

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



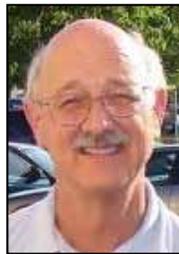
NUMBER 10

WEB VERSION

OCTOBER 2017

at the

Mike:



VETERANS DAY NOVEMBER 11, 2017

This day in November is a holiday for all Letter Carriers and we get a chance to enjoy the day with our loved ones. But, this day did not come without a great cost...

Too often, the stories of the majority of our military veterans have never been shared. Most feel that they were just "doing their job".

Pages 5 - 24 of this web version are a look at some histories which build on the three pages which were in the original print version.

OFFICIAL NOTICE OF ELECTION OF NALC "GOLDEN EMPIRE" BRANCH 782 DELEGATES TO THE 2018 NATIONAL CONVENTION

ELECTION

The election will be conducted by secret ballot at the regular meeting on November 15, 2017 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 15, 2017, 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 14.

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 least two (2) meetings (any combination of regular General Meetings and/or Quarterly Area Meetings) in the twelve months just prior to National Conventions.

Minutes of the September 2017 General Meeting

The regular meeting of Branch 782 was called to order by President Mike Towery at 7:00 p.m. on the 27th day of September, 2017 at the branch office, Bakersfield. The flag salute was led by Sgt. at Arms, Frank Martinez. All members of the Executive Board were present. The stewards were present from Avenal, Brundage, Camino Media, Dole Ct. Downtown, East Bakersfield, Edwards, Hillcrest, Lamont, McFarland, Shafter, South, Stockdale, Taft and Wasco. Also present was the Newsletter Editor, Basil Zuniga; Webmaster, Rick Plummer; Photographer, Anita Holderman; Assistant Treasurer, Debbie Guillet, Assistant Recording Secretary, Norma Hamer; OWCP Representative, Rick Gerdes and Frank Martinez of the Social and Recreation Committee. The minutes of the August 23, 2017 meeting were read by Asst. Recording Secretary, Norma Hamer. The Minutes were accepted with no additions or corrections.

APPLICATION FOR MEMBERSHIP: Applications for membership were received from John Guingao and Kyaw Thiha, Dole Ct.; Dedrick Callahan, Hillcrest and Sevrine Bradshaw, South.

REPORTS OF STANDING AND SPECIAL COMMITTEES:

Teresa Ortega reported that the picnic is October 8, Jastro Park. We will be having a taco truck again this year. Lunch will be served from 11:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m. There will be an ice cream truck. Flyers are available for each station, see her following the meeting. We will be having a 50/50 drawing to benefit Make a Wish, a drawing for a basket full of gift cards and cash to benefit MDA. Pam Smith will be set up to sign Carriers up to contribute to the Letter Carriers Political Action Committee. Those who sign up and those who already contribute will be placed in a drawing for \$100. Teresa also informed members that any CCA's who have to work on Sunday can come by the park after 9:00 a.m. to get their raffle tickets and meal tickets for their family. Teresa will not be responsible for the tickets, so CCA's should give them to their family or another Carrier. Tami Foshee is in charge of the games. Teresa still needs a volunteer to serve the rice and beans. Basil Zuniga reported that last month was Hillcrest, so next month will be Brundage. He thanked Kim for dinner. Basil discussed each page of the newsletter beginning with the cover, which has all the rules for nominations and elections of branch delegates. He shared that the NALC was the first corporate sponsor for MDA. He thanked members for their contributions to the newsletter and President Mike Towery for making the power point for the meeting. He encouraged everyone to check out the web version of the newsletter, it has more information than the printed versions and the Fred's cartoons in color really "pop." Frank Martinez reported that there will be a meeting of the Social and Recreation Committee tomorrow, he expects the postmaster or Teresa Espinoza to attend as the management representative.

Kim Gerdes reported that 4 books were sold this month, 638 remaining. Mark Ramirez will be sure to get an article in next month's newsletter regarding "Open Season" and the new premium rates.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS: Mike Towery reported that the route inspections at South are completed. Most of the inspectors including, Steve Blanton, have never attended a Route Check class. Several Carriers were given a Letter of Warning during the week for expanding street time on the day the inspector went with them.

NEW BUSINESS: Mike Towery opened the nominations for Delegates to the National Convention to be held in Detroit. Adela Carrasco, Mike Meza, Angie Hernandez, Randy Courson, Shari Sharp, Norma Hamer, Jerry Patterson, July Kiyoshi, Maria Valenzuela, Gilroy Manglicmot, Frank Martinez, David Treto, Basil Zuniga, Denise Ream, Mark Ramirez, Pam Smith, Evelyn Gauthier, Tami Foshee, Jasvir Sangha, Debbie Guillet, Darryl Holderman, Anita Holderman, Kim Gerdes, Lynnel Howell and Bonnie Whitbey. To qualify for Branch funds Delegates must attend 10 of the 12 meetings prior to the convention. Debbie Guillet proposed a By-Laws change. The current language reads "A drawing using the current membership roster provided by the Financial Secretary will be conducted at the regular meeting of the Branch with the beginning amount of fifty dollars. If the member whose name is drawn is not present at the meeting, the amount will increase fifty dollars each successive month until it reaches five hundred dollars and will remain at five hundred dollars until there is a member present whose name is drawn. Once there is a winner, the amount of the drawing will start again at fifty dollars. Members must be present to win unless their absence is due to attendance at the State or National Conventions." The proposed new language reads "A drawing for five hundred dollars, using the current membership roster provided by the Financial Secretary, will be conducted at the regular monthly Branch meeting. Member must be present to win unless their absence is due to attendance at the State or National Conventions." Mike Towery reported that the proposed By-Laws change will be posted in the newsletter and voted upon at the following meeting. Vice President John Ortega will head the Election Committee. Assisting him will be Dicie Wilder, Teresa Ortega and Paul Salazar. Requests for absentee ballots must be received two weeks prior to the election. Basil Zuniga informed the members that he would like to do a special Veteran's Day article to honor out Vets. He asked that the steward from each station let him know who is a Vet, years of service and branch of service.

GOOD OF THE ASSOCIATION: Mike Towery thanked Basil for the recognition he received in the newsletter, he went on to thank those who work so hard behind the scenes: Teresa, picnic; Dicie, elections; Mark, putting up the reflective film on the doors, Molly, Kim, John, Paul, Anita, Darryl, Norma and Debbie. It is amazing how much people do for the branch and don't get credit or compensation. He thanked everyone who does so much for the branch. Mike then reported that Carriers in Ridgecrest are being written up for missing a "Special Service Sampling Scan." All recently converted CCA's should have received a letter re-

garding a special enrollment for health benefits from September 4th thru October 19, with the benefits effective October 28. Mike thanked John, Paul, Mike and Bonnie for attending the Local Agreement training. All Local Agreements must be negotiated October 16 thru November 16.

FINANCIAL SECRETARY'S REPORT: Anita Holderman reported that \$13,474.82 was collected for the month of September, 2017.

TREASURER'S REPORT: Molly Biggar reported for the month of July:

Beginning Balance	\$73,721.27
Dues and Income	\$12,994.55
Total Balance	\$86,715.82
Expenses	\$15,198.20
Ending Balance	\$71,517.62

The MDA 50/50 Drawing was won by Bonnie Whitbey, who donated her winnings to MDA.

There was a drawing for a coupon book that was donated by a member, which was won by Jerry Patterson.

The Drawing for \$300.00 would have been won by Sonja Sandhu if she had been present.

There were 42 members present and 1 guest.

The meeting adjourned at 8:17 p.m.

