

# National Association of Letter Carriers

## Branch 782

# E.A. Baker Union Update



ARVIN  
CALIFORNIA CITY  
McFARLAND  
TAFT

AVENAL  
DELANO  
MOJAVE  
TEHACHAPI

BAKERSFIELD  
EDWARDS AFB  
RIDGECREST  
TRONA

BORON  
LAMONT  
SHAFTER  
WASCO

**CHARTERED FEBRUARY 25, 1901**



NUMBER 10

WEB VERSION

OCTOBER 2015

## **OFFICIAL NOTICE OF NOMINATION AND ELECTION OF NALC "GOLDEN EMPIRE" BRANCH 782 DELEGATES TO THE 2016 NATIONAL CONVENTION**

### **ELECTION**

The election will be conducted by secret ballot at the regular meeting on November 24, 2015 at 7:00 P.M. at the Branch 782 Union Office, 2628 "F" Street, Bakersfield, California.

Any member who, for any reason, will be unable to vote on November 24, 2015, may obtain absentee ballots by submitting a signed written request to the Election Committee, Golden Empire Branch 782, 2628 "F" Street, Bakersfield, California 93301-1816, at least two weeks before the election. Absentee ballots must be returned to the election Committee by November 23.

Write in votes are not permitted.

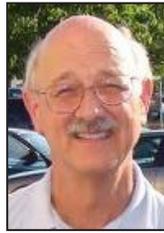
### **ELIGIBILITY FOR BRANCH FUNDS**

Of the delegates from the Bakersfield local area selected to the National Convention, the requirements of eligibility for Convention funds will be attendance at ten (10) of the twelve (12) regular General Meetings just prior to the National Convention

Of the delegates selected from the outlying Associate Offices, (excess of thirty miles from Bakersfield, the requirements of eligibility for convention funds shall be: attendance at at least two (02) meetings (any combination of regular General Meetings and/or Quarterly Area Meetings in the twelve months just prior to the Convention.

at the

# Mike:



I offer my personal thank you to all who helped with the Branch 782 picnic at Yokuts Park on Sunday, October 11!! Thanks to Molly Biggar for taking care of all the tickets as usual! Thanks to Mike Meza for spending all his time cooking the hot dogs! Thanks to Norma Hamer for help as usual in organizing the games! Thanks to Debbie Guillet for calling the numbers for Bingo! Thanks to Jerry Patterson for taking care of the 50/50 drawing! In addition, thanks to Darryl and Anita Holderman, Rick and Kim Gerdes, Paul Salazar and Mark Ramirez and their kids for spending their time helping set up the picnic! Thanks for the pix, Anita! All this was done on their own time in order to benefit the membership and I hope that you are also very appreciative of all of their hard work!

I would **ESPECIALLY** like to thank Teresa Ortega for all the work she did in organizing the picnic. In her spare (?) time after carrying her mail route, after being a Shop Steward for the Downtown station, after fulfilling her duties as Branch Trustee and — then as a mother of two teenagers — she managed to organize the picnic. She has done it for many years and always makes it look so easy. One person *can* make a difference and Teresa is a prime example. Without her taking on the responsibility, the Branch would not have had a picnic. This was the case in the past when no one stepped up to help. I hope that Teresa will continue to organize the picnic in the future. The plan is to reserve Jastro Park for next year’s picnic since it seems to better accommodate our needs. (Check out *some* of the pictures from this year’s picnic on pages 10 - 15 in the newsletter.)

As we approach the Veterans Day holiday, I want to take this opportunity to thank **ALL** NALC Retired or Active veterans, not only for their the military service, but also for their service as Letter Carriers in the Postal Service. Twenty-five percent of the Letter Carriers across the nation are military veterans. ***Thank you for your Service!!***

I would also like to thank all those Carriers who are union members and remain union members year after year! *The time is now for all the non-members to join and pay their share instead of letting everyone else pay for them.*

Finally, I hope to see everyone at the next General meeting on Tuesday, October 27. We’ll begin at 7:00 p.m. Plan to be there!

MIKE TOWERY  
NALC Branch 782 President



***Could  
YOU  
Really  
Win  
\$500?***

## Membership has rewards...

Each and EVERY month, Branch 782 sponsors a drawing to encourage **YOU** to come to our Meeting\*. *There was no winner in September 2015!!!*

**YOU could win \$100!**

If no one wins, it will go up by \$50 each month until there is a winner — or until it hits the max limit of \$500.

\*The fine print: TO WIN THE MONEY **YOU** HAVE TO BE PRESENT WHEN **YOUR** NAME IS DRAWN!

# Johnny on the Spot



## Amazon Has Found a New Way to Deliver Packages

The company is testing an Uber-like service.

Amazon (NASDAQ: AMZN) has put considerable effort into refining and perfecting how it delivers packages to customers. The company has invested heavily in building shipping warehouses around the country that are manned partly by robots. Amazon has even spent big on developing predictive technology, so it can prepare orders before a customer actually places it.

In addition, the online retail leader has pushed the envelope developing even faster shipping methods. It offers free two-day delivery on millions of items to its Prime members (who pay \$99 a year for the service), and in limited markets, it has same-day and even two-hour delivery. Amazon even has a deal with the United States Postal Service for Sunday service, and it's leading the charge to make dropping off packages using unmanned drones both possible and legal.

If there's a way to get items from the warehouse to the customer faster, it's likely that the online retailer is investigating the option. Its latest innovation, which it's testing in its home market of Seattle,

borrowed a bit from a service that was created to move people around faster and more efficiently.

Amazon's latest delivery experiment, Flex, borrows heavily from Uber, and if it works will turn anyone with a car into a potential Amazon driver.

### What is Amazon doing?

Amazon has quietly launched Flex in Seattle, and it's also recruiting drivers in New York, Baltimore, Miami, Dallas, Austin, Chicago, Indianapolis, Atlanta, and Portland. The company has also solicited drivers in other markets to sign up in advance of launching outside those initial cities. The company explained the opportunity on a web page for the new service:

Make \$18–25/hr delivering packages for Amazon with your car and smartphone. Be your own boss: deliver when you want, as much as you want.

It also detailed what it required in order for someone to be selected for the position.

We are looking for drivers who are at least 21 years old and have a car and a valid driver's license. You will also need an Android phone and will need to pass a background check. We'll provide access to the app and opportunities to deliver.

Amazon does not say exactly what delivery speed will be expected, just calling it "ultra-fast Amazon Prime Now packages." Prime Now is a one-hour delivery service the company has launched in select markets for Prime members.

The company explains the service in a very simple graphic. Source: Amazon

This is a good idea, maybe Uber has proven that a flexible workforce mixing part-timers and full-timers working on an as-needed basis can work very well. There is no reason to believe the same model won't work for Amazon, and that should be very good for customers.

