than often all your toys (i.e. fatboy Harley, guns etc.) end up sold so that you can maintain the 3 things above. At this point people usually turn to the church which can only help for so long.

I encourage everyone to give, give, give to oppose the take, take, take. Anyone who is currently not giving to COLCPE please donate \$5 or \$10 a month on a regular basis because it goes a long way in protecting your job. It allows our voices to be heard in Congress and messages sent that opposes meddling of Representatives like the ones you see on pages 4-6 of the May 2011 Postal Record. If you would like to know how you can sign up and start donating please don't hesitate to contact Ms. Marie Montano Legislative Chairman 917-8006 or you can call me, and I'll walk you through on how to sign up. Lastly, in making your decision to give or not to give to COLCPE remember, "THEY think YOU make too much for a living and the unemployment rate of 9% that they thought would get better is starting to look normal".



*Chief Shop Steward
Rob Woodley*

**Yours in solidarity,
Robert Woodley
Chief Shop Steward**

Article courtesy of the June 2011 *El Sol* published by Albuquerque, New Mexico NALC Branch 504

Legislation has been introduced in the House of Representatives that is very important to every current and future Letter Carrier.

HR 1351 addresses the overpayment made by the Post Office into the CSRS and the pre-funding required by law. HR 137 addresses maintaining 6 day delivery. Please take the time to call your Congress Person and ask them for their support on these issues. If the pre-funding issue was fixed we would be in a much better position to negotiate our next contract. Also maintaining 6 day delivery will save a lot of jobs. There will also be jobs in the future for our returning veterans.

It does not matter whether you are a republican or democrat; this is not a partisan issue. These are *Letter Carrier* issues that have support from both sides of the isle. Please don't wait and expect someone else to do this for you. Your politicians need to hear from you on these issues. Please call or take the time to write a letter and mail it to them. We all have a very big interest in this.

Honorable Kevin McCarthy
United States House of Representatives
4100 Empire Dr #150 Bakersfield, CA 93309

Date:

Dear Congressman McCarthy:

I live in Bakersfield and I am a member of the National Association of Letter Carriers Branch 782 and a constituent of your congressional district.

6-day mail delivery service is an essential service that the American people have relied on since 1912. Reducing mail delivery service to 5 days a week would inevitably cause not only delays in the delivery of mail, but higher postal costs, due to the many hours of additional overtime that the Postal Service would require in order to handle the resulting back-up of mail.

Also, our senior citizens rely heavily upon the steady delivery of mail service 6 days a week. Social Security is the primary or sole source of income for many senior citizens, and any delay in the delivery of their Social Security checks would make it difficult for them to purchase even essential items, such as food and medicine.

Taking into account these items and other serious consequences that would result from reducing mail delivery services I am asking you to please sign on as a cosponsor of H Res 137. This bill, sponsored by Representative Samuel Graves, expresses the sense of the House of Representatives that the United States Postal Service should take all appropriate measures to ensure the continuation of its 6-day mail delivery service.

Thank you for your consideration of this request. A return response to this letter would be sincerely appreciated.

Thank you.

Sincerely,

Honorable Kevin McCarthy
United States House of Representatives
4100 Empire Drive, Suite 150)
Bakersfield, CA 93309

Date:

Dear Congressman Kevin McCarthy:

My name is _____ and I live in Bakersfield. I work as a letter carrier for the United States Postal Service.

I am writing you concerning the plan the Postal Service has been pushing to reduce service to your constituents by eliminating Saturday delivery. Our State's small businesses, expanding agriculture industry, and senior citizens heavily depend on retaining Saturday delivery for their livelihood. While it is true this plan is facilitated by the recent losses in revenue the Postal Service has been experiencing there is another way to address this crisis.

Recent legislation has been introduced to help ensure the Postal Service be treated in a fair and equitable manner allowing it to overcome the very difficult financial challenges it currently faces. H.R. 5746 would address a decades-old accounting error that led the Office of Personnel Management (OPM) to overcharge the Postal Service, by billions of dollars, for payments into the Civil Service Retirement System (CSRS). This overcharge, of at least \$50- \$55 billion, was confirmed this year by reports conducted independently by both the Postal Regulatory Commission and the USPS Office of Inspector General. These reports thus conclude the Postal Service has massively over-funded its pension liabilities and that the surplus funds in the CSRS postal account could be used to meet its obligations to pre-fund its future retiree health benefits – a congressionally mandated obligation. H.R. 5746 does not repeal or in any way address the legally mandated pre-funding payments into the Postal Service Retiree Health Benefit Fund (PSRHBF), it simply fixes the massive over-funding to the Postal CSRS account and transfers it to the PSRHBF.

As a constituent I am asking your support to help fix the deep financial crisis the Postal Service is experiencing in large part as a result of these miscalculations by cosponsoring H.R. 5746.

Thank you for your consideration of this request. A return response to this letter would be sincerely appreciated.

Thank you.

Sincerely,

Legislative Issues Do Matter!!!

These sample letters were submitted by NALC

Branch 782 Legislative Liaison

Diana Chavez...because, "Yes We Can!"

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

“You May Be...Really?”

At present, there are two Branch 25 offices that are online with FSS. Those offices are Haverhill and Marblehead. There is one other office, Burlington, that has a firm date to go live with FSS.