KIM GERDES
NALC Branch 782 Recording Secretary

Non-Members September 2017*

Downtown Station
Sarah Kirby
Javier Cruz

Edwards AFB
Varline Reeder

South Station
100% UNION!!!

Mojave
Alexander Keller

Brundage/East Bakersfield
100% UNION!!!

Ridgecrest
100% UNION!!!

Hillcrest
100% UNION!!!

Shafter
M. D. Voights
L. M. New

Dole Court
100% UNION!!!

Taft
K. J. Hughes

Stockdale
James Oh
Marty Martinez
Daniel Zuniga

Tehachapi
B. C. Den Beeman

Camino Media
100% UNION!!!

Trona
100% UNION!!!

Arvin
100% UNION!!!

Wasco
100% UNION!!!

Avenal
100% UNION!!!

California City
100% UNION!!!

Delano
Cynthia V. Quebral
Daniela Barreto

Lamont
100% UNION!!!

*CCA names are in italics

**There are only 13
non-members in
all of the cities we
serve... Two of
them are CCAs.**

OUT THERE

BY FRED ACEDO



House Advances 2018 Budget Resolution With Federal Retirement Cuts

The House passed a 2018 Budget Resolution that sets the stage for Congress to make **BILLIONS OF DOLLARS IN CUTS TO FEDERAL EMPLOYEE RETIREMENT BENEFITS!** (That includes USPS employees.)

The Resolution includes “reconciliation instructions,” which charges the House Oversight and Government Reform Committee to develop legislative proposals to reduce the federal deficit by \$32 billion over 10 years through reforms to civil service pensions.

Those reforms would include:

1) Higher employee contributions to the Federal Defined Benefit Pension Plan;

2) An elimination of supplemental payments to federal employees who retire before age 62;

3) An involuntary, automatic switch to a Defined Contribution Pension Plan for any new federal employees. (Passing this resolution is another small step in a long, complicated process to enact deeper cuts to federal retirement and compensation.)

“This would achieve significant savings while recognizing the need for new federal employees to transition to a defined contribution retirement system,” the House Budget Committee’s report on the Resolution reads.

Additionally, “The vast majority of private sector employees participate in defined contribution retirement plans. These plans put the ownership, flexibility and portfolio risk on the employee as opposed to the employer. Similarly, federal employees would have more control over their own retirement security under this option.”

According to a count from the House Budget Committee Democrats, the Budget Resolution includes **\$163 billion over 10 years in total cuts to federal compensation and retirement benefits.**

For example, the Resolution supports changing the formula for the government’s contribution to the Federal Employee Health Benefits Program (FEHBP). Instead of the current formula — which caps the government contribution at the average weighted rate of change in FEHB programs — the House resolution suggests tying government increases to the rate of inflation.

The latest version of the House resolution also includes a proposal that would reduce the G fund’s rate of return in the Thrift Savings Plan.

As per the House report, “Securities within the G fund are not subject to risk of default. Payment of principal and interest is guaranteed by the U.S. government...Yet, the interest rate paid is equivalent to a long-term security. As a result, those who participate in the G fund are rewarded with a long-term rate on what is essentially a short-term security.”

This ISN’T the first time lawmakers have suggested such a Proposal.

Both the Federal Retirement Thrift Investment Board and Federal employee groups have previously said the change would make the G fund practically worthless for TSP participants.

Some lawmakers have already expressed their opposition to these proposals — including one hundred House Democrats who wrote to House Speaker Paul Ryan (R-WI) and Minority Leader Nancy Pelosi (D-CA) back in June.

The ideas included in the House resolution are similar to the four major changes President Donald Trump offered in his own 2018 budget request.

This is why each and every Letter Carrier should contribute to the Letter Carrier Political Fund (LCPF)!

Why? Think about it just a little bit. It should be pretty simple to figure out: **YOU** cannot take for granted retirement benefits will be there when **YOU** are ready to retire!

The money contributed to the LCPF is used to help candidates who support Letter Carriers with their campaigns. It is also used to release Carriers to work on campaigns to protect our interests.

It is easy to contribute right out of your paycheck through an allotment. Any amount per check will be greatly appreciated, but the NALC is suggesting that \$5 per paycheck is a good start!

Sign up online on the NALC website under government affairs! Or, you can contact me at (661) 979-5854.

PAM SMITH
NALC Branch 782 Legislative Liaison





You may wonder why we would have a special Branch 782 military Veterans tribute in our October newsletter. I do have a reason and a hope!

Veterans Day is on November 11. The November issue of our newsletter won't reach your mailbox until *after* that day. I see that as a problem.

Hopefully, I can with this effort give a proper emphasis as to why Veterans Day is such a very important holiday. It's **NOT** just a chance to get away from the job for a day so that there can be a barbeque or an opportunity to hang out and have a good time.

EACH NALC Veteran should be remembered and honored. While there is no way that I can share the experience of every single Veteran member of our Branch — or that of their families — I want to make an effort. Why? **PLEASE FLIP THE PAGE...**

Bakersfield National Cemetery

Basil Zuniga, Branch 782 Editor-guy

93203 — ARVIN
No Veterans currently assigned

93204 — AVENAL
No Veterans currently assigned

93215 — DELANO
Arnie Reyes-Rios: USA — 2000 - 2006

93241 — LAMONT
No Veterans currently assigned

93250 — McFARLAND
Robert Campos: USA — 1988 - 1991
Fernando Soto: USMC — 1989 - 1995

93263 — SHAFTER
No Veterans currently assigned

93268 — TAFT
No Veterans currently assigned

93280 — WASCO
No Veterans currently assigned

93301 — DOWNTOWN STATION
Eugene Shebley: USN — 1987 - 1995
Lynn Hunter: USAF — 1977 - 1978
Artie Evans: USMC — 1990 - 1994

93304 — SOUTH STATION
Mark Andersen: USAF — 2009 - 2013
Neil Kramer: USA&R — 1985 - 1997

93305 — EAST BAKERSFIELD
Cherilyn Morgan: USN — 1983 - 2000
Steve Lubrecht: USAF — 1984 - 1985
& National Guard: 1986 - 1989
George Duarte: USA — 1982 - 1985
& USAR — 1991 - 1992
Robert Guerrero: USAF — 1992 - 1996
Levi Prinz : USA — 2012 - 2015

93306 — HILLCREST
Joe Gutierrez: USA — 1972 - 1974
David Renner: USA — 1990 - 1996

93307 — BRUNDAGE
No Veterans currently assigned

93308 — DOLE COURT
Robert Zehner: USA — 1990 - 2004
Ricardo Obando: USA — 1983 - 2004
Steven Carter: USA — 1988 - 1991
Paul Hernandez: USA — 1990 - 1994
Art Mooney: USN — 1974 - 1979
Daniel Medina: USN — 1983 - 1989
Lee Collaso: USN — XXXX - XXXX
Michael Tucker: XXX — 1998 - 2010
Henry Gasco: USCG — 24+ YEARS

93309 — STOCKDALE
Bobby Cruz: USA — 1972 - 1974
Cindy Flores: USN — 1979 - 1983
John Hardin: USN — 1976 - 1980
Paul Skinner: USN — 1982 - 1986
Joe Lovio: USA — 1971 - 1972
Randy Courson: USAF — 1972 - 1976

93311/13 — CAMINO MEDIA
David Bridges: USMC — 1979 - 1983
Duane Huse: USAF — 5 Years 10 months
Mike Meza: USA — 1993 - 1996

93501 — MOJAVE
No Veterans currently assigned

93504 — CALIFORNIA CITY
Ray Pasillas: USA — 1983 - 1987
One Veteran declined participation

93516 — BORON
No Veterans currently assigned

93523 — EDWARDS AFB
No Veterans currently assigned

93555 — RIDGECREST
Tina Dill: USA — 1991 - 1993
Nicholas Travers: USAF — 2007 - 2013
Gary Burgwald: USAF — 1973 - 1981

93561 — TEHACHAPI
No Veterans currently assigned

93562 — TRONA
No Veterans currently assigned

We also thank all Postal employee Veterans who are not NALC members!

