

# National Association of Letter Carriers

## Branch 782

### E.A. Baker Union Update

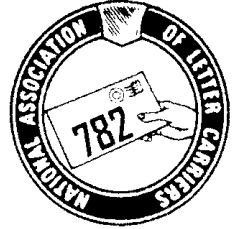


ARVIN  
CALIFORNIA CITY  
McFARLAND  
TAFT

AVENAL  
DELANO  
MOJAVE  
TEHACHAPI

BAKERSFIELD  
EDWARDS AFB  
RIDGECREST  
TRONA

BORON  
LAMONT  
SHAFTER  
WASCO



**CHARTERED FEBRUARY 25, 1891**

VOLUME LXXXIII NUMBER 8

SEPTEMBER 2012

at the

# Mike:



It is getting to be almost impossible to keep up with all of the changes in the legislative arena.

But, I urge you to act to protect all that you currently have, your future benefits, or any retirement plans you have...

## Choices DO Have Consequences

Every day we make hundreds of choices. Most have very little impact on our life; but, others could turn out to be potentially life altering.

Some choices—when taken by themselves—might only have a minor effect on our life. However, when taken together in conjunction with other choices that we make, we could find ourselves dealing with major impacts on our life.

One example would be the choice we make to come to work on time. As long as we report on time, there is very little negative consequence to that choice. But, repeated choices to report late could lead to major consequences of losing your job. Really? Truly? **Yes.**

Furthermore, some choices not only effect our lives and what we do. Sometimes our choices may very well affect hundreds or even thousands of others. Really? Truly? **BELIEVE IT OR NOT... YES!!!**

I am thankful for all those who have made the choice to join the Union. I am also so thankful for all those individuals in our local Branch who have made the choice to become involved! Locally, 386 Carriers (approximately 95% of the entire complement of people who have been hired) have made the **choice** to join the Union. *It is voluntary.* They realize that there *IS* strength in numbers.

*Continued on next page...*

Conversely, seventeen (17) Letter Carriers who have not joined the Union have chosen to let all of the other 386 support them...

I am also thankful for all those that not only made the choice to belong to the union but who have decided to become active as national, state and local branch officers. I wonder what it would be like now if all the national officers we have been fortunate to have over the years had made the choice not to join the union and not run for an office in the union.

Think about what your lives might be like if past National President Vincent R. Sombrotto had not made the choice to join the union and run for national office. We'd still qualify for Welfare...

Each one of us will make the choice as to whether we vote and who we vote for in the upcoming presidential election. We stand at a crossroad in November.

Do we make the choice to believe those who are backed by millions of dollars from corporations and whose stated agenda is to dismantle the Post Office and bust unions? Or, do we make the choice to vote to protect the middle class and all the gains that have been achieved in the last 80 years.

Let there be no doubt. The choice *you* make will affect your job and your future.

Do you want to privatize the Post Office? Do you want to lose your collective bargaining rights? Do you want to be at the mercy of management without any representation by the union?

Do you?

These are real possibilities that exist. I *guarantee* that your choice of whether you vote and who you vote for *will* have consequences.

The choice is up to you as to whether you let the improvements and protections won by unions for the middle class will be protected.

# Choices Do Have Consequences

Or, the multi-rich can have even more money.

The choice is yours. Make your vote count as if your job depends upon your choice...because it just might.

Choices.

They do and will have very real consequences.

With all of this in mind, I want to offer my thanks to several different individuals who have shown a willingness to become involved.

I want to really thank one person who has made the choice to serve for years as our NALC Shop Steward out at Edwards Air Force Base. It has not been an easy job. Finally, after seeing too many changes that he wants to keep adjusting to, he has chosen to join the ranks of the "Last Punch Bunch".

I offer my heartfelt congratulations to Larry Beem! I wish him a long and healthy retirement. It really is time for him to start doing some of the things that he wants to do! I really appreciate the fact that he made the choice not only to become involved but he also chose to stay involved through everything for many, many years.

It really is amazing to me. Despite all of the focus on how many political attacks there are on Letter Carriers, there are many of us who realize the importance of helping out those who are less fortunate than we are.

Nationally, Letter Carriers all over the country joined together to participate in a one day event called "Fill the Satchel" on September 9, 2012. I want to thank the following local members who invested time from their Sunday to participate in this great event: Shari Sharp, John Ortega, Randy Courson, Anita Holderman, Darrell Holderman, Pam Smith, Alma Kirby, and Mike Meza, and Basil Zuniga. You did a great job!