Why, then, have letter carriers from five other offices received letters that say they “may be” involuntarily reassigned from the carrier craft of their installation to a different installation? I can't claim to know why management has sent the letters. I do know, however, that management's actions in doing so are irresponsible, and yes, disrespectful.

The letters all start “Dear Employee”. Really? Why don't they just start “Dear 01691435”? Or better yet, why don't these letters remain stored on computers until management can get their collective act together and have a clear understanding of the actual impact of FSS in an office?

I'll explain that last statement, using Marblehead as a case in point if you will. On March 29, I received a letter from Operations Programs Support stating that the anticipated reductions in Marblehead as a result of FSS implementations would be 3 full-time routes abolished, 1 full-time route reduced to auxiliary status, and 1 auxiliary route abolished. Keep in mind that Marblehead wasn't scheduled to implement FSS until May 9, a full 41 days after the letter.

At any rate, the above mentioned impact would potentially indicate that there would be 4 regular carriers that would no longer have assignments (possibly 5 if the reduction in routes created a T-6 swing that would no longer be needed). There were seven letters issued in Marblehead on April 8.

Since Marblehead has been on FSS, the actual time used has exceeded the projected time required each and every day. The amount of time has ranged from a low of 12 hours to a high of 39 hours. The point is, 12 hours is more than a full position. The point is, had management acted responsibly and respectfully, there should have been fewer 60 day “maybe” letters issued.

We receive calls at the office from stewards, from affected carriers, and from concerned carriers regarding these 60 day letters. There are questions about what to do when one receives these letters. The JCAM explains this situation on page 12-17.

Basically, we sit tight. The JCAM says: “It is the intent of the parties to minimize the number of grievances filed on the excessing activity, and no procedural arguments should be made regarding which excessing activity is grieved.” Where the JCAM speaks of “which excessing activity” means that the Union can grieve the letter and/or the actual excessing. Unless a letter is issued to the wrong person, as a branch, we will grieve the actual excessing. (Note: The issuance of letters is also being addressed in branch grievances relative to FSS implementation).

I hope that this information serves to help alleviate some of the anxiety that carriers are experiencing. As usual, don't hesitate to contact the union office if you have any questions.

“Arm Carrying”: Letter carriers can't be required to arm-carry mail. Does that mean that if you're instructed to arm carry mail you can refuse? No. It means that if you are instructed to arm-carry mail you can request union time and file a grievance.

FSS has not changed the rules regarding removing flats from one's satchel. So, if you arm carry now and you find it comfortable and you want to continue to arm-carry, that's your prerogative. If, however, you don't arm-carry and you're not comfortable arm-carrying, then contractually you can't be instructed to do so.

“Where Do I Put This Stuff?”: If you refer back to the April 2011 Postal Record, and reread Director of City Delivery Lew Drass' article, you will see that on curblines all bundles should be placed on the working tray with the addresses facing the driver. I'm sure you're aware that the working trays in most vehicles are only wide enough to accommodate three trays (some vehicles will only accommodate two trays). So, what is a carrier to do? Ask your supervisor to train you.

If the supervisor can't offer any instruction/training on a safe and efficient way to handle a fourth bundle on a curblines route, I have a suggestion. Please understand, I can only suggest, I can't instruct. My suggestion is this: Remove half the letters from your DPS tray and stand the flats on end behind the DPS mail. That way, all the mail will fit on the working tray and all the addresses will be facing you.

“Case Labels”: Assembling the strips and inserting them into carrier cases is **OUR WORK**.

EXECUTIVE V.P. REPORT

Currently there are 2 offices in Branch 25 that have been adjusted and are taking the FSS flats to the street. A third is scheduled for June. For these stations there are obvious changes to the work day, such as less casing time and more street time. There also will be a big difference in handling flats both in the office and on the street.

Just like DPS letters, the FSS flats will not be seen until the carrier punches out to the street. This could possibly present a problem for carriers and management on certain days. The carrier is supposed to notify management when they are of the opinion that they will not complete all duties within the 8 hour assignment. Generally, this is done by requesting a Form 3996 and filling it out and letting the supervisor respond to plan the day.

In the FSS environment, the carrier and supervisor will have already planned the day before the carriers head to the street. This is when the carriers will see how much volume they have for the day, both FSS flats and DPS letters. If the carrier feels at this point that he/she can't complete the assignment within 8 hours, then it is necessary to fill out a 3996 and submit it to management. There is a national step 4 agreement from 1998 that allows the carrier to submit a 3996 or amend a previously submitted 3996 after picking up the DPS mail. This should apply to the FSS flats also, as you will be picking them up at the same time. It is possible to have locally developed agreements that will allow the carriers to view both the DPS and FSS mail before they pull down the routes but it is not a requirement.

Most of our stations will be in prime vacation time by the time this is printed. This is the time when PTFs get to exercise their seniority for hold-downs. Most stations have a calendar available to see what routes are vacant. Also remember that a level 1 carrier can bid on temporary vacant higher level assignments (t-6 assignments) if they chose. Anyone serving on a temporary higher level assignment can end the assignment at their discretion, even if there is time left to the assignment.

There are a number of stations in the Branch currently receiving FSS flats but still casing the flats. These are considered to be test sites. From what I understand, management is testing the schemes they run on the FSS machines. There have been rumors

that some managers are telling the carriers they should take the flats to the street. If this occurs please contact your steward and call the Union office. I don't believe the purpose of the test is to have the carriers take the flats to the street. In these offices the routes have not been adjusted and there has been no adjustment to the office and street times.