The Defense Department has announced that honorably discharged Veterans will be able to shop online at military exchanges effective this Veterans Day, November 11, 2017. "As a nation, we are grateful for the contributions of our service members. Offering this lifetime online benefit is one small, tangible way the nation can say, 'Thank You' to those who served with honor."

Basil Zuniga has registered. "It was easier than I would have expected. Put in my first and last name, birth date, last four digits of my SSN and my Branch of service. Got a confirmation and I'm good to shop! *And, they ship via USPS!!!*" Google "www.VetVerify.org". Click to begin verification. As of June 2017, almost 70,000 veterans had signed up. Be aware that you *might* have to use your DD-214 Copy #4.

In honor of the Veterans Day holiday I thought I'd do something a little different for this issue to honor Veterans and their service to our country; and, to tell a slightly different kind of *Tales of Yore* — the story of how I first learned what it meant to be a Veteran.

by Mark Woodbury, Editor
NALC Branch 2555

Being a kid back in the 50s meant you were very aware of “The War”, meaning WWII. After all, it had only been a dozen or so years prior that the war had ended with a bang at Hiroshima and Nagasaki.

Americans were justifiably proud of ridding the world of Nazis. It also meant as a young boy having to answer the dreaded question from your friends, “What did *YOUR* Dad do during the war?” Woe to the kid whose Dad was 4-F or had some other kind of deferment. Being stationed “stateside” also got you looks that varied from sympathetic to scornful, depending on how far the father was removed from the “action”.

But finding the answer to that question meant you had to ask it yourself.

My Dad was approachable on most subjects, but “The War” wasn’t one of them. It wasn’t that he was silent on the subject of war in general. We watched the TV shows and movies that were prevalent in those days, but he seemed reticent to talk about his personal involvement.

So it was with some inner trepidation that day when I popped the question, “So, Dad, what did you do during the war?”

He hesitated a bit, a wistful expression. “Mostly I was in France during the war and near the end I was in charge of a warehouse near Marseilles.” And then he fell silent.

A bit of a letdown. Not what I’d hoped for but... still a bit of a letdown.

Hours later I was still trying to process the news, trying to figure a way to put the best light on the fact that my father was some kind of storekeeper.

With Dad gone to work. Mom appeared, “Come with me. I want to show you something.”

On the kitchen table was a cigar box that she opened. Inside I saw photos. Guys in uniform, dirty but with their arms around each other’s shoulders and smiling.

“Your dad doesn’t like to talk much about the war, but he wasn’t just a manager of a warehouse like he said. More things happened. I’m not sure exactly, but sometimes he has bad dreams...he started out in a place called Omaha Beach.”

She pulled out some photos. “These were some of his friends — those that lived.

“This is called a *Purple Heart* medal. And this,” she held it up in its felt cushioned box, “is something called a *Bronze Star*.”

My Dad unbent over the years as the ambivalence he felt towards the war seemed to fade.

With the passage of time he did share a few stories.

One of my favorites was this: It was near the end of the war and the army had just captured a French town and had moved their headquarters into a brick building near the center of town that had formerly

served as German headquarters. As was their custom at the end of the day, Dad and the other sergeants had gathered in the basement to get their orders for the next day.

They had just settled in when they heard the distinctive sound of hobnailed boots clattering down the steps. All heads went up. Americans didn’t wear hobnailed boots, the only troops who wore those were the British ... and the Germans.

The startled German officers quickly threw their hands up. For them (and likely to their great relief) at that stage near the end, their war was over.

But the real prize my dad and several others soon discovered when they made their way outside was what the captured German officers had ridden in on—a *brand new, state of the art, still idling where they’d left it, Tiger tank*, ‘captured’ by my Dad (nearly single-handedly) and without firing a shot!

WHAT A STORY THAT WAS TO TELL MY FRIENDS AT SCHOOL!

Article courtesy of the NALC Branch 2555 East Lansing, Michigan May - June 2017 *Spartan Views*. Thank you to Editor Mark Woodbury, a special friend to Fred Acedo!



Bronze Star, getting pinned on by an unknown General. The guy on the right is my Dad, Sergeant Gerald C. Woodbury

Mario Muniz, USMC Veteran NALC Branch 782 Retiree

I had a conversation with Mario in July 2017. I called him because I was looking for information to flesh out (for our newsletter) an announcement that he and his wife, Irma, had recently celebrated their 50th wedding anniversary on July 8th.

At the outset of that conversation, Mario told me to remember August 18, 1968. He then proceeded to share with me some details of a sequence of events in Vietnam that he’d survived. As he recounted details, he once again stopped and asked me to remember the date: **August 18, 1968.**

I grabbed a piece of paper and wrote down the date. I figured if he’d mentioned it twice, it must be pretty important.

I had no idea that action would lead me to do some research. I just knew that Mario

THANK YOU, MARIO, AND ALL MILITARY VETERANS!



Mario Muniz served in Vietnam 1968 in G 2/5 - 3rd Platoon 3rd Squad. On August 18, 1968: "...At 181500E, Company G, at AT 945517, received S/A and A/W fire from the vicinity of AT 946517. The company returned fire from the vicinity of AT 946517, received S/A, returned 150 rounds S/A fire, 23 rounds M-79 and 10 rounds M-60 fire. As the company continued to advance, it received a heavier volume of S/A, A/W fire and handgrenades from an estimated platoon of NVA. Company G fired 250 rounds of S/A, 300 rounds of A/W, 50 rounds M-79 and 35 handgrenades. A 105mm mission of 60 HE rounds and 6 fixed wing air strikes were called, then Company G swept the enemy position. Results: 7 USMC KIA (*Note: The entire battalion suffered a loss of 14 KIA in August. Seven were in this single action.*); 13 USMC WIA EVAC.; 7 USMC WIA NON-EVAC; and 37 NVA KIA (conf)."

[Source: 2nd Battalion, 5th Marines, 1st Division Command Chronology 1AUG68 - 31AUG68 dtd 5SEP68]



Mario Muniz was there.

This santized version only hints at what went on. After almost fifty years, his memories are still vivid and very personal... Like Irma, we are glad he returned home. We honor him *and* his squad members!

had asked me to remember the date — ***TWICE***. It was important to Mario...

Over the course of the next few days, I was able to use the internet as a search tool. Found the September 1968 official USMC monthly report on activity in August 1968 *and* was able to find a reference to what his unit was engaged in on that specific date and that KIA and WIA information was cited. (See the actual language in the box at the top of the page.)

Additionally, the virtual Vietnam War Wall was really helpful as I tried to identify the names of the personnel who lost their lives on that one important day to Mario. Did a little more searching on Google Images for some possible graphics that I could use in conjunction with an idea that I started percolating for a mini-project.

A few days later, I presented to Mario something that I'd put together.

I don't know if I can actually put into words his reaction. But, I do know that he seemed so moved as he saw the names of each of the seven Marines who had been such a part of his life in combat in 1968.

And, now? To the best of my recollection, this is the account that Mario shared with

me about what happened on the night of August 18, 1968.

(Additionally, there is also a **Part 2** that I suggest you read. I learned about this additional twist after Mario read through what I'd written about his initial account. In its own way, it is just as amazing!)