MIKE TOWERY

# Proposition 32 - Political Wolf in Sheep's Clothing

By John Beaumont, President  
California State Association of Letter Carriers

Proposition 32 is being circulated across California as campaign finance reform that offers a broad-based and fair solution to curtail special interests' control of government and returns power to the voters. However, what this proposed legislation really does is limit the voice of union workers and create special exemptions for corporate interests.

Proposition 32 would severely restrict union members in both the public and private sector from having a voice in our political process. This would result in working families like us not to be able to speak out on issues that matter to us all. Community issues like cuts to our schools and colleges, police and fire response times, post office closures, patient safety and workplace protections.

Proposition 32 is misleading, deceptive and full of consequences that hurt all of us. It does absolutely nothing to limit special interest influence on politics. And, in fact, it is NOT campaign finance reform, as its backers claim, since the measure actually exempts Super PACs and corporate front groups from the same restrictions it puts on unions. The measure also does nothing to prevent anonymous donors from spending unlimited amounts to influence elections.

Corporations already outspend unions 18-1 in politics but that is not enough for big business. This measure would effectively clear the playing field of any opposition to their agenda of outsourcing jobs, gutting homeowner protections, slashing wages and health benefits and attacking retirement security.

Proposition 32 is misleading, deceptive and full of consequences that hurt all of us. It does absolutely nothing to limit special interest influence on politics while severely curtailing working people's ability to stand up to powerful corporate interests. The result would be a devastating tilt in power to big banks, corporate CEOs and billionaires that would be the final death to California's middle class. Protect your voice; protect your future. Vote No on Proposition 32!

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# LET'S DO THIS!!!!!!!

I am being released by NALC to work on Labor 2012 campaign and work locally with the Central Labor Council and our Union members. Our focus will be on Congressional District 21. The NALC is endorsing John Hernandez who resides in Fresno. His area basically covers Jim Costa's old district and he realizes the importance that Proposition 32 has with us.

I hope our E-Activists will come out and volunteer some hours on your day off weekends or after hours from work and to walk precincts and work by phone banking. Usually, refreshments are provided. It can be very interesting and fun meeting new people and seeing what other labor Union issues are.

We need to make sure all registered Union members and family go out to VOTE on Tuesday November 6 for John Hernandez and to also vote "NO on Proposition 32". I will be calling upon the regulars and hoping for new volunteers. If you're interested feel free to call me.

John Beaumont, our State Association President, has this in the works. I will let you know when all details are in. Additionally, the State Association is also in discussions with National about sending Carriers to Las Vegas and Reno in October to assist with their Labor 2012 effort.

Due to the number of congressional races we are now covering in California (11), we have decided to do just one weekend for each location this October. We are still working on pricing the buses and trying to line up affordable union hotels and it looks fairly possible that this will happen. We are waiting on final approval on these trips from National President Rolando. If this is approved the Las Vegas contingent will leave Southern California on Saturday October 13th, stay the night in Las Vegas, precinct walk for 5 hours on Sunday and then head back to Southern California. The Reno buses will follow a similar pattern but is tentatively scheduled for the October 27-28 weekend.

As soon as we have a decision on this, we will be asking most of you to recruit as many members as possible to attend the trip closest to your branch. Pick up points will be announced later.

If you know members who are not e-Activists, please forward this message to them and ask them to go to [nalc.org](http://nalc.org) to sign up today.

In Solidarity,  
DIANA CHAVEZ-HERRERA

# I want to share some thoughts about what is going on with our national agreement with the USPS and with another very special event that we were recently involved with.

Interest arbitration for a new National Agreement between the National Association of Letter Carriers and the United States Postal Service began formally on Thursday, Sept. 6. The hearing convened at NALC Headquarters in Washington, with the union's entire Executive Council in attendance along with a contingent from the USPS.

The three-member arbitration panel, consisting of neutral arbitrator Shyam Das, NALC attorney Bruce Simon and USPS attorney Robert Dufek, heard opening statements from NALC's lead counsel Keith Secular and his USPS counterpart, Thomas Reinert.

"The NALC acknowledges that the Postal Service's financial situation is as dire as the agency says it is," NALC President Fredric Rolando remarked afterward, "but the main source of the problem is not the pay and conditions of letter carriers, but the Congress of the United States. The arbitration panel cannot solve the financial crisis by helping the Postal Service dismantle itself; Congress must act and the arbitrators must give the parties the chance to do what's necessary to adapt to the needs of the 21st century."

The USPS opened by offering a proposal that contained the following: NO raises, NO COLAs, NO Layoff Protection, a 25% TE workforce, and a two tier wage scale.