Because of the postponed Branch meeting in February, we will be having a second monthly meeting in June on the 28th. I hope you all have a relaxing summer, although that probably won't happen unless you are retired.

Keep on grinding
Paul Desmond

JARAP 2011

by Ron Kania,
Branch 2 Vice-President
Milwaukee, Wisconsin

On March 22, 2011, the national parties agreed to the latest round of a joint route adjustment process, the Joint Alternate Route Adjustment Process – 2011 (JARAP). I will summarize most of the changes in the latest JARAP agreement. The complete JARAP agreement and other training materials can be found at the NALC website (nalc.org) if you want to read the entire agreement.

This version of JARAP once again allows either side to select offices to be evaluated and adjusted; but with this year's version, only entire zip codes can be selected. Last year, the parties could pick individual routes; but this time, it is entire zip codes only.

This year, there is an emphasis for more communication and training to be provided to District Lead Teams (DLT), District Evaluation and Adjustment Teams (DEAT), and the Local Office Contacts (LOC). There are a couple of changes regarding the DLT. After the zones that will be evaluated and adjusted have been determined, the DLT will determine the number of zones that will be adjusted using Carrier Optimal Routing (COR). The DLT will also decide if a zone will be reviewed in the fall (using data from September and October) after they were adjusted under JARAP 2011.

This version of JARAP does not require an automatic review of the adjustment. The LOC have a right to request a Route Adjustment Review within 120 days following the implementation of the route adjustments, but it is up to the DLT to decide if a review is needed.

Another change this year is that once a zone has been selected and evaluated, the DEAT is permitted to jointly agree that no adjustments are warranted. I have no idea how often this will apply, but it is a change to this version of JARAP.

JARAP 2011 states the LOC have the authority to jointly agree to make changes to park points, relays, and lines of travel within 30 days after adjustments are implemented. The LOC can't make any territorial changes to correct obvious errors without the approval of the DLT.

This version of JARAP requires the DEAT to look at two additional reports: the Weekly Summary Report and the Weekly Operation Summary Report (in addition to other reports) to determine if there are any data integrity issues.

Management is required to post the Workhour Workload Report for all routes in a convenient location each day regardless of whether or not your office is being adjusted. The purpose of posting this report is so the carrier can look at that report each day to verify their assignment was given the proper credit for the previous day. For instance, if you received auxiliary assistance but the report does not show any auxiliary assistance, or if the total time for the assignment is not accurate, or if the mail volumes are wrong, these are errors that need to be corrected. If you experience any problems with any of the data listed on the Workhour Workload Report, request to see your steward and have those problems addressed.

Here is another change: *"At the option of the Branch President, all full-time city delivery assignments in a zone where all routes are optimized using COR will be opened for expedited bidding by seniority. If this option is chosen, bidding will be limited to the city letter carriers holding full-time city delivery duty assignments in the impacted zone."* We will have to wait and see if this provision will come into play during any of the upcoming adjustments.

This version of JARAP once again talks about the use of COR. A new sentence has been added to this agreement regarding when COR is available. JARAP 2011 states: *"COR is considered available in any zone where the COR data preparation is completed before the adjustment and where a COR technician is available."*

Another change this year involves the PS Form 3999, Inspection of Letter Carrier Route. Within three business days of performing a PS Form 3999, management will explain the examiner's comments and the reason for any time recorded as nonrecurring street time, as well as any editing of the original PS Form 3999 to the carrier. The carrier will have the opportunity to write his/her comments on an attachment to the original unedited copy of the PS Form 3999.

I advise every carrier to take advantage of this opportunity to write any comments you have regarding any PS Form 3999 that is completed on you. You need to look at the original unedited PS Form 3999 to review what time was recorded and then look at what time was edited. If you don't take the time to review your PS Form 3999, I can't predict what will happen during the adjustment of your assignment; but I know if you make comments right away that can only help with your adjustment and evaluation.

Last but not least, under this version of JARAP, the NALC is permitted to have an NALC COR technician in conjunction with, or in lieu of, the DEAT assigned to a zone where COR is used. The USPS will have the responsibility to train the NALC COR technician.

I want to thank, in advance, everyone involved with the difficult task of adjusting routes. Being a DLT, DEAT, LOC, or COR technician is not an easy job. Each person has a tremendous responsibility to see to it that routes are adjusted to as close to eight hours daily as possible.

I also want to express my thanks, in advance, to each carrier who will be subjected to this latest version of JARAP. You play a critical role in how your assignment is evaluated and adjusted. You need to speak up on your own behalf throughout this entire process. No one knows your assignment better than you do. If the times they are using for the evaluation and adjustment of your assignment don't seem to be right, make those comments during your consultations. If you experience problems as you go forward in this process, call the branch office and let us know. If you need our help, please call us early on in the process. This is a joint process and calling us after the adjustments have been agreed to will most likely be too late to make any changes.

I'm confident the NALC representatives will be working very hard on your behalf, but they will need your input at each step of this process. If we all work together toward the same goal of making properly adjusted routes, I'm optimistic that JARAP 2011 can be a success.