The challenge here is making this system work economically. Even if Amazon charges around \$4 per package (which is in line with what it has charged for other express delivery experiments), each driver would need to make roughly five deliveries in an hour for the company to break even.

For that to even be possible, the retailer will be a critical mass of users placing orders for delivery in the same time frame. In the beginning, it seems very likely that Amazon will lose money on Flex, which is typical when a company launches a service of this magnitude.

If Amazon can get enough customers in a concentrated geographic area using Flex, it could pay off. That would be an impossible task for nearly any company, but Amazon has hundreds of millions of customers and extensive data on ordering patterns. It knows a lot about when customers in certain markets need various items, and it should be able to use that data to make this new service more efficient.

Amazon is only using the USPS because they have to. We need them because of the revenue generated from them.

JOHN ORTEGA  
NALC Branch 782 Vice-President

# PROPOSED BY-LAWS CHANGE GOLDEN EMPIRE NALC BRANCH 782

## CURRENT LANGUAGE:

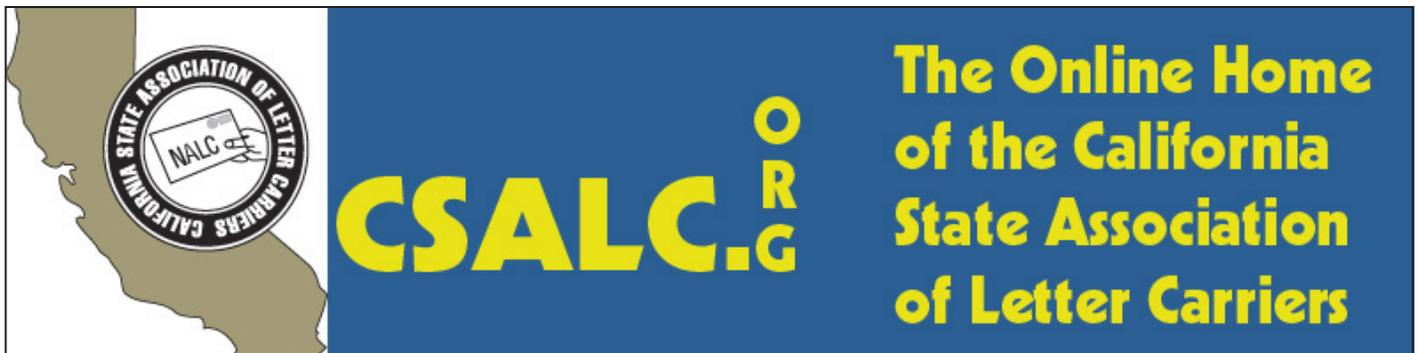
Article VII Section 5. Any Officer or Branch Representative using the funds (i.e.: savings and checking accounts, Certificate of Deposit and credit cards) of the Golden Empire Branch 782 of the National Association of Letter Carriers for a personal nature will not have the approval of the Fiscal Committee. This provision makes the collection and disbursement of funds process equitable and free of any accusations which might result in the mismanagement of funds leading to embezzlement charges.

The only authorized signatures for the savings, checking and Certificate of Deposit will be the Treasurer, Chief Trustee, and Vice President.

## PROPOSED NEW LANGUAGE:

Article VII Section 5. Any Officer or Branch Representatives using the funds (i.e.: savings and checking accounts, Certificate of Deposit and credit cards) of the Golden Empire Branch 782 of the National Association of Letter Carriers for a personal nature will not have the approval of the Fiscal Committee. This provision makes the collection and disbursement of funds process equitable and free of any accusations which might result in the mismanagement of funds leading to embezzlement charges.

The only authorized signatures for the savings, checking and the Certificate of Deposit will be the Treasurer, **the Financial Secretary**, and the Vice President.



Today, Governor Jerry Brown signed into Law AB 1461, The California New Motor Voter Program. Our State Association, working with several other labor unions, and the California Labor Federation have been working to get this and other voter registration legislation passed for several years. First, Arnold wouldn't consider it. Then, it had too much red tape to move during Governor Brown's first term. Finally, in an effort led by our new Secretary of State Alex Padilla, the Bill passed the legislature and was signed into law today.

This legislation automatically registers people in California when they apply for a California Drivers license or California State ID Card. It's not a choice like previous voter motor laws. It is an automatic opt in. California becomes only the second state after Oregon to adopt an automatic voter registration system. This Law is projected to help increase our state's voter registered population by millions.

See the segment in the Law that deals with this change.

In unionism,

JOHN BEAUMONT

President, California State Association of Letter Carriers

### Bill Title: Voter registration: California New Motor Voter Program

Under the program, the Department of Motor Vehicles would be required to electronically provide to the Secretary of State the records of each person who is issued an original or renewal of a driver's license or state identification card or who provides the department with a change of address, as specified. The person's motor vehicle records would then constitute a completed affidavit of registration and the person would be registered to vote, unless the person affirmatively declined to be registered to vote during a transaction with the department, the department did not represent to the Secretary of State that the person attested that he or she meets all voter eligibility requirements, as specified, or the Secretary of State determines that the person is ineligible to vote. The bill would require the Secretary of State to adopt regulations to implement this program, as specified.

# OUT tHeRe! Dogs!!

OUT THERE



by Fred Acedo, NALC Branch 782  
Special Assistant Newsletter Editor  
(S.A.N.E. We think...)

Out there



OUT THERE



OUT THERE



Fred Acedo's address is on page 16. Let him know what YOU see in YOUR head. It might be a cartoon someday...

# Minutes of the September 2015 General Meeting

The regular meeting of Branch 782 was called to order by President, Mike Towery at 7:00 p.m. on the 22nd day of September, 2015 at the branch office, Bakersfield. The flag salute was led by Sgt. at Arms, Jerry Patterson. All members of the Executive Board were present. The stewards were present from Arvin, Avanal, Brundage, Camino Media, Delano, Downtown, East Bakersfield, Edwards, Lamont, Oildale, Shafter, South, Stockdale, and Taft. Also present was the Newsletter Editor, Basil Zuniga; Photographer, Anita Holderman; Asst. Treasurer, Debbie Guillet and OWCP Rep., Rick Gerdes and Frank Martinez and Basil Zuniga of the Social and Recreation Committee. The Minutes of the August 25, 2015 meeting were read and accepted with no additions or corrections. Kim Gerdes read thank you letters. A retired NALC member ordered some **Out tHeRe** books.