I have been to the past three NALC National conventions. At each of them the message has been "We are in for a battle to preserve what we have won for our members over the past 40 plus years as a Union". First it was the current contract that we are still governed by; then the contracting out issue; and, now, maybe the greatest challenge of them all—THE SURVIVAL OF THE USPS.

To keep up with the latest happenings, log on to [NALC.ORG](http://NALC.ORG).

Our good old "frienemy" Congressman Darrell Issa is at it again in his attempt to destroy our jobs as we know them. This time the weasel has asked President Barack Obama to consider an "interim postal reform bill" during the lame-duck session.

He specifically requested THREE things: 1. A reamortization of the remaining payment schedule for retiree health care benefits. 2. A removal of the Congressionally imposed restriction that prevents USPS from going to 5-day

delivery. 3. A prospective ban that prevents federal agencies, including USPS, from entering into no-layoff agreements with their employees.

In response to his requests let me offer you my thoughts:

1. BS! There is currently enough money in the fund to cover the prefunding obligation. This account will accrue interest and the original figure was based on an 800,000 USPS workforce. The USPS currently has just over 500,000 employees.

2. BS! You can't shrink something to grow it. Business is not going to come to a grinding halt because of the USPS decision to eliminate a day of delivery. Business will innovate and find a way to get it done without the USPS—and even more importantly WITH SOMEONE ELSE!

3. BS! Who doesn't want job security?

On a lighter note, the NALC National 2nd Annual Fill The Satchel Drive was held Sunday September 9th, 2012. Locally, Letter Carriers and friends gathered at the Northwest Promenade on Rosedale Highway in Bakersfield. Our MDA coordinator, Norma Hamer did a fantastic job organizing the event! She talked me into "going to jail" on opening weekend of NFL football to help raise funds to send children afflicted with Muscular Dystrophy to summer camp. I had a great time and over \$1000.00 dollars were raised.

## Johnny on the Spot



While standing side by side with the volunteers was great, the moment I will remember most was when a very special person arrived. His name is Aaron—and he has Muscular Dystrophy. With help from his dad, he made it a point to visit *every* volunteer and he thanked us for sacrificing our time.

I will *ALWAYS* remember how his face lit up when I asked him about MDA camp.

I also want to thank Letter Carriers Rosie Padilla and Joe Dangler from my home unit—Brundage Station. They baked goodies that we sold to raise money for MDA. Thanks to all who bought something also. Brundage raised \$100 dollars!

JOHN ORTEGA  
NALC Branch 782 Vice President

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# NO, ON PROP 32!

What are Politics good for? Well...think about the following things:

**Health Insurance, Eight-Hour Day, Prevailing wage laws, Social Security, Overtime pay, Vacation, Health & Safety laws, Meal Breaks, Breaks, Pension, Minimum wage, Sick Leave, Not contracting out jobs, Job Security, Medical Benefits, and more...**

**DO NOT TAKE THESE THINGS FOR GRANTED.**

These are *union-won* benefits your union, or unions you know about, had to fight for at the bargaining table or in the legislature through the political process. Believe it or not, some folks even died to try to get some of these benefits. *Really!!!*

If you don't believe this, research some history of the labor movement and what so many people were willing to risk in order to have a life which would add dignity and promise to the work that they did each and every day.

You have a chance to protect the legacy that you have received from all of those who went before you. How? By making sure that you understand the power that you have by voting to protect those rights! Californians are faced with a chance to take a vote on a measure which could, potentially, eliminate many of the rights that you take for granted.

Proposition 32 or by its other name "The Special Exemptions Act" is intentionally written to be very confusing and deceptive.

- The initiative would take away union members' voice in politics to fight for jobs, good wages, workplace safety and retirement security.
- It's deceptive - it pretends to be about balanced campaign finance reform that would level the playing field in politics, but really it makes things worse by giving special exemptions to corporations and the super-rich while eliminating the voice of workers.

- Corporate special interests and Super PACs would still be able to spend UNLIMITED money on politics.
- Some of the very same anti-union multi-millionaires and retired corporate CEOs are behind it this year who were behind similar initiatives in 1998 and 2005.
- The initiative is the first half of a "one-two punch". If it passes this year, the same anti-union backers who put it on the ballot will come back later to take away our rights to safe working conditions, overtime pay, prevailing wage, pension and even the right to have a union at all.
- It would eliminate our right to pool our money through payroll deduction (dues or COLCPE) to have a political voice. Even if we wanted to contribute money to our unions for politics, we would be required to sign a form every year authorizing our unions to use the money.