Article courtesy of the June 2011 *Pioneer* published by Milwaukee, Wisconsin NALC Branch 2

**THIS IS AN
"EDITOR-GUY"
NOTE...**

**You are looking at
the first page of a
seniority list of the
Bakersfield City
Letter Carriers in
1983.**

**You may wonder
how I figured this
out since there
is no date on the
page.**

**Well...the
junior PTF is
listed as having
been hired on
1/31/83.**

**Rick Gerdes was a
PTF as of 7/6/82...**

Other PTFs included:

- B.L. Nichols, D.M.
- Diaz, S. M. Honeycutt,
- W.R. Thomas, A.L.
- Montomery, J.R Siamis,
- S.R. Linenberger, L.D.
- Clemons, F.G. Mor-
- gan, D.J. Wilder, K.D.
- Henson, J.M. Varela, E.
- Gifford, J.W. Lavoie,
- B. Rinehart, N. Miles,
- R.D. Sparks, T. Cour-
- son, T.R. Lindsay, F.A.
- Arambula, R.C. Leitko,
- K.B. Tornkvist, and
- T.A. Lanza (in order)...

<u>NAME</u>	<u>OFFICE SENIORITY</u>	<u>NAME</u>	<u>OFFICE SENIORITY</u>
- Tesch, F. W.	08/01/49	Robison, D. R.	04/09/62
Reddy, J. Jr.	02/01/52	Altman, H. R.	07/30/62
Perkins, J. H.	08/01/53	Price, L. W.	11/01/62
Gonzales, M.	03/16/54	Oscars, D. G.	05/02/63
Evans, P. R.	05/16/55	Pimienta, C. J.	09/05/63
Pettus, R. K.	05/16/55	Riley, T. Jr.	09/10/63
Hail, B. E.	05/16/55	Ruiz, H. Jr.	10/12/63
Suniga, R. J.	05/16/55	Maltone, F. D.	09/12/64
Gomez, D. D.	05/16/55	Fehdraw, C. R.	10/05/64
Jackson, V.	09/16/55	Neal, L. L.	11/16/64
Gomez, S. M.	09/16/55	Jennings, E. L.	04/07/65
Munoz, M. V.	11/16/55	Shaw, P. G.	07/03/65
McKinley, J. T.	07/14/56	Ewings, J. L.	09/10/65
Estrada, M. J.	07/28/56	<i>Retired</i> <i>Dec</i> Kidwell, H. D.	09/11/65
Johnson, O. W.	10/20/56	Gregory, R. F.	09/25/65
Wright, G. C.	01/29/57	Colbert, C. L.	10/14/65
Lane, W. L.	05/04/57	Alexander, P. M.	10/23/65
Corella, A. L.	06/04/57	Aros, R.	03/12/66
Escalera, E. G.	07/27/57	Horton, H. F.	05/21/66
Gonzales, J. A.	08/14/57	Rogers, H. J.	05/21/66
Huggins, R.	12/28/57	White, G. G.	08/08/66
Avalos, J. V.	02/22/58	Davin, M. J. <i>Retired 4/1/85</i>	08/13/66
Aguilar, B. G.	02/22/58	Munoz, E.	08/22/66
Gonzalez, M. V.	08/09/58	Golden, E.	09/21/66
McCoy, W. C.	11/15/58	Watt, R. M.	11/17/66
Villagomez, M. J.	11/29/58	Clark, F. L.	01/10/67
Magana, A. R.	02/21/59	Trombetta, P. R.	02/21/67
Garcia, A.	09/23/59	Berna, B.	02/25/67
Marchard, W. C.	09/25/59	Johnston, G. R.	02/25/67
Hull, R. L.	11/28/59	Acedo, F. Jr.	04/04/67
Tillett, J. R.	02/27/60	Lewis, J.	06/20/67
Eaton, M. J.	09/03/60	Shropshire, J. A.	06/22/67
Chavez, R. A.	10/15/60	Santa Cruz, J.	07/14/67

from the editor-guy

I want to start out with a question—"Do you have "Old Timers"?"

Here is a test: Take a look at the names on this seniority list on the last page. Match the names on the list with names like "Pop", "Luther", "Spider", "Billygoat", "Tomcat", "Cowboy", "Pete", and "Spike".

If you can name six out of the eight, you may qualify as an "Old Timer". On the other hand, if you don't recognize any of the names at all (and were around in 1983) you may have the other kind of "old timers"...

Be as it may, finding this seniority list as I was going through old files in preparation to setting up an office at home to do my editor-guy things was pretty cool.

More than a couple of things jumped out at me.

The Carrier with the most seniority in the city of Bakersfield started carrying mail on August 1, 1949. His name is Frank Tesch.

You may notice that I didn't say, "His name was Frank Tesch." He's still around! Next month I'll share a little about him. Not only will that be fun for me, you might like it, too.

However, this points to issues of context. In every town and city where there are City Letter Carriers, there is a senior Carrier—the "old timer" who has been around the longest. And, there is also the "newbie".

All of us who are still carrying mail are walking streets which others walked before us. We are startled and—too often—bitten by dogs. So were they. If we've carried mail for a while, we hear newer people complain about how hot it was in June. We remember those July and August days and we wonder what they're going to say then. And, if we pause to think about it, we wonder what our lives will be like if we make it to retirement. So did all of those people on that old seniority list on the other page.