**APPLICATION FOR MEMBERSHIP:** Applications were received from Justin Gerber, Hillcrest and Lingko Vilavong, Brundage.

**REPORTS OF STANDING AND SPECIAL COMMITTEES:** Teresa Ortega reported that "everything is great." The picnic is at Yokuts Park on October 11th from 11:00 a.m. – 3:00 p.m. Breakfast for volunteers will be at Village Grill at 7:30. Debbie Guillet will call Bingo and Norma Hamer will be in charge of the other games. Basil Zuniga reported that it was Dole Court's turn to fold the newsletter and it was done in record time. Next month will be Stockdale's turn. Basil discussed the article about Fred Acedo in the *Postal Record*. One of his cartoons was on the cover and there was a two page article about Fred. He reported that Fred is not at the meeting tonight because he is setting up a booth at the fair. He will be selling the **Out tHeRe** books at the fair. Frank Martinez reported that the Social and Recreation Committee are trying to get discounted tickets for the Kern County Fair, The Melodrama and the Condor's game. Mike Towery reported that 57 books have been sold since we lowered the price to \$7.00 each or two for \$10.00. We need to sell \$4186.00 to break even. Kim reported that the calendars have been ordered. Mark Ramirez discussed an article in the newsletter about how much CEO's of Insurance Companies make, the NALC does not pay its CEO an astronomical salary. All the money goes back to the plan, so the more members who are in the plan the lower the premiums will be. Mark will have more information when he returns from the HBP Seminar.

**UNFINISHED BUSINESS:** Molly Biggar reported that the amount still owing on the Food Drive cards is \$817.00. \$50.00 was donated this month. Please let Norma Hamer know if you are donating your winnings from the 50/50 Drawing, she is keeping track of the 50/50 winnings.

**GOOD OF THE ASSOCIATION:** Mike Towery reported that Branches 2902 and 4006 are having a Texas Hold'em Tournament. See Mike for the flyer if you are interested. Mike reported that District Manager Cary Wolney will retire on October 1st. Amber Pember has been moved to be in charge of Woodland Hills and Chatsworth. Sabrina Bonilla has been promoted to supervisor. He reported that the OIG has been in Bakersfield and will continue to be here. A Carrier was caught taking money from letters; there was a camera in his vehicle. Paul Greenfield asked about the scanners "talking" to the Carriers. Our Postmaster Linda LaForce just found out about this feature and had no information to pass on to the Carriers. Shari Sharp reported that a Carrier at Dole Ct. missed a MSP scan and was taken "into the office" for a fact finding. Mike reported that the meeting scheduled for September 30 has been postponed until October 28 or 29 because we did not get the information in the newsletter. The meeting will be for any member to come and ask questions, if we don't know the answer we will find out and get back to the member. Mike discussed a grievance filed in Ridgecrest. Basil discussed the fact that some CCA's are frustrated because they are doing the same job and are being paid a lower wage. The NALC cares about the CCA's and wanted them to all be career carriers. The NALC did win a victory in that the Postal Service wanted a two-tier wage for new employees. The arbitrator ruled against the two-tier wage and left a path open for CCA's to become Regular. Also to reach the top of the pay scale is 12 years, the same as for Carriers who are already working. Locally 40 CCA's have been converted to regular with 20,000 converted nationwide. Basil discussed Mike Towery's article about members getting involved without being a Steward. Mike reminded the members that we did not have a picnic for years because no one would step up and plan the picnic. Mike thanked Teresa Ortega for stepping up and planning our picnic. Shari Sharp thanked Rick Gerdes, OWCP Rep., for helping carriers with OWCP issues

**FINANCIAL SECRETARY'S REPORT:** Anita Holderman reported that \$6,866.56 was collected for the month of August.

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

Beginning Balance	\$71,852.16
Dues and Income	\$11,945.47
Total Balance	\$87,797.63
Total Expenses	\$11,344.44
Ending Balance	\$72,453.13

The 50/50 Food Drive card drawing was won by Alan Smith. He donated his portion to pay for the cards. (\$20./\$20.)

The drawing for \$50.00 would have been won by Sylvia Long, who was not present.

There were 33 members present. The meeting adjourned at 8:03 p.m.

KIM GERDES  
NALC Branch 782 Recording Secretary

## Non-Member List July 2015\*

### Downtown Station

S. Kirby  
J. Cruz  
D. Zuniga

### South Station

M. Martinez

### Brundage/East Bakersfield

**100% UNION!!!**

### Hillcrest

**100% UNION!!!**

### Dole Court

D. Morris

### Stockdale

J. Oh

### Camino Media

C. Rodriguez

### Arvin

**100% UNION!!!**

### Avenal

**100% UNION!!!**

### California City

**100% UNION!!!**

### Delano

C.V. Quebral  
D. Barreto

### Lamont

**100% UNION!!!**

### Ridgecrest

G.D. Schatz

### Shafter

M. D. Voights  
L. M. New

### Taft

A. Veach  
B. M. Krier  
K. J. Hughes

### Tehachapi

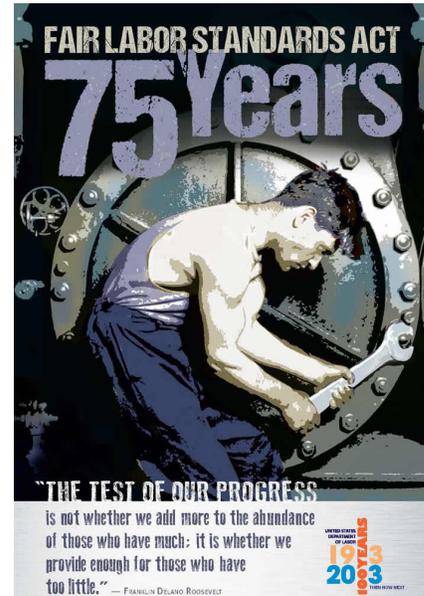
B. C. Den Beeman

### Trona

**100% UNION!!!**

### Wasco

**100% UNION!!!**



\*CCA names are in Italics

# “Open Season”

November 9 - December 14, 2015

## BENFEDS in 2016?

You can enroll in Dental/Vision Supplemental Plans for Federal Employees (BENFEDS). How do I sign up? You have many options!

You can go to [www.benefeds.com](http://www.benefeds.com). Or, you can call 1-877-888-3337. Or, you can write to them at Benefeds, P.O. Box 797, Greenland, NH 03840-0797.

## Changing Health Plans?

You can use “Postal Ease” to enroll during “Open Season”. You will need your USPS Personal Identification Number (PIN). If you don’t know it, just call the Employee Service line at 1-877-477-3273 and wait for Option 6.

You can also utilize [www.liteblue.usps.gov](http://www.liteblue.usps.gov). You will need your Employee ID number (it is printed at the top of your earning statement (check stub). Enter all eight digits (even if the first number is a zero).

You will need your daytime phone number, the name of the health benefits plan in which you are enrolling and the enrollment code.

Refer to the information on page 9. We’ve published the 2016 NALC Health Benefit Plan premiums. For example, these are some of the enrollment codes: 321, 322, 323, 324, 325, 326. KM1, KM2 and KM3.