If this passes it would be poison to California's working families! Please vote NO on Proposition 32. Pass this along to your family and friends.

Which brings me to COLCPE. I urge you to contribute *at least* \$5 a paycheck. You can do this by payroll deduction. It is simple and easy.

I will be at the picnic signing up people, all you need is your pin # to get into POSTLEASE. There will be a drawing for a \$100 gift card for all new sign-ups and everyone else who contributes. Last year Joe Gutierrez from Hillcrest won the gift card. Hope to see you there! If you have any questions, or if you want to sign-up, you can call me @ 661-979-5854.

One last thing: if you are asked to volunteer some time to working on a campaign, please consider it. Our jobs—as we know them—are in jeopardy and we need to help these candidates who will help us. Come to our monthly meeting and get the chance to meet the congressional candidate John Hernandez

PAM SMITH  
COLCPE Coordinator



# Minutes of the June 2012 General Meeting

The regular meeting of Branch 782 was called to order by President, Mike Towery, at 7:01 p.m. on the 28th day of August, 2012 at the branch office, Bakersfield. The flag salute was led by Sgt. at Arms, Darryl Holderman. All members of the Executive Board were present except Trustee, Lucinda Martinez. The stewards were present from Avenal, Brundage, Camino Media, Downtown, East Bakersfield, Oildale, Shafter, South, Stockdale, Taft and Wasco. Also present was the Newsletter Editor, Basil Zuniga; SANE, Fred Acedo; Webmaster, Rick Plummer; Photographer, Anita Holderman; Asst. Recording Sec., Mabel Bullis; OWCP Rep., Rick Gerdes; Legislative Rep., Diana Herrera and Frank Martinez of the Social and Recreation Committee. The minutes of the July 24, 2012 meeting were read by Asst. Recording Secretary, Mabel Bullis and accepted with no additions or corrections.

**REPORTS OF STANDING AND SPECIAL COMMITTEES:** Kim Gerdes reported on the picnic for Teresa Ortega. The picnic is October 7; dinner will be served from 11 a.m. to 1 p.m. We will be having steak, lasagna, corn on the cob, ranch beans, salad and rolls. Teresa has booked Laser Tag from 11 a.m. to 3 p.m. The face painting and balloon guy have been booked an extra hour. There will be one bounce house and a prize for all members who currently give or sign up at the picnic to contribute to COLCPE. Basil Zuniga reported that he received some "really cool" reports from the convention delegates and a good article about Jerry Patterson retiring. It was E.B. stations turn to fold and staple the newsletter, they were finished early. Next month it will be Hillcrest's turn. Basil also reported that he contacted everyone who gets a complimentary copy of the newsletter; they need to let Basil know that they still want to receive the newsletter and to send us a copy of their newsletter. Mabel Bullis reported that 274 books were sold at the convention and there are 1267 remaining. Basil Zuniga suggested that he go to the branch meetings in Fresno, Visalia and Br. 1100 to sell the book. Mark Ramirez suggested putting a flyer in the newsletter. Mabel Bullis suggested putting the information on Facebook. Hermie Encinas suggested sending them to carriers in other states as gifts. Renee Contreras of the MDA will help to sell them and Fred Acedo will take them to the fair again this year. Frank Martinez reported that the Social and Recreation Committee purchased tickets for BC home games; they have 20 tickets for each game. There are also tickets to the Dodger game on Saturday, September 15, the cost is \$20.00 each ticket. Norma Hamer reported that "Fill the Satchel" is Sunday, September 9th, from 11 a.m. to 3 p.m. at the same location at the Northwest Promenade near Target on Rosedale. MDA needs \$800.00 to send one child to camp. Norma has set a goal that the branch will raise enough to send 2 children to camp. She will have Vice President, John Ortega

in "jail" and we will need to raise \$1600.00 to get him out.

**GOOD OF THE ASSOCIATION:** Mike Towery thanked the delegates for attending the convention. He reminded the members that the delegates use their own annual leave to attend. They do not have much free time after attending the convention and classes, then helping to sell the book. Mike thanked Mabel Bullis for transporting the books and newsletters to the convention. Mabel discussed the week long steward class; she also said that she focused on fiduciary and secretary classes. She shared with the members that she drove to Minneapolis; she transported 10 boxes of books and 4 boxes of newsletters. She had to store her trailer during the convention for a cost of \$66.00. She made a motion that the branch pay for the storage of her trailer. Seconded by Frank Martinez, a discussion was held and the motion passed. Mike Towery reported that National Business Agent Chris Jackson made a station visit to Dole Ct. He informed the members that arbitration begins the first week of September and may continue through December or January. Mike also reported that our Steward at Edwards AFB, Larry Beem, will retire on September 3. The state association has requested that Legislative Representative Diana Herrera be released for the next couple of months to help work on legislative issues and the election.