Too soon—and we do it one day at a time—we find that *we* now are old-timers...elders...

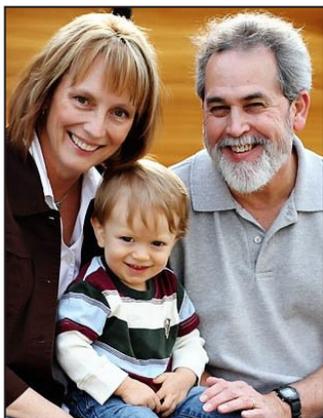
Part of what elders are supposed to do is to pass on knowledge and understanding. If someone doesn't share how things came about, our history is lost. Here is one example. The banner on this newsletter carries the title of *E.A. BAKER UNION UPDATE*. I've occasionally been asked if our publication is named after the founder of Bakersfield.

Actually, E.A. "Ed" Baker was a Letter Carrier who was a former editor of the Branch 782 newsletter. John Ross (another name from the past for many of us) pointed out that Ed's nickname was "18 & 8" because he was so consistent in his work habits. He was also a former editor of the *Branch 782 Update*. After he passed away, the newsletter was named in his honor. How many of you knew that?

Ultimately, the point that I'm making is that we're all passing through. We need to pass along our history so that it can be a foundation for our future. Each of us a building block in that future.



BASIL ZUNIGA
NALC Branch 782 Editor-guy



Recently, I spent a day at the office purging files for the shredder (very exciting work!). I then did a little organizing (again very exciting!). However, I **DID** come across some interesting stuff.

Did you know that we have a large collection of photos? I didn't. I know that it's great to look at the old station photos we have hanging up in the office. Well, we have *lots* more! I am looking for someone who would be interested in helping to preserve these photos by putting them in albums. We have a great history in these photos and putting them in albums would allow everyone to enjoy them. Give me a call if this is something you may be interested in doing. (Retirees! Only **YOU** may recognize some of the people in the older pictures...)

KIM GERDES
Branch 782 Recording Secretary
Home: (661) 834-2059 Cell: (661) 301-9676

OUT THERE



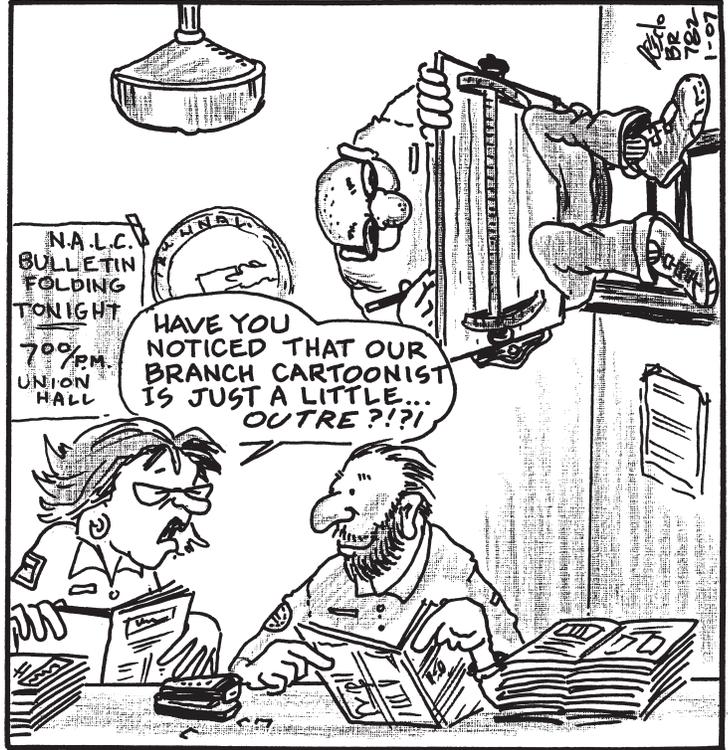
S.A.N.E. - SPECIAL ASST. NEWSLETTER EDITOR - P.O. BOX 6532 BAKERSFIELD, CA 93386

Think you have an idea for a cartoon? Give Fred a chance to see what he can do...