Additionally, the following phone numbers might also be helpful: Retirees/Annuitants - OPM Retirement info 1-888-767-6738; Federal Information Control 1-800-333-4636; Human Resources Shared Services 1-877-477-3273; and the NALC Health Benefit Plan 1-888-636-6252

MARK RAMIREZ

NALC Branch 782 Health Benefit Representative  
(661) 398-6075

# Health Prescription: Humor from Mark!

These R Funny: “Every day I beat my previous record of consecutive days I’ve stayed alive.” “I don’t like political jokes. I’ve seen too many get elected.” “Ever notice that people who spend money on beer, cigarettes and lottery tickets are always complaining about being broke and not feeling well?” “The closest I ever got to a 4.0 in college was my blood alcohol content.”

# 2015 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
CVS/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>
CVS/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 Organ Transplant Approval	1-800-668-9682
Quit Power (Smoking Cessation)	1-877-521-0244
CIGNA Health Rewards (Discounts)	1-800-558-9443
<b>CIGNA Dental Discount Program</b>	<b>1-877-521-0244</b>
Disease Management Program	1-800-227-3728
OPM Retirement Info Center	1-888-767-6738
Federal Information Center	1-800-333-4636
Social Security Administration Info	1-800-772-1213
PostalEase Human Resources USPS	1-877-477-3273
Quest Lab Services (Bakersfield)	(661) 631-8520
LabCorp Lab Services	(661) 631-9258
Shared Services (Retirees Info!!!)	1-877-477-3273

**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 85072-2192**

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

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

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

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

**CVS Pharmacy**  
**Some immunizations may require your**  
**doctor call in a prescription.**

**Also, not all CVS pharmacies**  
**have "Minute Clinics".**

*\* 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/45% non-formulary. MAIL ORDER/ CVS PRESCRIPTIONS (when NALC is primary): 60 day supply \$8 generic, \$43 name brand, \$58 non-formulary; 90 day supply \$12 generic, \$65 name brand, \$80 non-formulary; **MEDICARE PROGRAM** (when Medicare is primary) Retail network pharmacy: you pay 10% of cost of generic, 20% of formulary, 30% non-formulary. **MEDICARE PRIMARY** (mail order); 60 day supply \$7 generic, \$37 formulary, \$52 non-formulary; 90 day supply \$10 generic, \$55 formulary, \$70 non-formulary; 90 day supply \$4 for NALCSELECT generic (certain drugs); 90 days 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.

Our PPO doctors and facilities—through (OPA Network) CIGNA—save us and the Plan thousands of dollars and it is top notch care at a discount rate. You don't lose anything. You are saving money for the best care!!! For example: \*CIGNA Weight Loss Program (877) 220-6252

**Mark Ramirez, NALC Branch 782 HBP Rep.**  
**(661) 398-6075**

### OUT THERE



# The Choice is Yours...

The 2016 NALC Health Benefit Plan premiums are available for viewing on the NALC website and we have printed out the information for you in this newsletter. Make sure that you understand that “cheaper” Plans may not provide you with the total comprehensive care that you might find yourself faced with.

**THE COST FOR ALL OPTIONS IS AN OFFICE OF PERSONNEL MANAGEMENT (OPM) FORMULATION OF PREMIUMS DECISION. *THE NALC DOES NOT SET THESE AMOUNTS.*** Call 1 (800) 332-9798 for info!

New for 2016 is the “Self Plus One” for those couples with an empty nest and all the kids are over the age of 26. As you can see, the “Self Plus One” has a *HIGHER* premium than the “Self and Family”. Obviously, this is a decision Plan members should well consider before switching to “Self Plus One”.

The choice you make is strictly VOLUNTARY on your part.

I have not found any information on the formulation of premiums and why the “Self Plus One” cost is more and not LESS... as one would think. It is as confusing to me as it should be to you. (The “Self Plus One” option has been discussed for a few years now. I read on the OPM web site that OPM encourages ALL Federal Employees Health Benefit Plan (FEHB) members to consider staying with the cheaper “Self and Family” plan.)

Open Season for Health Benefit Plans provides members the opportunity to make the “best choice” for their own individual situations. Make sure that you consider decisions which will lead to better health care!

Quite a large number of health plans in the FEHB network have seen “CONSIDERABLE” increase in their premiums. Take a serious look at *YOUR* “NON PROFIT” NALC Health Benefit plan! You will find very reasonable premiums and an excellent Health Benefit package!

MARK RAMIREZ  
NALC Health Benefit Representative  
Golden Empire Branch 782

## 2016 NALC HBP Rates

Type of Enrollment	Enrollment Code	Biweekly		Monthly (Annuity)		Active NALC Members	Change to Employeee
		Gov't Share	Your Share	Gov't Share	Your Share		
High Option Self Only	321	\$213.37	\$72.55	\$462.30	\$157.19	\$60.69	-\$2.22
High Option Self Plus One	323	\$461.02	\$162.28	\$998.88	\$351.60	\$136.67	N/A
High Option Self and Family	322	\$476.06	\$158.68	\$1031.45	\$343.82	\$131.71	+\$7.16
CDHP Self Only	324	\$150.18	\$50.06	\$325.39	\$108.46	\$41.55	+\$2.00
CDHB Self Plus One	326	\$326.09	\$108.70	\$706.54	\$235.51	\$90.22	N/A
CDHP Self and Family	325	\$326.10	\$108.70	\$706.55	\$235.52	\$90.22	+\$4.35
Value Option Self Only	KM1	\$129.30	\$43.10	\$280.15	\$93.38	\$34.05	+\$1.72
Value Option Self Plus One	KM3	\$280.79	\$93.59	\$608.37	\$202.79	\$77.68	N/A
Value Option Self and Family	KM2	\$280.79	\$93.60	\$608.39	\$202.79	\$77.69	+\$3.75

**CCA Note** — If you are a CCA who has served 360 days, you have three options: 1. You can choose Self Only or Self & Family in the USPS Non-career Plan and receive a \$125 contributions to the premium every two weeks; 2. As an NALC member, you can choose NALC HBP Self Plus One or Self & Family (not Self Only) from the NALC Consumer Driven Plan or Value Option Plan and receive \$125 bi-weekly contribution from the USPS; or 3. You can choose Self Only, Self Plus One, or Self & Family coverage in any plan offered through the FEHB Program, but receive no contribution toward premium costs. If you have *NOT* completed a 360-day period of service, you have *only* one plan option at this time: You can choose to enroll in the USPS Noncareer plan (with either Self Only or family coverage) and receive the \$125 USPS premium contribution.

# BRANCH 782'S ANNUAL PICNIC 2015

“Mother” Teresa Ortega organized another Super Branch 782 Picnic!!! The food served was Excellent! There were beef, chicken, and pork taco’s and they were Very Tasty!! There were also hot dogs, mini donuts, cold water, sweet tea, fruit punch, and assorted sodas and chips. There were lots of prizes given away as well as a 50/50 drawing. The games were egg toss, bounce house, laser tag, and volley ball. “The Candy Toss Free for All” was just that. It was a really FUN day!!!