**IMPROVEMENT OF THE ASSOCIATION:** Mike Towery reported that the locks have been changed on the office, stewards should see him after the meeting to get keys. He reported that retired member Walt McCoy has passed away and Jessie Avalos is in the hospital. Basil Zuniga shared some of the information and "goodies" from the convention bags. He had a drawing for some of the "stuff" he brought back. The drawings were won by Jerry Patterson, Mike Meza and Deven Patterson. The 2014 convention will be in Philadelphia and 2016 in Los Angeles.

**FINANCIAL SECRETARY'S REPORT:** Anita Holderman reported that \$17,260.55 was collected for July 2012 and \$6,352.05 was collected for August.

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

Beginning Balance	\$73,371.01
Dues and Income	\$21,925.00
Interest Income	\$ 6.34
Total Balance	\$95,303.34
Expenses	\$18,493.61
Ending Balance	\$76,809.73

The MDA 50/50 Drawing was won by Bill Marchand.

The Drawing for \$150.00 would have been won by Karla Johnson of Ridgecrest who was not present.

There were 33 members present.

The meeting adjourned at 7:40 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,  
KIM GERDES

# NON-MEMBER LIST APRIL 2012

*If we all don't stick together now, there's going to be no one left to blame... We ALL should be Carriers in a Common Cause. Really? YES!!*

AVENAL (93203)  
100% UNION!!!

DOLE COURT (93308/12)  
S. Hancock  
D. Morris

ARVIN (93209)  
100% UNION!!!

STOCKDALE (93309)  
J. Oh

DELANO (93215)  
L. A. Campos  
C. V. Quebral

CAMINO MEDIA (93311/13)  
100% UNION!!!

LAMONT (93241)  
100% UNION!!!

MOJAVE (93501)  
100% UNION!!!

McFARLAND (93250)  
100% UNION!!!

CALIFORNIA CITY (93504)  
100% UNION!!!

SHAFTER (93263)  
L. M. New  
M. D. Voights

BORON (93516)  
100% UNION!!!

TAFT (93268)  
M. R. Marin  
B. W. Krier  
K. J. Hughes

EDWARDS AFB (93526)  
100% UNION!!!

WASCO (93280)  
100% UNION!!!

TRONA (93562)  
100% UNION!!!

DOWNTOWN (93301)  
D. Pearce  
J. Cruz

RIDGECREST (93555)  
B. J. Leroy  
L. M. Montano  
H. G. Blanco  
S. R. Pierce

SOUTH STATION  
(93304)  
100% UNION!!!

EAST BAKERSFIELD  
(93305)  
100% UNION!!!

HILLCREST (93306)  
100% UNION!!!

BRUNDAGE (93307)  
D. Kinglee



**We are an “Open Shop”.**  
**MEMBERSHIP IS VOLUNTARY.**  
**369 Letter Carriers are in the complement**  
**assigned to cities represented by**  
**our Branch. ONLY 17 ARE NON-MEMBERS.**  
**We are 95.4% organized!**

## MORE FROM DIANA CHAVEZ-HERRERA

### Proposition 32: “A fraud to end all frauds”

LA Times columnist Michael Hiltzik didn't mince words when he described Prop 32 in this Sunday's paper. He called it out for what it is: “a lie” and “a fraud to end all frauds.” He also went on to write: “In this state, we've come to expect ballot initiatives sponsored by business interests to be, essentially, frauds. But it's hard to conceive how one could be more fraudulent than Proposition 32. If there was any doubt left that the initiative process has been totally corrupted by big business and the wealthy, this should put it to rest for all time.”

# 2012 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**

**"Non"-Medicare Claims Submit to**  
**CIGNA (Payor I.D. 62308) or mail**  
**to P.O. Box 18804, Chatanooga, TN**  
**37422-8004.**

**OUT THERE**



**Check out this PPO: Sendas Northwest Urgent Care**  
**3409 Calloway Suite 101**  
**Bakersfield, California 93312**  
**Phone: (661) 587-2500**  
**Hours: M-F 8:00 am - 9:00 pm; Sat & Sun 9:00 am - 7:00 pm**

\* Failure to pre-certify for in-patient hospitalization will result in a \$500 reduction in benefits paid by our Plan. **YOU MUST** notify the Plan prior to undergoing radiology/imaging with doctor name and dates. Call: 1-877-220-6252.