Mario had been in the rear (**Part 2** later) and had been discharged to return to his unit: 2nd Battalion, 5th Marines, 1st Division Command Golf Company 2/5 - 3rd Platoon 3rd Squad.

He was dropped off on a road by a rice paddy. When he asked where his unit was, he was told, "Just walk about a mile in that direction and you'll find them in some village that they've cleared over there". He remembers thinking to himself, as he walked out there in the open through the rice paddy, "I just *know* there are eyes on me. I *know* that there's a sniper out there who is going to get me."

With a great sense of relief, he arrived at his unit unscathed and, when he reached his squad, he heard they were going to saddle up for a night op.

As Mario started to get his gear together, his Sergeant came by and told him that he would be staying behind when the rest of his squad went out that night. He protested. But, he was told that he'd just gotten back and that he was going to stay back with the newest radioman and act as part of a reinforcement group.

He didn't like it; but — Mario as a USMC Rifleman knew — "Orders were orders."

He recalls that it had gotten dark when everybody in his squad joined other Marines to go out on the night op. They filed out, and when they were out about a hundred and fifty rest yards, all hell seemed to break loose!

Mario remembers that he suddenly heard small arms fire, automatic weapons and

If you are on this page, you are looking at the web version of our newsletter. The print version only had four pages about our veterans. This has twenty-one....

the explosions of rocket propelled grenades. Mario and the rest of the Marines in the village were unable to provide any support because, where the Vietnamese forces were deployed, the Marines under attack would have been in their direct field of fire.

In the village, the Marines called for and received suppressing fire from artillery units. Some fast movers were also brought in to drop ordnance on the indicated coordinates. It was noisy. It was frightening. It was nerve wracking to be so close to the impacts. And it was also frustrating to be so close and yet be unable to help his friends.

About forty-five minutes after the action began, it got quiet enough that Mario could hear individual voices. He remembers hearing the groans of hurt Marines. He also remembers some of the dying calling for their mothers.

At some point, the Sergeant directed Mario and some of the other Marines to go out, find, and assist any wounded and bring back

the bodies of any KIA. As they did, they discovered that while there were many who had been killed there were also quite a number of WIA who needed a MEDEVAC. When the wounded and the bodies were brought back to the village, Mario's Sergeant asked him if he had a flashlight.

When Mario responded in the affirmative, the Sergeant told him that he needed to crawl back out about a hundred yards in the direction where the firefight had taken place. He was told to use his flashlight to signal the location of the LZ to the incoming MEDEVAC helicopters.

Mario crawled out with his weapon and flashlight. When he reached a spot that he felt would make a good LZ, he turned the flashlight on and placed in his crotch pointed upward. As he kept his rifle at the ready, he kept trying to look around to see if there might be any enemy soldiers around. He would periodically reach down to turn the flashlight on and off to draw the attention of the helicopter pilot.

GOLF COMPANY, 2ND BATTALION, 5TH MARINES, 1ST MARDIV, III MAF

**Casualty Date: 8/18/1968
Quang Nam Province, South Vietnam**

In mid-August 1968, the 2nd and 3rd Battalions, 5th Marines and the 2nd Battalion, 7th Marines conducted a cordon-and-search operation in the vicinity of Chau Phong, Quang Nam Province. On Sunday, 18 August, Golf 2/5 engaged an enemy platoon and killed 37 North Vietnamese soldiers — but lost seven Marines who were killed in the action:

SSgt (E-6) Freddy R. Williams from Plains, Georgia (Silver Star) — Infantry Unit Leader

Date of Birth 11/20/1935 Age at Loss: 32
Length of Service: 14 Years Start Tour: 6/14/1968

Cpl (E-4) Michael D. Hale from Lebanon, Indiana — Rifleman

Date of Birth 11/30/1947 Age at Loss: 20
Length of Service: 1 Year Start Tour: 11/12/1967

Cpl (E-4) James O. Spaw from Costa Mesa, California — Engineer Equipment Operator

Date of Birth 6/28/1948 Age at Loss: 20
Length of Service: 2 Years Start Tour: 2/6/1968

LCpl (E-3) Larry W. Walker from Greensboro, North Carolina — Rifleman

Date of Birth 3/9/1949 Age at Loss: 19
Length of Service: 1 Year YearStart Tour: 11/6/1967

LCpl (E-3) Michael R. Witt from Cincinnati, Ohio — Rifleman

Date of Birth 6/19/1947 Age at Loss: 21
Length of Service: 1-2 Years Start Tour: 12/22/1967

Pfc (E-2) Douglas S. Scroggins from Wing, Alabama — Rifleman

Date of Birth 4/24/1947 Age at Loss: 21
Length of Service: 00 Years Start Tour: 8/5/1968

Pfc (E-2) Wallace O. Travers from St. Louis, Missouri — Rifleman

Date of Birth 12/6/1949 Age at Loss: 18
Length of Service: 00 Years Start Tour: 6/23/1968



It worked. The KIA and those who were seriously wounded were loaded and transported. Mario made his way back to the village and began to realize what had just happened *and* what had not.

Everybody in Mario's squad was dead. If Mario had gone out with them, as he'd definitely intended, he would probably have been killed, too.

(As a side note: Mario's Sergeant thanked him and told him that he was going to put him in for a commendation because going out alone in the dark into what had just been such a killing field had not been an easy task but that it was something that needed to be done. Ironically, that Sergeant was killed two days later and Mario never got his commendation. But, he doesn't begrudge the Marine Corps for this. Mario felt that he was just doing his job.)

Each of the names of his squad members is listed on the thing that I was able to put together for him. And — to emphasize what is a personally important thing for me — EACH of them is gone; but, **NOT ONE OF THEM** is ever forgotten by the surviving members of Golf Company 2/5.

Mario also shared this: In the morning daylight, they went out to reconnoiter. He found a lower leg with an issue USMC boot still on the foot. He just pushed the limb down into the soft mud of the rice paddy and considered that he'd just finished burying one of his fellow Marines.

GONE. BUT, NEVER FORGOTTEN!

And, now, as Paul Harvey would have said, "For the rest of the story..."

Part 2

Mario rejoined his squad on that fateful night on August 18, 1968 after being discharged from the hospital. He'd been successfully treated for wounds suffered in another action a few days before.

His squad had been part of a convoy escort force. It had been a slow-paced process as the road had to be cleared of mines before the vehicles would be allowed to move. It was hot and it was humid. There was no breeze to speak of and there wasn't any shade.

Mario was wearing a Prick-25 radio. Although it was a communication link with the chain of command, it was also a large "Red Flag" with that long antenna. *Radiomen were prized targets!*

The reason that Mario had it on *his* back was that the former radioman had been killed just the day before. When volunteers were asked for, no one came forward. Finally, Mario told his Sergeant that he would do it. It was a job that needed to be done.

At some point, they were ordered to take a break and Mario sat on the side of the road with "Abeyta", one of his good buddies. Another Marine, "D", who was a little skittish kept moving around. Mario and "Abeyta" kept telling "D" to knock it off and just to sit down because he was going to set off a mine.

The memory that Mario has is that "D" had just passed on his left side from front to back. And then, in his peripheral vision, Mario

saw "D's" body flying through the air just as he felt a tremendous explosion behind him. Both he and "Abeyta" were somersaulted and Mario wound up a few feet away after a 360 degree head-over-heels spin. His back hurt because there was shrapnel embedded there. But the shrapnel was from pieces of the radio and not what had come from the mine.