The clean up was done by all of the members in attendance and their families. And? It was completed in record time! We left the park shelters so much cleaner than they were when we arrived to set up.

The picnic volunteers were the ever-faithful and “USUAL SUBJECTS”: Branch President Mike “Trailer” Towery; Rick & Kim Gerdes; Darryl & Anita Holderman; Paul Salazar; Treasurer Molly Biggar who coordinated the “ticket sales”; Jerry Patterson handled the 50/50 drawing; Mike Meza and John Ortega were “hot dog chefs”; and, in charge of fun activities, “Game Tamer” Norma Hamer! Branch 782 Photographer Anita Holderman took lots of photos for our newsletter.

I believe our members and their families enjoyed a well planned Branch picnic on a great Sunday afternoon on the banks of the amazing Kern River...

MARK RAMIREZ  
NALC Health Benefit Representative



# WE HAD A GREAT TIME!!!



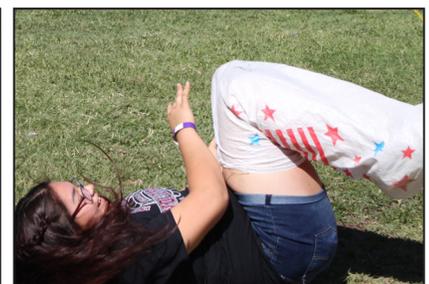


# FOOD? YUP, A LITTLE ~



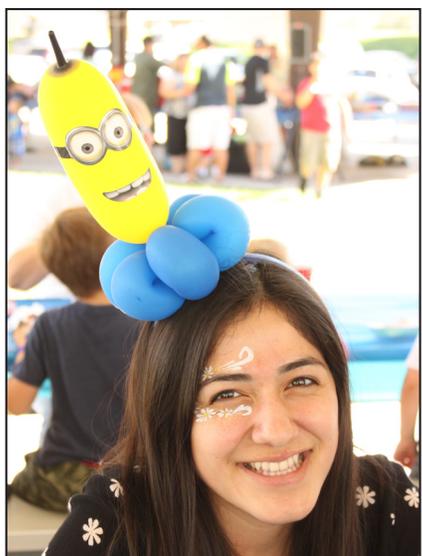


**WE HAD A GREAT TIME!!!**



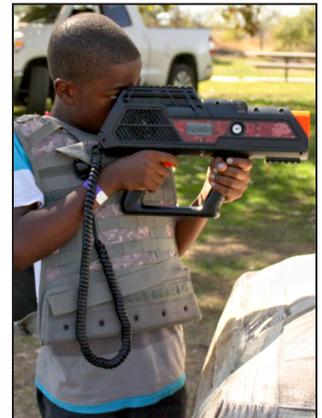


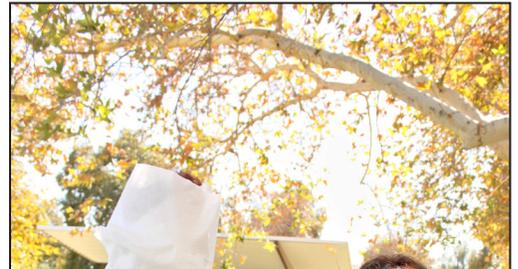
# BRANCH 782'S ANNUAL PICNIC 2015



*Thank You, Anita Holderman,  
they were great pictures!!! Go see  
more pix in the newsletter web  
version at [782NALC.com](http://782NALC.com).*

# WE HAD A GREAT TIME!!!

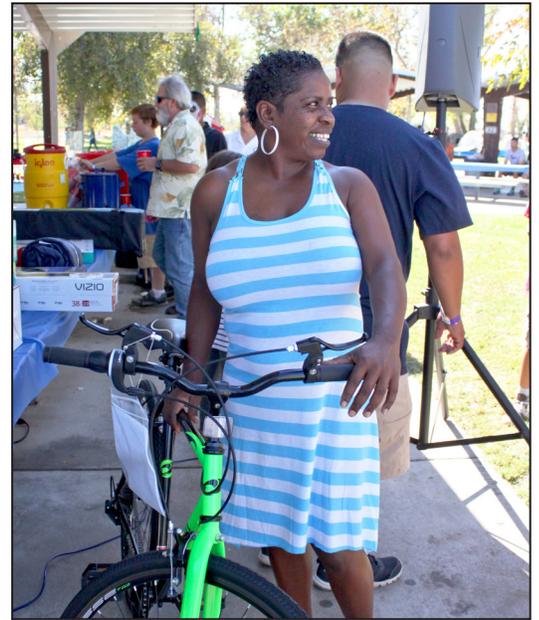






**WE HAD A GREAT TIME!!!**





# BRANCH 782'S ANNUAL PICNIC 2015



*Thank You,  
Anita Holderman,  
these were absolutely  
great pictures!!!*

# We Got Letters!!!

In 1960, I started with the Post Office. In a short time, I made Regular and was a Utility Carrier for five routes.

As I approached a house on Main St. for the first time, the family had a **large** mailbox.

Unbeknownst to me, they also had a small poodle—whom I would soon become acquainted with as he took a bite out of my leg!!

In those days, I had to get a shot and the dog had to be quarantined for two weeks.

A few weeks later, as I approached his house, he was out again...

*This time*, I saw him. I quickly put the mail in the box and reached down, grabbed him by all fours and stuffed him in the box upside down.

Funny. I can't imagine why he was always in the house after that.

Even after nine dog bites in my career I still like dogs." If Fred uses this in a newsletter, please send me a copy. Thanks!

## "OuT tHeRe"



N.A.L.C. BR. 782 BAKERSFIELD, CA

THANKS TO GEORGE I. PAYZANT

GEORGE L. PAYZANT  
NALC Branch 25 Retiree  
Turners Falls, Massachusetts

4-12-15

Dear Kim and Fred,

Yesterday, I got my *Postal Record* and saw the article "Inside **OuT tHeRe**". Wow! So real!

I have 26 years of so many stories: dogs, weather, people, management.

I started 12-1-73 at age 21. Young, happy to get a great job with great money (\$4.35 per hour!). So much pride and I worked so hard!

I started in Littleton, CO and went on to Delta, CO and, finally, to Grand Junction.

My route in Delta was 14 miles, no vehicle, but I had a pushcart working from relay boxes. Snow, ice, heat, etc. Whew! In 1991, I transferred to GJ where I lived.

My route was 2 hours of businesses - in and out of a van and about four hours of walking residential park and loop. I ended up with back problems, shoulder problems, foot problems and knee problems. But, I kept on pushing myself. **MY JOB WAS MY LIFE!**

Ended up having knee surgery in 1995 and 1996. Being work-related, they had to give me "light duty". I answered the phones 4 hours a day.

Well, in 1996, I found out from a one year old MRI that I had M.S.