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

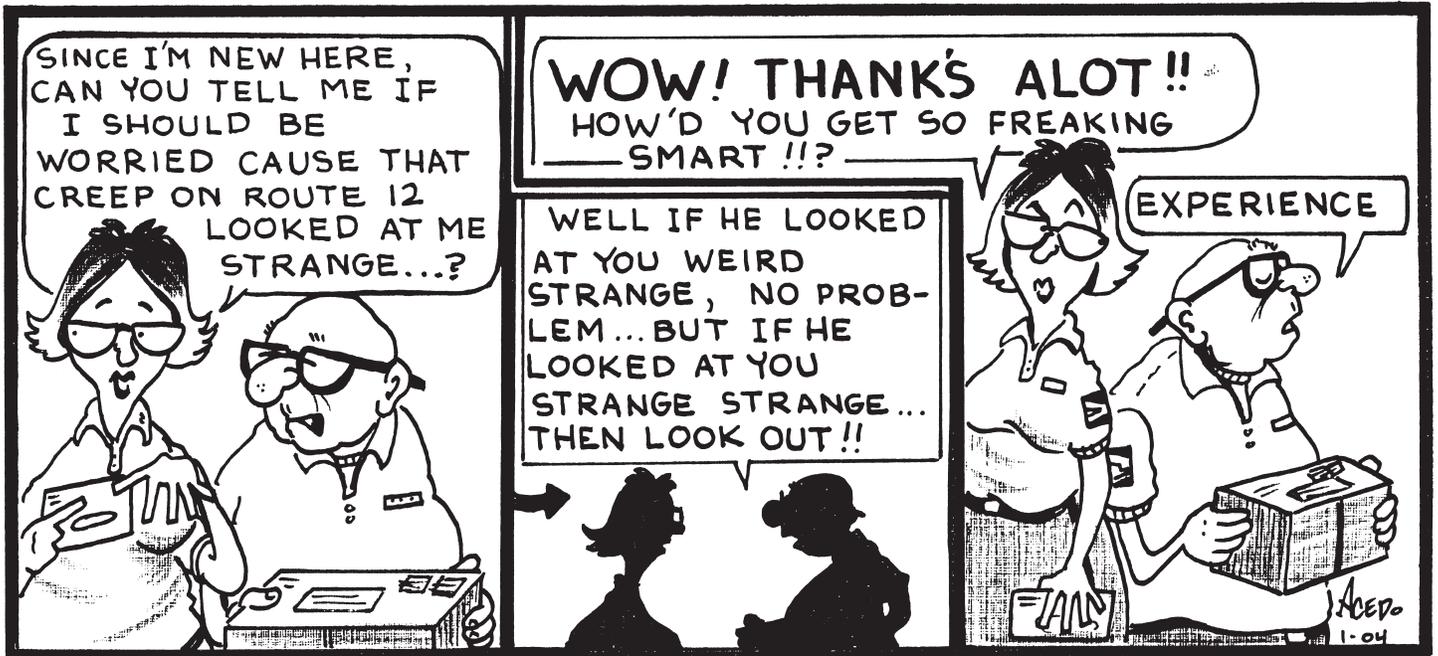
Out there

OUT THERE



OUT THERE

BY FRED ACEDO





THE Mail Bag NEWS

★ SOLIDARITY

★ EDUCATION

★ ORGANIZATION



OFFICIAL PUBLICATION OF TRI-VALLEY BRANCH 2902,
NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF LETTER CARRIERS AFL-CIO

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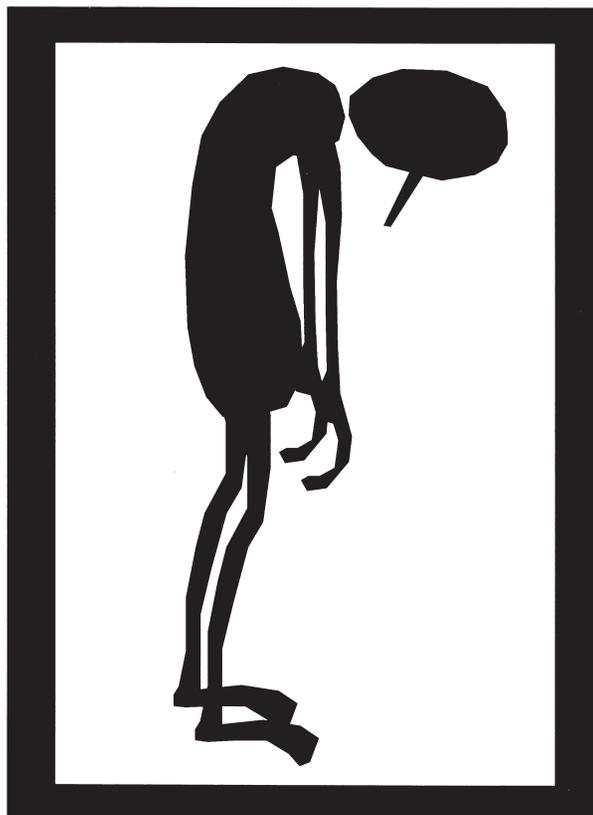
DIFFICULT TIMES

By Frank Salazar, President

For those of us in FSS offices, these are not the best of times. As we stated in previous articles, this was going to be a challenging year and so far our claims have come true. I hear the complaints every time I walk into an office with FSS. Sometimes, I feel like Daniel walking into the lion's den. I don't blame you all for being angry at what's happening, but you have to realize it's not the Union's fault. Management has the right under Article 3 to run the organization as they see fit. However, we as the Union have the right to enforce the National Agreement. I take pride in the fact that our Branch is the most aggressive in our District at policing the contract and protecting letter carrier rights and we will continue to do this day in and day out. But, remember this, we will get through this process just like we got through LLV's, routers, pencil whipping 6-day counts and inspections, vertical flat cases, 5 & 6 shelf cases, DPS, change in start times, scanners, delcons, msp's, the NRP, and anything else I missed. So, here's what's happening now.

FSS

As I walk through the FSS offices, carriers tell me that the DPS volume has been erratic. Some days the FSS is



heavy, other days its light, and other days the carriers leave the office and the FSS comes in after they have hit the street. I have heard that machine #2 is a problem machine to such an extent that it had started smoking and almost had an electrical fire. Maybe it was a bad connection or maybe it was cheap wiring, I never got the true story. But, what I do know is that flats, especially magazines are getting their covers ripped, torn off, shredded or crumpled. Carriers are getting flats for different offices, flats are being sandwiched, there are barcodes over the addresses, markups are not being taken out, flats are being put in backwards by clerks, and carriers are still waiting for parcels to be thrown. The District Manager has informed us that FSS volumes are starting to stabilize and that they are working on the parcel problem. Believe it or not, we have seen the

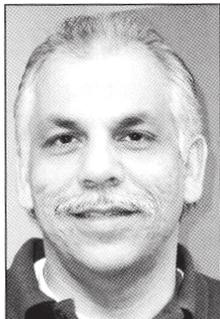
parcel problem improve in a few offices. So, it's a work in progress.