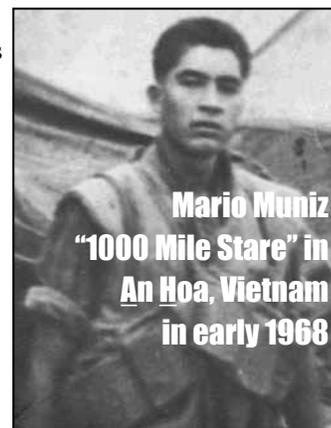
While "Abeyta" had shrapnel in his left arm, they were both still alive. "D" — the guy who had tripped the mine — hadn't been so fortunate...

Mario and Irma were married on July 8, 1967. They were still newlyweds on August 18, 1968 when Mario was in Vietnam.

If Mario had not volunteered to wear the radio, he may well have been sitting on the side of the road when the mine went off and he wouldn't have had that extra "layer" of protection from the shrapnel that wearing the radio on his back had provided.

If he had never been wounded, he would have been with his squad when they were decimated on August 18, 1968.

Letter Carrier Mario Muniz retired from the East Bakersfield Station in September 2003 after a thirty-three year career which began in 1970. His military service, active Veteran involvement and NALC membership should, indeed, all be honored!!



"If ever I have done anything to honor our Vietnam Veterans, this is my greatest accomplishment to date"



"If ever I have done anything to honor our Vietnam Veterans, this is my greatest accomplishment to date"

A portion of Taft Highway near Bakersfield was officially renamed in 2006 to honor veterans of the Vietnam War.

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

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

that had been raised to erect the monument was taken by the national organizations, Muniz said.

All I want to do is finish the effort started by Barney Cadena.

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

All costs have been borne by private sources. That's just fine with Muniz who is glad to have seen this project succeed.

It was for Barney and all the Vets...

"Tragically, he was killed in a motorcycle accident a few years ago, Muniz said of his longtime friend and fellow Marine. The veterans Post folded, and money

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

Modified article courtesy of STEVEN MAYER, *Bakersfield Californian* staff writer, Monday February 21, 2011



Mario Muniz kneels during this picture taken during the Keystone, South Dakota reunion of Golf Company survivors in 2012.

Mike Gonzales, USN Veteran NALC Branch 782 Retiree

Drafted in 1951 in conjunction with the Korean War, Mike found himself sitting on a bus with his friend Richard Olague as they travelled over the Grapevine on their way to take the military physical in Los Angeles.

As the bus climbed the steep grade, Mike's ear felt all plugged up and Richard advised him to hold his nose shut, close his mouth and blow. Feeling his ear pop, Mike also felt some kind of liquid trickling out. Later that day, he was told that he had not passed the hearing test. As he left, he said goodbye to Richard who was being sworn into the Army.

Looking back now, he wonders how his life might have been different had both he and Richard passed the physical and become soldiers. Six months after riding that bus with Mike Gonzales, his friend stepped on a mine in Korea and was dead.

In 1955, Uncle Sam remembered Mike and sent him a letter requesting his presence at another military physical. This time the bus headed toward Fresno. There, in addition to passing with flying colors, he and the other inductees were instructed to, "Form a line. Count off in fours!" Mike, and all of the other number threes were told to take a step forward and they were informed, "All you number threes, you're now in the Navy."

Following boot camp at the San Diego Naval Training Center, Mike was assigned for training as a mechanic providing helicopter maintenance. He remembers some of those early aircraft: The Gyrodyne RON Rotorcycle, Sikorsky H-19 Chickasaw and the Bell 47.

Squadron, HU-1, was stationed at Ream Field. (Ream eventually became home base for all helicopter squadrons of the Pacific Fleet and was known as "Helicopter Capital.") The station was



redesignated NAVAL AUXILIARY AIR STATION IMPERIAL BEACH in July 1955.) His squadron was deployed for two of the years he was assigned to assist in the replenishment of supplies for units which were part of the Distant Early Warning (DEW) Line in Alaska.

His squadron was attached to the Coast Guard icebreaker STATEN ISLAND and they flew sorties almost every other day in and around the Bering Sea. The next year, sailing on the Coast Guard Cutter STORIS, Mike was once again involved in almost daily flight ops as part of a fifty ship convoy in Alaskan waters and he remembers passing through Unimak Pass and liberty in Nome.

Nearing the end of his enlistment in 1958, Mike received orders to debark and return to San Diego so that he could be discharged.

Shortly after that, at age 28, Mike started his career as a Letter Carrier in 1958. He married Oralia Mary Gonzales in 1959, worked hard to provide a good home and life for his wife and three children, and eventually — after 32 years — retired out of Bakersfield's Hillcrest Station in 1990.

Mike is now 87 years old and he has had more than a little time to reflect on the impact that his military service had on his life. He is glad that he had a chance to serve his country. Although he missed being around his Father and Mother and the rest of

his family during his time in the Navy, he knows that what he did was important.

Mike also feels that the hand of God was present when he had the problem with his ear and that it was a blessing in disguise. Had he passed his initial physical exam, he might have been in Korea with his friend and might also have been killed or seriously wounded in action.

Because he survived his time in the military and married Oralia a year after his discharge, Mike is grateful that his children — their children and any of his other descendants — were able to have a chance at life.

Nicholas Travers, USAF Veteran NALC Branch 782 Member

With visions of exploits in all over the world, Nicholas began a six year enlistment in the Air Force in 2007. Anticipating that he and his wife, Shelli, would be travelling the world together, it seemed as if it would be an amazing adventure.

Nicholas had definite goals for his time in the military. He either wanted to be an Explosive Ordnance Disposal Specialist or a Firefighter. He explained to the recruiter that he would take an opening to whichever school came open first when he was done with recruit training. With a "Bring It On!" attitude, he was ready!

Lackland Air Force Base in Bexar County, Texas is where Nicholas went to boot camp. (In fact, every single person who enlists in the Air Force goes there for initial training.) It's also where he found that he would no longer be referred to by his first name — "Travers" is who he would be until his enlistment ended in 2013.

After graduation, he spent thirteen and-a-half weeks at USAF Fire Protection Specialist Tech School at Goodfellow AFB in San Angelo, TX. There, Travers learned how to fight fires "The Air Force Way". With no background, he found it easy put the training into practice. Interestingly, there were some trainees who had been either city or county firemen and they seemed to have a little harder time because they had to "unlearn" what they knew before they could apply the USAF techniques and practices.

Upon graduation, Travers was assigned to the 92nd Civil Engineering Squadron at Fairchild AFB in Spokane, WA. His duties consisted of constant local training, temporary duty (TDY) at locations like Tyndall AFB in Florida for more training, and being "at the ready" in the fire station.

Eventually, the routine developed into a sense of "just going to work". Initially, his days revolved around a 48 hour on duty and 72 hour off duty schedule and he really liked that. There were always so many things to do at the station that his days were always filled over the 48 hours he was there. The next 72 hours were devoted to being at home working on projects or traveling with Shelli to see things in the area. Eventually, there was a change as his unit went to a 24 hour on and 24 hour off routine and Travers felt a little more restricted with those time frames.

But, while it may have seemed that Travers had a job like any civilian firefighter, his was still a military life. In his six years of service, his first overseas deployment was to Balad Air Base in Iraq. That was followed by another deployment in Qatar at the "Al Udaid" Air Base.

Generally, Travers and the rest of his squadron only trained on USAF aircraft and the procedures they would need to follow in

the event that their expertise would have to be provided. Because of the nature of the facilities at Al Udaid, other service Branches constantly rotated aircraft in and out. Duty in Qatar was made more interesting because — not only was he in a foreign country — he was also working with different aircraft. For example, it was fun learning about the USN F-18 Super Hornet.