\*\* 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, NALC Branch 782 HBP Rep.**  
**(661) 834-5011**



# OPEN SEASON for 2013 NALC HEALTH BENEFIT PLAN

As our National contract negotiations are going to arbitration, our NALC Health Benefit Plan's coverage and monthly premiums will be negotiated by HBP Director Brian Hellman and his team as they meet with the Office of Personnel Management (OPM). Even though we don't have all the information for the 2013 season, it is of utmost importance that our NALC Union Brothers and Sisters take a good look at "OUR" Union's Health Benefit Plan during open season.

With the anti-union climate swirling around our nation, We "MUST" stand up and support our Union. The benefits we enjoy today can just as easily be taken away in the near future. Our NALC Health Benefit Plan is rated in the "TOP" of all health plans available to Federal employees. We own our plan, and any profits are returned to our Plan.

With our Health Benefit Plan, "we" can choose our doctors, hospitals, and other medical services in the CIGNA network, at super discounts. Open Season should begin in November and run through the middle of December. I have been the NALC health benefit rep. for Branch 782 for over twenty-three years; and, in past years, every member who has enrolled in "OUR" NALC Health Benefit Plan has stayed with our Health plan.

***IT'S NOT JUST THE BEST HEALTH PLAN TO BE A MEMBER OF, IT IS THE BEST "UNION OWNED" HEALTH PLAN TO BE "PROUD" TO BE A MEMBER OF!!!***

So during OPEN SEASON, use the PostalEASE website to enroll, or you can call 1-877-477-3273. The postal form SF-2809 can be used if it is still available for enrollment.

MARK RAMIREZ

A PROUD NALC HEALTH BENEFIT PLAN MEMBER  
NALC Branch 782

## NALC Flu and Pneumococcal Vaccine Administration Network

Getting a flu shot is the best way to keep you and your family healthy. In fact, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) recommends that every person age 6 months or older receive a flu shot every year.

The NALC Health Benefit Plan offers influenza, pneumococcal and seasonal flu vaccines to NALC Health Benefit Plan members and their eligible dependents at NO COST when the NALC Health Benefit Plan is the primary payer for medical expenses

The NALC Flu and Pneumococcal Vaccine Administration Network is comprised of more than 51,000 local NALC-Preferred and NALC CareSelect pharmacies (including more than 7,000 CVS Pharmacies and Longs Drugs stores) pharmacies.

When administered by a pharmacist at a participating pharmacy, the following vaccines are available free of charge:

Injectable Seasonal Flu Vaccine  
Intranasal Seasonal Flu Vaccine (FluMist®) & Intradermal Flu Vaccine  
Injectable Seasonal Flu High Dose (Fluzone® High Dose) Vaccine  
Adult Pneumococcal Vaccine  
Pediatric Pneumococcal Vaccine"

To find a pharmacy near you that participates in the NALC Flu and Pneumococcal Vaccine Administration Network, visit [http://pharmacyshots.com/vaccine\\_network\\_01.pdf](http://pharmacyshots.com/vaccine_network_01.pdf), or you can call CVS Caremark Customer Care at 1-800-933-NALC (6252).

# We Filled the Satchel with \$1,009.34!!!

As I sit and write this article, I'm pooped. Working six days a week for weeks in a row is taking a toll. And I'm sure that you *all* feel the same way as well...



**BUT**, I want to extend my own very personal THANK YOU to **ALL** of the exhausted Carriers who volunteered their time to come and help with the "Fill the Satchel" event on September 9th. Shari Sharp, John Ortega, Mike Towery, Randy Courson, Anita Holderman, Darrell Holderman, Pam Smith, Alma Kirby, Mike Meza, and Basil Zuniga. You are so absolutely, positively amazing !!!

And, a special thank you to **ALL** the family members that helped out as well! You all being there was an extra satchel to fill. **THANK YOU! THANK YOU! THANK YOU! THANK YOU! THANK YOU! THANK YOU!**

I also **KNOW** that it was the opening day of NFL football. Man, why did National schedule this event on this day?? Next year, I will see what can be done to avoid this. We might have a few more Carriers show up for a worthy cause.

**All in all, we were able to raise \$1,009.34!!**



We had John Ortega be our first Jailbird. Then, Basil's son—Nate. Then, Basil. (And I have to say that Basil was a great looking jailbird!)

I was up by the Wendy's/Rosedale corner, so I didn't get a chance to see who else was in there. But I'm sure they looked pitiful for donations!!!