But, we are still having problems with harassment concerning under time and expansion of street time. These are two issues that keep Managers up at night. However, the Managers have to realize that DOIS is a tool. It is not gospel. A Supervisor cannot hold you to DOIS projections.

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PRESIDENT'S REPORT...

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A carrier might be given a swing and told it's :30 minutes. Management has to realize that the :30 minute swing might take you :45 minutes. In addition, there is additional loading time, travel time, and allied time such as relays, accountables, parcel delivery, dealing with extra coverages and equipment (reloading), and unfamiliarity with territory, which all expands street time. Supervisors

don't want to address these facts, so use a PS Form 3996 and call from the street. Don't skip your lunch and breaks, because this will affect any future route adjustments.

COR Adjustments

If you've been following the articles in this newsletter or have been attending a Union meeting, you're ahead of the game. We've been telling the membership that the COR adjustments are going to be very stressful. Let me make this point clear, the Branch suggested to the District Manager that we use the Joint Alternate Route Adjustment Process to evaluate and adjust the routes, and to have involvement in moving the territory (joint use of COR). The Service chose their own method, which is their right under section 1 of the Memorandum of Understanding signed by past NALC President Bill Young. In that MOU (M-01643), which you can find on line at the NALC website or on page 31 of the April Postal Record, Management was given the right in fully implemented FSS offices to ". . . determine the methods to estimate impact in a delivery unit and make route adjustments accordingly". However, there is to be a 60 day review period after the adjustments and if either party determines that the routes are out of adjustment, then the routes have to be adjusted in accordance with the M-39 or on a "locally agreed upon adjustment formula". Check out the article by Lew Drass, our National Director of City Delivery on page 31 of the April 2011 Postal Record.

As I wrote above, Management has a right to unilaterally adjust the routes. And, this is what's causing most of the turmoil in our FSS offices. Management has made adjustments using COR that have wiped out senior carrier's routes causing Article 41.3.O to be triggered. Basically speaking, every route in the building under the most senior carrier having his/her route abolished has to be posted. In some instances, the most senior carrier had every delivery on his route changed. The only thing that didn't change was his/her route number. Other carriers have complained that the line of travel didn't make sense, they didn't get enough travel time or allied time, the loops are too long and too heavy, they are carrying uphill instead of downhill, they are dead heading, the geography of the new lay out does not make sense, and the list goes on. As you can see, there

was no carrier input. Management did it themselves and it's costing them. Overtime hours are up and so is the sick leave percentage. If Management had done it our way, the vacant routes, auxiliary routes or most junior routes would have been abolished minimizing the adverse and disruptive impact on the Installation.

In the District President's Meetings, Management kept throwing up the numbers, :48 minutes and :18 minutes. I asked, "What are those numbers? And, where do they come from?", because I didn't understand what they were talking about. Management stated that the :48 minutes is the savings per route from FSS and :18 minutes is the savings per route using the COR adjustments. COR is supposed to reduce the number of park points or relays, thus, it saves time, but only for park and loop routes. I said, "No way are you saving this amount of time!" It was explained that these are not actual savings. The numbers are anticipated savings on paper. "Oh, I see." I said. "The numbers are not real." So, I asked "What are the savings?" The response I got was that there are no savings! It's costing them big.

Ok, so what's next? The MOU states that if the routes are not properly adjusted, either side can ask for inspections. Guess what? The Union will ask for inspections. But, nobody wants to go through 6-day counts and inspections. Ok, there might be a few of you. The majority, I think would forego it and Management doesn't want to spend tens of thousands of dollars on inspections that will just lead to grievances and a host of special inspections. What we have decided to do to avoid these problems is a joint experiment with Management in the 77 zone in Agoura Hills and the 62 zone in Thousand Oaks. We will utilize the JARAP all the way through the COR process. So, if we want to avoid Management's unilateral adjustments, we have to make it work. I'm counting on the carriers in these zones to outperform the other zone(s) in their respective offices. I'll get back to you later and let you know how the experiment works out.

Excessing

In talks with the District Manager, he has agreed to try and hold off on excessing as long as he can. I think this is a good move, because based on the COR adjustments and subsequent adjustments to fix the COR problems, the numbers can all change and we might not have to excess as many people as we think or it could be a completely different group of people being excessed. For example, COR adjustments are triggering Article 41.3.O's in many offices. Some carriers that are currently CC2 (T-6) carriers, may be able to change their status to CC1 carriers and save themselves from excessing and vice versa. This may lead someone else to be excessed. It may not sound fair, but it is contractually correct and the situation only arose because Management took out a senior carrier's route.