I was devastated and scared and I was so worried about my job.

Well, a guy in management had me come into his office. He told me that the M.S. was not job-related and that I could no longer work for the Postal Service.

I cried and begged, but I was told to put in a claim for disability that might bring in 40% of my pay.

This letter about my story is so brief. It would take pages to talk about my life and feelings. I still dream about the post office and delivering mail.

Thank you for letting me say all this. I can't wait to get the book!

VICKI HOLLEY  
Grand Junction, Colorado



*Have an Idea for Fred?\**

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

\*But, you never know what you might get...



# Reviewing your eOPF

by Ron Zalewski, Treasurer  
NALC Branch 4374

**J**ust in the last month or so, one of my favorite old timers, a retiree from St Clair Shores, Paul Kleist, died. In a terrible tragedy, an active Carrier in the Branch, Kristina Hallam, passed away; and then another Carrier, CCA Whitney Craddock, was nearly killed in a motor vehicle accident.

Each one of these events led me to think about not only the Carrier, but their family as well.

Each of us has a number of forms in our Official Personnel File (OPF) that designate what happens if (when) we depart this life. Most of these forms were filled out during the week that we first hired on with the Postal Service, and we haven't given them much thought since. The problem with that is that as our lives change, so must the information in our OPF to protect our families.

So, what is in the OPF, and how can we review it?

It used to be reviewing your OPF was as easy as asking your general clerk or supervisor to pull it from the files maintained in your office, then paging through it to make sure it was accurate.

Some years ago, the OPFs were moved from paper files kept locally, to electronic ones maintained in a central location by the USPS. Your OPF is now an "eOPF". You must have your employee identification number and new password (the old 4 digit PIN won't work for this application) to access your eOPF.

You also must have internet access on a computer using Microsoft Explorer (no, Chrome and Firefox will not work).

For security reasons, computers using the USPS internal network may not access the eOPF system. Log in to lite blue (the USPS's extranet) at [www.liteblue](http://www.liteblue).

[usps.gov](http://usps.gov). Once you're in liteblue, click on "My HR" at the upper left, then "access eOPF" in the upper left resource box.

You'll find "Access Personnel Folder Now!" on the upper right. Once you've clicked on that, you'll again be asked for your EIN and password, then your file opens.

So, what is all this stuff?

The most common form for most people in their eOPF is the Form 50, Notice of Personnel Action. Every step increase, contractual increase, transfer, promotion or vacation increase results in a Form 50. None of these should be a surprise to you, as the Service mails you a copy at the same time one is placed in your file.

Should you ever find yourself in need of another copy of a Form 50, you can pull that copy yourself right here and print it instantly.

If you have outstanding discipline, you'll find it here as well. Often, there will be two forms included: the original discipline and the grievance settlement modifying it. Read both thoroughly.

If the settlement modifies the discipline to "expunged," "rescinded," or "official dis-

cussion" — neither the discipline nor the settlement should be in your file at all.

If the discipline is expired (either by running it's full course, or removed by the satisfactory completion of the term in the settlement) both should be out of your file as well.

You can fill out a PS Form 8043, Request to Amend Electronic Official Personnel Folder (eOPF) to get the necessary items removed. This form must be mailed to District HR. The corporate address in bold at the top of the form is misleading as it is only for Headquarters employees.

You can always ask your steward to help you fill out the form, which I suggest unless you're familiar with the process. You



can find a fillable, printable version online by typing "PS Form 8043" in to a search engine.

If you've ever had a TSP loan, you'll likely find a USPS 10, RTR Employee Detail Report. This is simply a report that verifies your current employment with the Service, and the details of your employment. It also seems that the system generates one when you check your eOPF, dated for that day,

and places it at document #1. If all of your form 50s are correct, this report will hold no surprises.

couple of years. **THIS MAY BE THE MOST IMPORTANT TASK YOU HAVE IN REVIEWING YOUR eOPF.**

wife as my beneficiary. This could be an important for you to know!

## OUT THERE



There will be a PS Form 1216, Employee's Current Mailing Address. This is important because the address on the most current PS 1216 is what the Service uses to mail your pay stubs.

For active employees, it's also the address that TSP will use to mail your statements. Even more critical, this is the address that TSP will use to mail your new password. If it isn't up-to-date, there's a possibility that an unauthorized person could get access to your TSP account.

Retirees should notify OPM and TSP of address changes directly.

Next up: SF 2823 — Designation of Beneficiary under Federal Group Life Insurance Program. For long time employees, and even some shorter ones, the situation that we were in when we hired in has changed. Marriages happen, as do divorces. Parents pass on, and families are blessed with children.

Checking that your current beneficiary is whom you desire should be done every

simple search on the internet.

SF 1152 designates who gets your final paycheck should you die while an active Carrier.

Obviously, with a far smaller amount at stake, this isn't as important as the SF 2823, but that means you are also more likely to have overlooked this form.

The first time I reviewed my eOPF, I found that while my life insurance beneficiary was correct, my SF 1152 did not designate my

An example: If your beneficiary is your ex-spouse, and you pass, that ex-spouse will get your insurance, and your present spouse will be unsuccessful challenging your designation in court. Your current family will get nothing.

Changing your SF 2823 is as simple as filling out another one, getting the proper witness signatures, and mailing it in. Fillable SF 2838s are also available with a

It's just as easy to change as the SF 2823. SF 3102 accomplishes the same thing for your FERS benefits (and I'm sure there's an equivalent for CSRS).

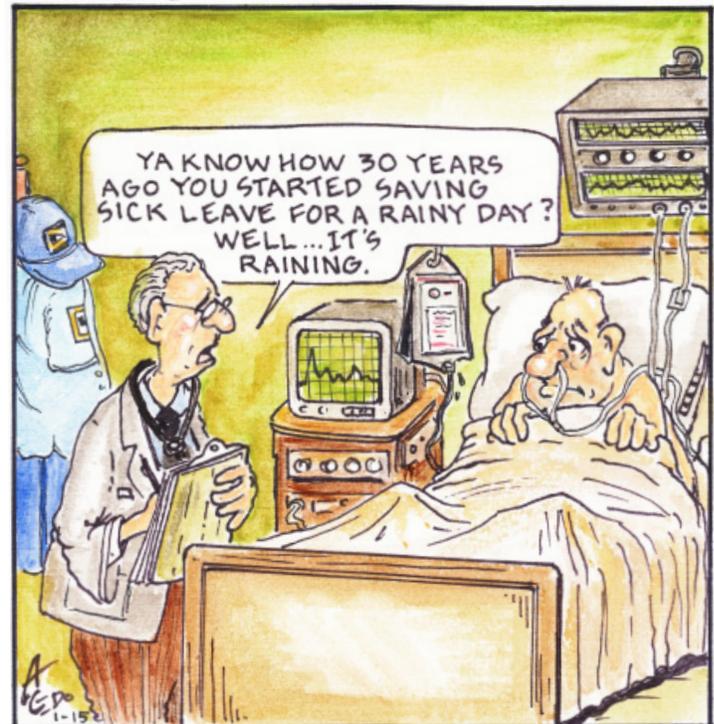
SF 2817 is the life insurance election form. As a new employee, you may not have had need for optional life insurance. You should discuss your current requirements with your family and a financial planner, then use major life events to adjust your insurance level to match your needs.