Looking back, Travers is glad that he made the decision to enlist in the Air Force. He received great training and was certified in any number of different skills as a first responder (HAZMAT, EMT, etc.). However, in 2013, the military was downsizing and he was discharged at the end of his initial enlistment period.

His immersion in military life is paying other dividends. Because he became infused with a sense of getting the mission accomplished, Travers (who, once again, is now “Nicholas”) is a full time student at the same time that he is a full-time Regular Carrier City Route 009 in Ridgecrest.

It’s not easy. But, Nicholas knows that he will “Get It Done!” He’s on a journey for Shelli and his nine year old daughter, Peytynn.

Charlie Loven, USMC Veteran NALC Branch 782 Retiree

After leaving high school in Harlingen, Texas right before graduation, Charlie wondered what he was going to do with his life. (He did later receive a high school diploma from the Texas Board of Education.) A few months later, he started on a journey which would get him away from the Texas humidity which he was pretty tired of. At least for awhile...

On June 2, 1950 he enlisted in the United States Marine Corps. Twenty-three days later (on June 25, 1950), North Korea invaded South Korea. When he heard about that, he remembers this, “I thought, while in boot camp in San Diego, that I might have done the wrong thing. But, too late, I was stuck!!”

(As an aside, when discussing Marine Corps boot camp, Charlie knows that recruits no longer experience what he went through. He recalls that there were literal “butt kickin’ and attitude adjustments” that are no longer tolerated by the military. He also knows that drill instructors are now highly trained and have achieved some seniority. When he was going through training, his DIs were Corporal Jacobson (a 2 striper) and PFC Sage (a 1 striper); and, the main talent that they brought to the job was that they were two tough SOBs who weren’t reluctant to start swinging and kicking when the recruits didn’t react quickly enough or in a way that they were told to.)



Like many other Marines from that era, after boot camp he soon found himself facing shockingly bitter cold when he was assigned to George Company, 3rd Battalion, 7th Marines, 1st Marine Division on the east coast of Korea. Going through cold weather training, two USMC Corsairs mistook them for the enemy and

dropped two bombs which caused no injuries. *That* was a pretty nerve rattling event, but it gave him a preview of what he was going to find himself experiencing in the very near future. Charlie was used to finding himself one of the bigger men wherever he wound up. The USMC noticed this and provided him with a Browning Automatic Rifle, lots of ammo and a PRC-10 radio on a backback which he strapped on. It was a lot of weight!

In bone-chilling cold, his unit was eventually assigned to a hill overlooking a valley where the enemy was lobbing shells at them. The Marines inherited an Army mobile 8 inch self-propelled howitzer and used “bore-sighting” technique to return fire until they ran out of shells.

“Then, the unit was sent to the West coast of Korea and helped set up the rest camp by the “Freedom Gate Bridge”. During this time, I was assigned to a dug-out with a .50 caliber machine gun to protect the camp from enemy aircraft. There were ten machine guns around the camp.”

It was here that Charlie got the first of his three Purple Heart medals.

Dug in at the top of the hill on the front lines, the Marines faced a daily barrage. “I and the rest of my platoon (about 28 Marines) were assigned about 50 yards in front of the main trenches. While filling sand bags, we heard the sound of enemy mortars being fired. My buddy and I laid down in the closest trench. One shell came in. My friend was killed. I came to about three days later.”

He was told by others in his unit that, due to his injuries, he had been strapped to the skid of a MEDEVAC helicopter and airlifted to a MASH unit for medical care. The other two Marines who dove into the trench with him had not survived.

At the end of his four year enlistment, Charlie returned to Bakersfield and was hired as a Letter Carrier in 1955. After performing sub duties for a time, he eventually went to the 18th and G post office and won a bid to a route that no one else wanted.

Charlie’s assignment was residential delivery in the area around what is now Hwy 58, South Union and Casa Loma. “I had to dead-head quite a way from the station before any deliveries were made. You really had to be in shape!”

The reason no one wanted the route was that delivery was made from a bicycle. And, it was not a light-weight bike! It was really heavy, had a little, itty-bitty front tire, and a big, deep basket on the front and the line of travel included a lot of spot boxes.

He learned how to deliver with letters in his left hand (pinkie hooked under the handlebar to help steer, flats in his left armpit) and developed the technique of slowly rolling in front of the box, opening the flap and placing the letters which he’d fingered together with the flat mail in the box...all without coming to a stop!

(Some current old-timer Branch 782 members may remember “Pop” Wright. Charlie recalls that — before he became got to be an old-timer and earn the name of “Pop” — Wright was known as “Goober” and that he used to be Charlie’s T-6.)

Although he enjoyed delivering mail (punctuated by one occasion when, on Panorama, he had walked up the side of one of the big houses to get a signature for a letter and encountered a woman who had just gotten out of her pool and wasn’t wearing any clothes —not that he was looking...), Charlie decided to go back into the Marine Corps in 1958.

He was reinstated in his former “Buck Sergeant” pay grade.

At the time, the USMC was looking “for a few tall men” . Charlie more than met the height requirement and he acquired a new military occupational specialty (MOS): Military Police.

After training, he found himself aboard the USS PRINCETON (LPH-5) where he was assigned as a “brig warden”.



“Buck Sergeant” Charles Loven being promoted to E-5 in 1959.



The Marines in Charlie’s unit really appreciated the way that he took care of them! Unbeknownst to him, they spent hours and hours of their own time putting together a special plaque to honor him on the occasion of his retirement after twenty-five years of service!

of tracking vehicle mileage, gas mileage, and making reports; because the unit had its own gas pumps, Charlie tracked the

Through the years, until 1976 when he retired from the Marine Corps as an E-8 after a 25 year career, Charlie took on duty in positions of increased responsibility in both foreign and domestic locations.

He served as the duty Provost Marshall at Camp Pendleton and has a whole different set of stories which came out of his many varied experiences all over the world.

Because he had been employed by the Postal Service before re-enlisting in the USMC, he was able to return to duty as a Letter Carrier in 1976.

Unfortunately, a short time later he suffered a serious knee injury. After a long period where he had to fight for his benefits — he was medically assessed as being unable to perform his normal Letter Carrier duties and he was placed in a disability status.

Quite a few years later, in the late 1970s, he received a letter from the Post Office. He was directed to report for duty and they tried to make him a Clerk because he would be working the night shift at the Annex on California Avenue. **But, Charlie was a Letter Carrier and he resisted their efforts!** Although he was never made a Clerk, he sorted a lot of mail at the Annex.

After about a year, he was assigned to Stockdale Station and he was made responsible for a number of different things: he was in charge

amount of fuel used, set up fuel deliveries and made sure that all of the reports were provided to the Vehicle Maintenance Facility; he also put together new satchels and supplies for new Letter Carriers who reported for 93309 duty; he ensured that there would be adequate miscellaneous supplies on hand (pens, toilet paper, postal forms, etc.) for use by the station; and, he also did a variety of other tasks as they were assigned.

When Charlie retired from the USPS on November 1, 2000, he did so with twenty-seven years of accumulated postal time.

ADDED TO HIS TWENTY-FIVE YEARS OF USMC TIME, CHARLIE WALKED OUT THE DOOR WITH OVER FIFTY-TWO YEARS OF FEDERAL SERVICE!

Shari Sharp NALC Branch 782 Member Daughter of a Vietnam War KIA

There is a phrase which is associated with Veterans ,“Some gave all. All gave some.” It is also a painful part of the lives of family members who never got the chance to see their military loved ones return to be with them.



A Letter Carrier since 8/18/2007, Shari is Bakersfield’s Dole Court Shop Steward. She is also the daughter of a U.S. Army soldier who never came home to give her a hug, to see her grow up or to know his grandchildren.