On the other hand, offices like Studio City may not have

Continued on next page....

anyone excessed out of North Hollywood. They may get excessed out of Studio City, but may end up on a residual vacancy in LCCA, Chandler, or Valley Village. In an office such as Woodland Hills, half as many carriers may be actually excessed than previously anticipated. However, Woodland Hills has its own set of unique problems. Before Management can excess, it must separate all TE's and cut PTF hours. Instead, Woodland Hills has done the opposite. It has borrowed TE's and PTFs from other offices and the PTFs in Woodland Hills are working 40+ hours on a weekly basis. If excessing does occur, we will look for some offices close by for those affected.

National Reassessment Process

Here's a quick update on NRP. Many NRP cases are getting pre-arbitrated in the Union's favor. This means that some injured carriers are now working 40 hours per week or are working more hours than they had been working in the past. Some carriers were brought back and given new job offers, and others are still off work, but getting paid by the Department of Labor. In common, is back pay. Our biggest win to date was a back pay award of approximately \$142,000.00. After all the adjustments, taxes, TSP deposits, etc., the carrier ended up with a lump sum of approximately \$50,000.00. We are proud of this win, but it should have never gone this far. Management has the rights to do certain things, but it has to follow the law. To those of you awaiting a hearing, be patient. God willing, justice will also come your way in due time.

Route Structure . . . DUA's

I read a recent OIG report that used the term Delivery Unit Assistants (DUA's). The OIG recommends using part time workers such as PTFs and TEs as part time routers. In my opinion, we should not separate casing and delivery duties. Our craft should remain preparation of mail and delivery of mail as a whole not as two separate functions. We've been through this router thing already and what are the routers going to case, if the volume is steadily declining? And, how are we going to get the mail to the office earlier? This model may work for UPS where they have loaders and drivers. We deliver more than just parcels.

In my opinion, if we are going to do something with route structure we should think green and customer service. On a National Level we should propose that business routes should be created at less than 8 hours. For example, take a business route and make it 7 hours of delivery. For the last hour, the carrier can drive back through the route in the pm and pick up parcels at its businesses who want their buildings cleared of product in the pm similar to what the UPS drivers do. In thinking green, the Postal Service can look to its past and go back to walk out routes and parcel post relay drivers in high density areas. This would get vehicles off the road, save on fuel costs, and vehicle maintenance. Going green and parcel delivery seems to be the trend. I'd like to get to the political news in this article, but I'm pressed for time with stacks of grievances. So, I will save those thoughts for a future article. All for now back in two.

*I don't
know if
anyone
has
gotten
to this
point...*

*If you did,
thanks!*

Basil Zuniga, Branch 782 Editor-buy



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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).

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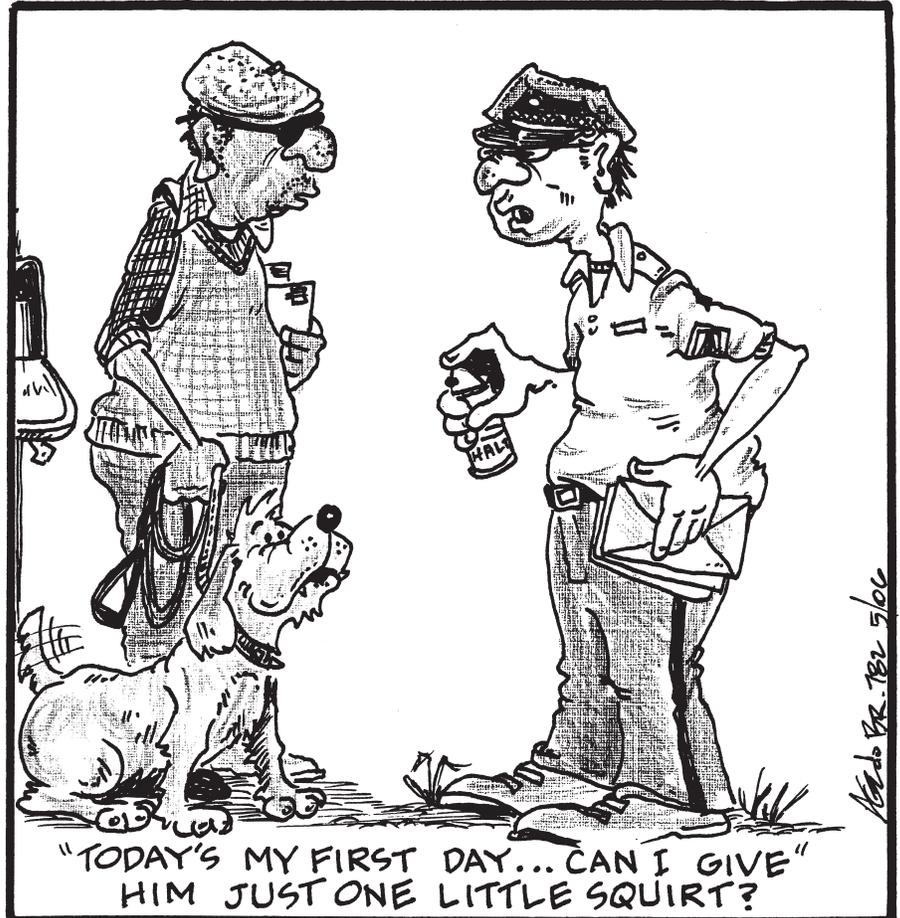
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FORWARDING SERVICE REQUESTED

OUT THERE



"Yno", do you think that you are going to miss all of the things that you did over the course of your career???