Finally, you'll find a number of documents that you filled out when you were hired. Many of these are now only historical in nature, but you should at least review them once to make sure that there aren't any errors. Veterans will also find a copy of their DD Form 214.

Reviewing your eOPF shouldn't be a long and drawn out task, but the ramifications of not reviewing it may last far beyond your lifetime. Take a moment, and make sure that you, and your family, are protected.

Article courtesy of the South Macon, MI August 2015 NALC Branch 4374 *Front Lines*

## OUT THERE



The following is an excerpt from an article by Mark Seitz. Mark is the President of NALC Merged Branch 92 in Portland, Maine. It comes out of his message in their July-August 2015 newsletter, *Carrier's Corner*.

This is an important topic because it presents background on now obsolete USPS regulations that mandated how parcel deliveries *were to be handled*...and new modified regulations that have degraded the "Service"...

# Parcel Deliveries

by Mark Seitz, President  
NALC Branch 92  
Portland, Maine

Until recently, the Union has always suggested following the M41, M39 and the POM (Postal Operations Manual) on how to deliver parcels/packages. This language always left it up to the carrier to leave a parcel if it was in a safe, secure and covered (protected from the elements) location.

Apparently, there was a change made by the USPS in the M41 and the POM in regards to packages that we were allowed to leave.

The National (NALC) was notified of the change and no protest was given or grievance was filed on this change to handbooks and manuals. The confusion that was made is because the USPS never changed or re-wrote those manuals and handbooks to show the changes and the local Unions were not significantly notified of these changes in my opinion.

So, I will explain below the proper procedures in delivering parcels;

**WHAT IS A PARCEL?** A Parcel when delivering on the street is considered any item that does not fit in the customer's mailbox. (In the office may be different as they put it in a category to count for their DOIS program). Also, putting a parcel in an NDCBU or Parcel locker is considered delivering to their box.

## **IF I HAVE A PARCEL TO DELIVER, DO I ALWAYS KNOCK ON THE DOOR OR RING THE BELL?**

ALWAYS! You are required to knock on the door or ring their bell (BNA=Bell Not Answered) in order to deliver their parcel.

Now the language is clear in the M41 that states, *For any parcel that does not fit into the customer's mailbox or parcel locker (when available), an attempt to deliver must be made at the customer's door. If no one is available to receive the parcel, follow the procedures in 322.311 and 322.312.* While

waiting for the customer to answer, the carrier can determine whether there is a protected location to leave the parcel.

## **SO, WHAT ARE THOSE PROCEDURES IN 322.311 AND 322.312?**

322.311: Parcels must not be left in an unprotected location such as a porch unless the mailer participates in the carrier release program by endorsing the package "Carrier-Leave If No Response" or the addressee has given written directions for an alternate delivery location. Examples of protected locations are a locked vestibule, locked hallway or with the doorman of an apartment building, inside a storm door of a residence, etc.

Parcels must not be left where adverse weather can affect them.

By following the mailer's or addressee's instructions, the Postal Service provides customers with a more convenient way to receive parcels. Carriers are not liable for loss or theft where these instructions and postal regulations are followed.

Mailers who participate in the carrier release program understand that there are areas where the Postal Service will not leave parcels for security reasons. Mailers also understand that carriers do not leave packages without protection from inclement weather. If there is not a suitable location to leave a carrier release parcel, Form 3849 must be left.

And this is section also pertinent:

**322.312: When the Carrier Is Not Authorized to Leave Ordinary Parcels:** When someone is usually available to receive parcels. When an ordinary or unnumbered insured parcel is not delivered on the first attempt and the carrier knows that someone at the address is usually available to receive parcels, do not leave Form 3849, Delivery Notice/Reminder/Receipt. Write the date and the carrier's initials and route number near the address and return the parcel to the office. Place the parcel in the gurney at the carrier's case. Attempt a second delivery on the next delivery day. If the parcel is not delivered after the second attempt, complete and leave Form 3849. Legibly endorse the form with the following information:

- (1) Article number (if applicable)
- (2) Date

- (3) Sender's name
- (4) Type of mail
- (5) Article requiring signature at time of delivery (if applicable)
- (6) Addressee's name and address
- (7) Amount due (if applicable)
- (8) Date and time customer can pick up article at post office.

**When someone is not usually available to receive parcels.** If no one is available to receive the parcel and the carrier knows that someone at the address is not usually available to receive parcels, complete and leave Form 3849 (see exhibit 322.312b) after the first attempt. When the carrier does not know if someone is usually available to receive parcels, Form 3849 should be left after the first attempt. Endorse the parcel near the address, showing the reason for nondelivery, e.g., "No Response", date delivery was attempted, and the carrier's initials and route number. Upon returning to the office, deposit the parcel in the designated place for undelivered parcels.

So, the above are the original sections of the M41 which is what the Union would state are the rules and procedures with delivering a parcel.

## **IT HAS CHANGED!**

These are the provisions which are now in effect:

### 322.311 When the Carrier Is Authorized to Leave Parcels

*[Revise items a and c as follows:]*

a. Uninsured parcels or parcels that do not require a signature may be left in an unprotected location such as a stairway or uncovered porch when the mailer participates in the Carrier Release Program by endorsing the parcel "Carrier – Leave If No Response" or the addressee has given written directions for an alternate delivery location. PS Form 3849, Delivery Notice/Reminder/Receipt, with the "It Is Located: \_\_\_\_\_" block completed, must be left in the mail receptacle notifying the addressee of the mail left in the authorized alternate location.

c. Mailers who participate in the Carrier Release Program understand that there are unsecured areas where the Postal Service will leave parcels AND ALSO THAT CARRIERS WILL LEAVE PACKAGES WITHOUT PROTECTION FROM INCLEMENT WEATHER. *(Emphasis added.)*

### 322.312 When the Carrier Is Not Authorized to Leave Parcels

*[Revise text to read as follows:]*

a. When someone is usually available to receive parcels. When an uninsured parcel, a parcel not requiring a signa-

ture, or a parcel that is not part of the Carrier Release Program is not delivered on the first attempt and the carrier knows that someone at the address is usually available to receive parcels, do not leave PS Form 3849, Delivery Notice/Reminder/Receipt. Write the date and the carrier's initials and route number near the address and return the parcel to the office. Place the parcel in the gurney at the carrier's case. Attempt a second delivery on the next delivery day. If the parcel is not delivered after the second attempt, complete and leave PS Form 3849. Legibly endorse the form with the following information:

- (1) Article number (if applicable).
- (2) Date.
- (3) Sender's name.
- (4) Type of mail.
- (5) Article requiring signature at time of delivery (if applicable).
- (6) Addressee's name and address.
- (7) Amount due (if applicable).
- (8) Date and time customer can pick up article at Post Office.