On the day her father was killed, Shari was only two years old.



On June 1, 1968, SP4 Danny Edward Ward lost his life in the service of the United States in Kien Tuong Province, South Vietnam. At the time, he was assigned to the 43RD INF PLT SCOUT DOG, 9TH INF DIV, USAR and his MOS was 11E20: Armor Crewman. He had been in the Vietnam since

11/28/1967 and his enlistment was scheduled to end on October 24, 1968...

Shari was able to travel to Washington, DC and find her father’s name on the Vietnam Wall Memorial. It was an emotional moment to see — there on Panel W61, Line 8 — a lasting memorial to the father she’d never known.

Although Shari is not a Veteran, she has such a deep and profound appreciation for each person who is. She knows that that each military Veteran has truly given something! She also knows that each family member of a military veteran has also given a part of their lives. Truly, Veterans Day is special to her, too!

Stephanie MacLaughlin, USA Veteran NALC Branch 782 Retiree

Betty Newman was a clerk at the Bakersfield post office and she had a daughter. Her daughter was an only child who was extremely shy, seemed to lack confidence, and needed

to find some direction in her life. Betty wanted her daughter to “grow up and experience as much as possible” and to become a strong woman. One day, she urged Stephanie to join the military.

She was shocked when Stephanie actually did!

Enroute to eight weeks of recruit training, 21 year old Stephanie found herself aboard a bus in Alabama on the way to Fort McClellan in May 1974. “Welcome to your new home,” the bus driver drawled as he opened the door and she was welcomed by what she remembers as the meanest of the drill instructors she came into contact with. She smiles as she relates, “I was just like Goldie Hawn when she went through boot camp in the movie *Private Benjamin!* And, I don’t think they ever found a pair of boots small enough to fit me to run the obstacle course!”

Waking up at 0400 soon became routine, as did the constant pace of classes, obstacle courses, constant ironing and inspections. She recalls the lines at the pay phones where she and most of the other recruits shared how homesick they were while waiting to make calls home.



Arlie Sipes a proud grandfather and Stephanie in August 1984

Following graduation, Stephanie was sent to Fort Gordon in Georgia for Advanced Infantry Training (AIT) for Signal Corps military occupational specialties. Her MOS was 72 “Echo”. Upon completion of that training, she took leave to return home before flying out of Philadelphia to report to the headquarters of the 4th Transportation Battalion in Flak-Kaserne Ludwigsburg, Germany.

Stephanie moved into the brand spanking new barracks. [All that remains of the former barracks are the gymnasium (now a kindergarten), the officers mess (now an apartment building), the guard house (now a cafe) and the main gate. Source: Wikipedia] She met new friends, put on her uniform each day, and reported to work where she pumped out a lot of paper on an old manual typewriter.

Following through with her mom’s admonition to truly experience life, Stephanie spent time exploring Austria, Amsterdam, England, France and Italy with friends. Many times her travels were on a train and sometimes she would be with a friend who had a car. She remembers cobblestone streets, old buildings and walking on streets on “Junken Day”. Once, looking for a guest house, she was part of a group who opened up a front door and walked into the living room where the residents were sitting. They were all surprised! Although she never did learn much German, she did learn other things: whether at the base NCO club, or out with her friends, Stephanie learned to drink German beer and to actually like it!



Believe it or not, Stephanie was never the tallest member in any of her units...

Military life is not just “another day at the office”.

“REFORGER” gave Stephanie a chance to go out into the field where she would dig latrines, help put up tents, and participate in support activities in the

various maneuvers. She never got enough time with an M-16 to become proficient, but she knows how to hold one!

During her time in a foreign country, she experienced being made to feel as if she were “an ugly American” by some of the Germans who didn’t see past her uniform. *That* was also part of the experiences that seemed to add to her maturation process.

The people who lived in German villages were different than many of the city people she encountered and they were very friendly. Stephanie recalls having one an extremely “We’re not in Kansas, anymore!” moment in a German shopping mall because — ***right next door to the regular stores!!!*** — there was a sex shop selling products that she would not even have begun to imagine.

And, of course, there were times when she found herself doing a totally new unplanned activity which would have been unthinkable if she had not been in the military...

When the General’s regular secretary was unavailable to travel to the USAG Army Base in Stuttgart, Germany, Stephanie was assigned to accompany him. ***As she was strapping herself into a helicopter for the very first time in her life, she realized that she’d never been so scared!***

Stephanie relates that her overall military experience was so tremendously helpful. She became much more confident. She was more “mission oriented”. More importantly, she had learned to overcome any and all obstacles that she might run into.

On December 21, 1976 which was her first day as a U.S. Postal Service Letter Carrier, she had no idea that she would put to the test all of things she had learned about herself and how to succeed while in she was serving in the United States Army.

But, persist she did, and on April 1, 2013 she retired with some 39 years of total federal service!

Alex Dang, USA and USAR Veteran NALC Branch 782 Retiree

“I was attending Bakersfield College (BC) in 1967 and also working part-time evenings at the K-Mart on 34th Street earning maybe \$1.70 an hour. My best friend from BHS mentioned that he was going to apply for a job at the U.S. Post Office....that a part time position was available.

In May/ June of 1967, I put in my application at the U.S. Post Office for a position as a 20 hour Regular, doing night-time mail box collections for maybe \$1.95 an hour. I was interviewed in August 1967 and reported to work on September 9, 1967.

When I turned 18 years old, I registered for the draft...just to be that “law abiding citizen”! During my 2nd year at BC, my first DRAFT NOTICE arrived, and I filed for a deferment. My sister and I were attending BC at the same time and my parents could only afford to send one of us away to a four year school. I told my parents to send my sister (she graduated from San Jose State).

During my third year at BC (when I was still a part-time postal employee, my INDUCTION NOTICE ARRIVED: Report to the Greyhound Bus Depot at 0430 for a bus ride to the induction center.

I can’t remember the date but I do remember that I thought that it would be better if I finished out my 3rd year at BC. I also

decided that if I was being drafted, why not just join up for 3 or 4 years and get a education while serving my country. My older brother was U.S. Air Force and career officer. He agreed.

I *really* wanted to become a military X-ray Technician and it didn't matter whether it was in the Army, Air Force, Navy or Coast Guard. I discovered that only the U.S. Army offered a 21 week school for X-Ray.

After speaking with the Army recruiter, I found out that I could sign up and take a DELAYED ENLISTMENT, and go active duty after my 21st birthday, plus finish my 3rd year at BC! I turned 21 on August 13, 1969 and entered the U.S. Army on the 18th of August 1969.

The folks in the Post Office Personnel Office at our 18th & G Street Post Office did all the paperwork allowing me MILITARY LEAVE during my term of enlistment. John Loustalot was the Postmaster and Patty Baird was his secretary. It was on her advice, that I chose to take military leave from the Post Office. (I hope I remembered her name correctly...)

I went to Ft. Ord, California for 8 weeks BASIC TRAINING, went to Ft. Sam Houston, Texas in San Antonio for 19 weeks of very condensed x-ray training and then I flew back out to Ft. Ord Hospital for 2 weeks additional training in the x-ray department.



Medical Field Service School. Medical Field Service School at Fort Sam Houston in 1969.

After receiving graduation documents, I was ordered to take 8 days leave, then report to Travis Air Force Base and make my 27 hour journey to Viet Nam.

Although, I was originally DRAFTED. I wanted to gain something more, than just be handed a weapon for shooting enemies of my country. My GOAL, during this time period, was to make this experience something I could carry into the future. Helping to save lives seemed like it would be more rewarding.