We were served free pizza donated from Mountain Mike's. We were even visited by two local families here in town. Our gift card drawing was won by John Ortega, who graciously donated his winnings to the MDA. Thanks, John!

A **SPECIAL** Thank You goes out to Shari Sharp for helping me with all the preparations. ***I appreciate you!*** And, also let me give a big thank you to Renee Contreras the MDA Coordinator! Your spunk and drive are contagious!

Next year, I really pray that we will have more of our NALC Branch 782 Carriers choose to get involved in this great effort! It really is a lot of fun! It really is a great thing to get involved in! And, finally, it is a really amazing thing to do something to send these special kids to MDA camp!!!

NORMA HAMER  
MDA Fill the Satchel Drive Coordinator



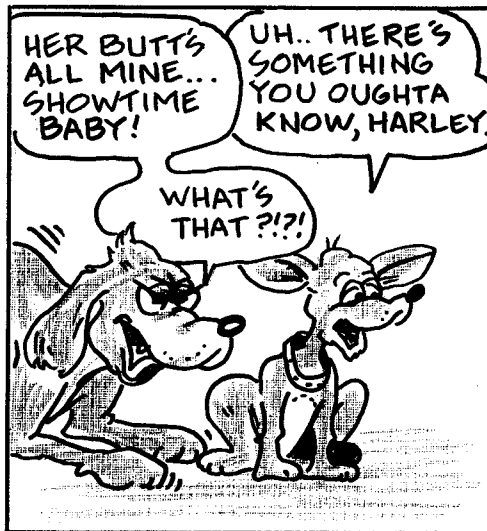
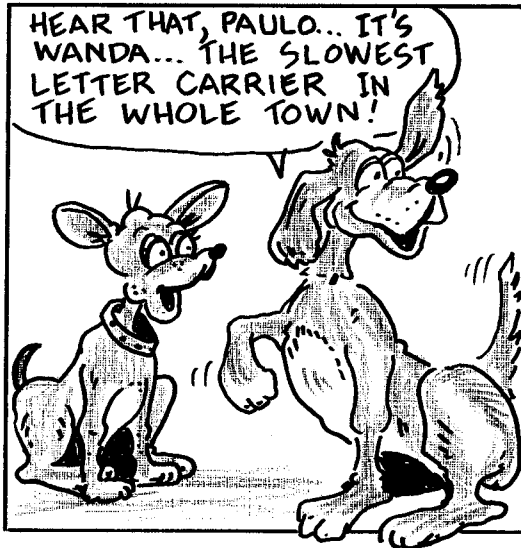
# We Filled the Satchel with \$1,009.34!!!



*Next year, I really pray that we will have more of our NALC Branch 782 Carriers choose to get involved in this great effort!*

OUT THERE

By FRED ACEDO



## Shafter is saying good-bye to Elle Zamora

Elle came to work for the post office just over a year ago. He was a TE who also had the privilege of working in Lamont, Wasco, Arvin, and Taft. He was a great carrier and even a better cook! Sure are going to miss you, your help, and your awesome food! Thanks for a Great Job! You will be missed! And good luck on your new adventure.

Best regards,  
NORMA HAMER  
Shafter Shop Steward



*We're  
Gonna  
Miss  
You!!!*



## Mabel Bullis on Facebook...

“I have to say.....I just love the smell of trash in the morning! The overflowing, abundant amount of nasty ass smell of rotted food and crap that for some reason ALWAYS seems to be kept right near that dear mailbox! Not that people can park it on the other side of the driveway or consciously know that not ONLY the trash man comes near it....but your sweet, loveable LETTER CARRIER, who is now gasping for an oxygen mask!!!!”

“Words just can’t describe how it feels to be in a tin can, having hot air blown in your face while it’s 110 degrees outside, cause it’s much hotter inside that tin can, delivering mail. You just have to experience it. ... I love my job! lol I guess, the plus is..... I don’t have to go far or pay lots of \$ for a sauna experience, that’s for sure”.

“It is amazing what people out there actually think about what’s going on with the Postal Service. A lot still think that it is run by taxpayer’s money, which is not true. A lot of people think that it would be cheaper to dismantle the Postal Service and have private companies take over, I don’t see how that is true either. I could NEVER see Fed Ex and UPS deliver a piece of mail for \$.45 cents!!! They charge A LOT now for their packages!!!”



# from the editor-guy

We've all heard people use the phrase about "...doing things by the book."

This message is one that is promoted by newly-retired Branch 782 member, Larry Beem.