**b. When someone is not usually available to receive parcels.** If no one is available to receive the parcel, the carrier knows that someone at the address is not usually available to receive parcels, or the parcel is insured, requires a signature, or is not part of the Carrier Release Program, complete and leave PS Form 3849 (see Exhibit 322.312) after the first attempt. When the carrier does not know if someone is usually available to receive parcels, PS Form 3849 should be left after the first attempt if the parcel is insured, requires a signature, or is not part of the Carrier Release Program. Endorse the parcel near the address, showing the reason for nondelivery, e.g., "No Response", date delivery was attempted, and the carrier's initials and route number. Upon returning to the office, deposit the parcel in the designated place for undelivered parcels.

So, what is the change? If there is no endorsement authorizing the carrier to leave, the carrier may only leave if in a safe, protected location. If there is an endorsement, and the endorsement has to specifically state Carrier — Leave If No Response, then the carrier **HAS** to leave the parcel *REGARDLESS OF INCLEMENT WEATHER OR WHETHER THEY BELIEVE IT IS A SAFE LOCATION.*

Please use the proper procedures. Taking the time to knock or ring the bell may add 10 minutes a day to your route which management may otherwise try to add 10 minutes to you. Even with the endorsement to leave, you are still required to knock/ring as it does state "Leave if no response". You can only get a response if you knock or ring the bell. To the carriers that use the plastic bags, I just caution you to get permission from your supervisors before doing so as they are not official equipment.

## from the editor-guy:

Some of you probably like roller coasters. I don't. Never have.

Recently, I've been on a roller coaster and it has been quite an experience. Not anything that I would particularly wish on anyone.

One question Marcelle, my wife, asked me: "How would you have felt on the morning of July 9 if someone had told you that *that* day would be the day you delivered your very last letter?"

I've pondered that.

If I look at it with a certain perspective, I know that — in a different more tragic context — my world could just as easily have been changed by an accident, heart attack or some other life-ending event.

My life didn't end. But, it certainly changed.

I was on a roll that day. I was on pace to get off in time to get to an emergency dental appointment at 17:10. I had reported to work with a toothache. And, just a few minutes before "it" happened, I remember thinking that I'd be able to get home and take a shower before I had to see the dentist. (I did find out later that I did have a cracked tooth.)

Anyway, I went in to make a delivery at JoAnn's fabric store across from the Mall and I left my window open on that nice warm July day in Bakersfield. After getting back into the the LLV, I didn't see the tray of DPS...

Within ninety-some minutes, I had called my supervisor to report what had happened; waited for someone to show up; gave a statement; followed my manager and supervisor back to the station; handed over my keys, scanner and name tag; was told that I was on Administrative Leave; and, was then escorted out the door.

At the fact finding, I answered the questions about whether the window was open, did I know the window was open, and did I know that I was supposed to have secured the vehicle before I went in to make the delivery.

I hovered over the phone for the next few weeks. I was afraid to go anywhere (because I was on the clock). I knew that I would soon be told to come in to "face the music".

For two months, I didn't hear anything. Those were two long months of Administrative Leave where I heard nothing at all about anything. And, I was paid...for doing nothing.

On September 9, I signed for a certified letter from the USPS.

That letter, in pretty ugly language, painted me as the worst possible employee who had ever walked in the door. Additionally, the letter informed me that my Administrative Leave would end on October 9 and, at that time, I would be terminated from the USPS.

I contacted my Shop Steward Darryl Holderman and Branch 782 President Mike Towery to let them know. Marcelle can attest to the fact that *that* was a pretty rough night.

However, even though I don't like roller coasters, I do know that they do eventually end.

I am so thankful that I have had the protections put in place by the National Association of Letter Carriers!

On many occasions, I have told folks that paying dues is more than just an insurance plan. However, when it had come to the point where it had to be a push and a shove, it was the NALC which was there for me in my "hour of need".

Through the years, I have heard about countless incidents where the NALC has protected the interests of Letter Carriers in many, many different situations all over this country.

I **NEVER** would have **EVER** anticipated that I would, one day, find myself facing such a grim end to my career as a Letter Carrier.

I do know something else. While I never got any kind of a call from anyone in postal management, I did receive calls from many Letter Carriers who told me to "hang in there" and that they were concerned about how I was doing.

**That was so very important!**

Eventually, Mike Towery asked me what I wanted to do. He laid out how the Grievance-Arbitration process could proceed and explained the time frame for how this issue could play out.

Having had some time to consider, I told Mike that I really didn't want to come back to this current Letter Carrier world (new parcel regulations, possible starting time changes, use of scanner info for discipline, "talking" scanners that even direct your actions, etc.?) Think "I Robot..."

Newer Carriers can't really understand how much things have changed with the USPS. The "Service" has eroded to the point where it just doesn't seem to have any meaning at all.

I acknowledge that I screwed up when I left the window open. I'm sure it's the one and only time that any Carrier ever did that.

And now (with credit for USPS time, military time and almost 2800 hours of Sick Leave), I will be retiring on November 1, 2015 after serving some 43 years as a Federal public servant.

BASIL ZUNIGA

### **Attention all you Associate Office (AO) Carriers out there...mark January 20 on your calendar!!!**

It's that once a year time, once again, where we all come to get together for pizza to fold the monthly newsletter for our great Branch 782! Would appreciate it if you could come and help fold, staple, label, count, and rubber band!

Let's give some of the Bakersfield Carriers a break and come together to fold the monthly newsletter. The Branch will feed us too!!

Hope to see you there! We might even have some fun!!

NORMA HAMER  
Shafter Shop Steward



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<b>Vice-President</b>	<b>John Ortega</b>	<b>(661) 809-8140</b>
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The options expressed in this publication are those of the writer and are not necessarily those of the publication staff or of the Officers of the Branch.

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

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

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

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

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

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Shafter (93263)	Norma Hamer	(661) 619-1465
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Brundage Station (93307)	John Ortega	(661) 809-8140
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**Branch 782  
Website  
www.782nalc.com**

Rick Plummer, Webmaster



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 (661) 331-9171

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

# General Meeting

## Tuesday

### October 27, 2015

### 7:00 p.m.

Branch 782 Office  
 2628 "F" Street  
 Bakersfield, California

**FORWARDING SERVICE REQUESTED**

# Official Notice of Election of NALC "Golden Empire" Branch 782 Delegates to the 2016 National Convention

**Details on Front Cover**

# BRANCH 782'S ANNUAL PICNIC

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