Larry spent about four months as a Casual employee at Edwards Air Force Base before he was hired as a PTF in September 1982.

It didn't take long for Larry to realize that surviving as a Letter Carrier would be fairly simple. He discovered that there are numerous manuals and books which—in great detail—specifically explain how to do the job.

Larry started out his career by doing two things: 1) He learned what doing the job "by the book" meant; and, 2) Larry chose to do the job by the book every day.

And? His approach was successful.

Over the course of thirty years, Larry was **NEVER** given any type of disciplinary action. Never!

## OUT THERE



Additionally, Larry delivered mail the same way every day. He took the time to deliver the mail that he had and did so safely and efficiently. The route checks that he went through were remarkable in one very real testament to his approach to delivering mail. He **NEVER** had any time deducted for time-wasting practices.

Nothing to it. Just do the job "by the book" and everything will take care of itself.

Before starting his career with the USPS, Larry worked in the restaurant business as a manager. He worked long hours and, too often, had to work nights. This had gotten really old and when he heard about a possible Letter Carrier job opening at Edwards AFB, he thought it might be a good idea. But, Larry lived in Lancaster. Larry's case at Edwards AFB would be thirty miles away. It meant a sixty mile trip every day for him to carry out his assigned duties. Larry decided he was really tired of working nights. If he could be off every day by 5:00 p.m. things would be great.

Then-Postmaster Mike Sisson hired Larry. His first SPO was Jim Norman. The "old timer" Carriers when he shouldered that first satchel were Walt Eckroth, Fred Erickson and Mary Shineflew. There were four regular routes and an auxiliary at that delivery unit when he walked through the door on his first day.

Thirty years later—due to many changes at Edwards AFB staffing—Larry points out that there *is only one regular route left*. In fact, during the last two months, Larry has been in a "semi-retired" mode and has been on annual leave. He has come in a couple of days a week so that Betty Winters (who has been assigned to his route) can at least have a little time off during the week.

Think about this... Larry could have just not worried about it. He was on Annual and getting ready to retire. It wasn't *his* problem. But, that isn't the way that Larry rolls.

Soon after he first started on this journey thirty years ago, there was a need for a Shop Steward. He stepped up and said that he would try it out. Of course, that meant learning even more about what it meant to do this job "by the book". And, over the years, this knowledge has paid dividends.

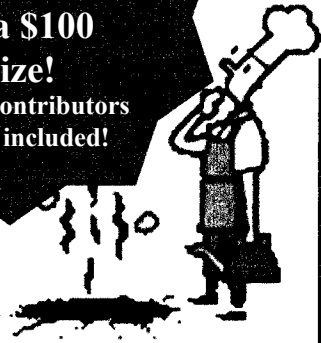
Part of the job of the Shop Steward is to learn how to deal with management. Larry has done that. Ironically, changes in the USPS have also lead to some interesting things for him as Steward. In the last year and eleven months, Larry has had *seven* different bosses. With a bit of an understated chuckle, Larry said, "Robbie Rodriguez lasted four days..."

Despite dealing with creaks and groans which can arise from a thirty-year career carrying and delivering the mail, Larry is looking forward to taking a trip with his brother. The thought of hitting the road with their Harley and Triumph is something that is going to be really special. (And the extra protein with the bugs in the teeth???) Of course, there is a whole lot of work on the house that has to be done. His life is going to continue to be busy.

His recipe for those of us who haven't reached retirement yet is simple: "Do the job by the book. Don't run. Don't skip your breaks. Be honest about how much time you will need...be honest with management *and* be honest with yourself. **AND, do this every day!**"

BASIL ZUNIGA  
NALC Branch 782 Editor-guy

Join COLCPE  
at the picnic  
and enter to  
win a \$100  
prize!  
Current contributors  
are also included!



FACE PAINTING &  
BALLOONS

N.A.L.C.

BRANCH 782'S

ALL NEW.....LASER TAG

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# ANNUAL PICNIC

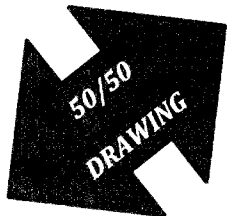
*Sunday October 7, 2012*

Jastro Park (section 1)

10am - 3pm

Serving from 11am - 1pm

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## STEAK AND LASAGNA

MEMBERS & HOUSEHOLD      \$FREE

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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.

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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).

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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Brundage Station (93307)	John Ortega	(661) 809-8140
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Bakersfield, California

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allows, come  
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at our  
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meeting.  
John is the  
NALC  
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OUT THERE



**candidate for Congressional District 21.**

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