91P10/20/30 was my MOS (Military Occupational Specialty) - X-Ray Tech (Graduating Class date 30 March 1970).

I was assigned to MILPHAP Team 27, City of MOC HOA, the capital city of Kien Thuong Prvince. I was in Vietnam to replace an x-ray tech who had already gone home by the time I arrived.



Three months after I arrived at Team 27...the OR Tech went home.

For the next 9 months, I cross trained

(on-the-job training) as the Operating Room (OR) Tech, assisting the SURGEON, handing the surgery instruments to the Doctor as he worked to save the life of the wounded.

Without a doubt, I have to share that this was the absolutely MOST REWARDING PART OF MY MILITARY CAREER!

I was "in country" for 11 months and 23 days and then returned to Ft. Ord and worked at that hospital till the U.S. Army gave me a 6 month drop, so I only ended serving 2.5 years total time on active duty.

I was discharged at the rank/pay grade of SPECIALIST 5 from Ft. Ord, California... on 22FEB1972 and then continued my service in the U.S. Army Reserve.



In conjunction with my Reserve duty—at 55 years young—I was activated for OIF (Operation Iraqi Freedom) and left my route and my customers for 18 months (from January 2004 through June 2005). My unit from Bakersfield was the 736th Transportation Company. My company was assigned to a base called CEDAR II, located in IRAQ. (This is the city where Jessica Lynch's convoy was ambushed.)

By the time my unit arrived in country, Kellogg, Brown and Root had established many tent cities for units conducting operations in the war zone. We operated out of a base area protected by air & ground personnel. We were never hit. The tents were air conditioned, so we could rest and sleep on double decker bunks.

Once we geared up and walked outside, then it became a furnace. I have pictures of thermostats reading 128 degrees and one reading 132 degrees. Working in Bakersfield was *NOT* a problem.

BEFORE I LEFT FOR IRAQ, I PROMISED MY WIFE MAUREEN THAT—UPON MY RETURN — I WOULD RETIRE FROM THE U.S. ARMY. I DID JUST THAT IN FEBRUARY OF 2006.



On the left, Alex Dang — in his mid-50s — takes a picture with his unit in Iraq while deployed with the 736th Transportation Company

With my Active and Reserve duty my TOTAL TIME IN THE MILITARY: 33 years, 9 months and 7 days—as per official retirement documents.

I have no regrets at retiring from the military when I did.

I started with the Post Office in September of 1967 and retired in September 2014 with 2628.72 sick leave hours on the books. I had the sick leave when I needed it and used it when I really

//

needed it. BENEFITS are a good thing to have!

Alex Dang was working at Bakersfield's Stockdale Station when he retired on September 30, 2014 with over forty-eight years of service!

Bill Curtis, USN Veteran NALC Branch 782 Retiree

With a USN background (Bill's father, HMC Donald J. Curtis was a 20 year retiree) it made sense that Bill might make a decision to enlist in the Navy. On October 10, 1966 — three days before turning eighteen — he did just that.

Following boot camp at Naval Training Center San Diego, he spent the next 18 weeks in Michigan at Naval Station Great Lakes undergoing training to be a Gunners Mate. After graduation, he was assigned to the *USS CAMP (DE-251)* which was on picket and support duty in coastal Vietnamese waters.



An official USN photo of the *USS CAMP* underway.

Aboard her for eleven months from May 1967 until April 1968, Bill experienced life aboard ship during a typhoon. [“Running into 40 foot seas and 70 knot winds which remained unabated for several days, the *CAMP* suffered total destruction of the forward gun shield and loss of the fire control radar system. Subsequent high seas washed the remnants of the gun shield over the side and reduced the remainder of mount 31 to mere junk.” Source: Wikipedia] “After the typhoon, we were directed to Subic Bay, Philippines for emergency pier side repairs, where an eight-foot section of her hull was found nearing failure. The enclosed rear gun mount 32 was moved forward and replaced with an open gun mount from a decommissioned ship.”

As a junior Gunners Mate, Bill was kept pretty busy trying to bring everything back up to speed. The *CAMP* then cruised to Guam, Hong Kong and Taiwan. “We then returned to Vietnam and resumed duty as part of Operation Market Time.”

Up until then, Bill's “Vietnam War” had been aboard a ship cruising off the shore. It had all been war “at a distance”.

In April 1968, Bill received orders to “Patrol Boat, River” (PBR) duties which would probably lead to a more personal interaction with people who were trying to kill him. Although he was upset at first, his introduction to the craft at PBR SCHOOL MARE ISLAND in Vallejo, California got him pretty excited.

The PBR was a thirty foot by 10 foot wide long boat with a fiberglass hull and water jet drive powered by twin supercharged 220 horsepower diesels and could operate in shallow, weed-choked rivers. It drew only two feet of water fully loaded. More importantly, while it had no armor to speak of, it packed quite a punch!

Bill Curtis remembers, “... twin M2HB .50 caliber (12.7 mm) machine guns forward in a rotating shielded tub, single .50 caliber on the stern, with an M-60 amidships, and sometimes we also mounted an 81mm mortar, or a bow-mounted Mk16 Mod 4 Colt 20 mm automatic cannon. The boats were designed to rely on rapid acceleration, maneuverability, and speed.

And, also, to put out a world of hurt!”

“AS A GUNNERS MATE, IT DIDN'T GET MUCH BETTER THAN THAT!!!”

Part of the PBR training involved going through NAS WHID-BEY ISLAND in Washington State where he got an introduction to “Evasion & Survival”.

After landing at Tan Son Nhut Air Base in Vietnam in August 1968, he was ordered to report to “Delta Gypsy” River Boat Section 523. Bill vividly recalls walking along the Saigon streets and looking up at the rooftops, seeing sandbags and people with weapons, and knowing that he was entering a different world.



He eventually joined his unit at the *USS Garrett County (LST-786)*. She was the support vessel for the PBRs in the area. On her deck were two Navy Helicopter Attack Light Squadron Three (HAL-3) “Seawolf” UH-1B Huey gunships. The two helicopters were the designated rapid response units for the attached PBRs.

Within a few days, Bill was transferred to Commander River Squadron – 572 TF-116. He was then introduced to places like “Purple Heart Alley”. He soon experienced his own very personal “closest time I ever came to dying” — up to that point...

THE EGG BASKET INCIDENT

For context, the PBRs were utilized in much the same way that police are dispatched. There would be a report of something that needed to be investigated and a PBR would be dispatched to put “eyes on” whatever it was that seemed suspicious.

About two weeks after Bill reported to his unit (basically two weeks after he was in Vietnam), a sampan was reported because it was floating in the middle of the river and no one seemed to be aboard. Bill and the other three enlisted crewmen on the PBR made their way to the sampan and determined that, indeed, there was no one aboard.

But, they did see that there was a large wicker basket on deck that contained a lot of eggs that were visible.

“The sampan was, initially towed, but started to turn sideways, so the boat stopped and we pulled it to the back of the boat. We lifted the basket out and stowed it on the engine covers. Then we pulled the sampan up onto the “stern sheet” and tied it off. There was a string sticking out of the bow board and it was pulled out by Seaman Collier, who then noticed a grenade drop out. The pin was stuck with rust, so it didn't go off. We dropped it into the river. Then, after much discussion, it was decided to pull up to the shore. The next step was that we lifted the basket down onto the beach.

Our VN cop then called a farmer over and instructed him to open it. At that moment our boat backed off into the river. The ensuing explosion blew the farmer into three pieces and a small boy in the field was hit in the head. The VN cop had a shrapnel wound to his ankle. Later, that day our CO came out to the farmer's village to apologize and made some "compensation" to the family

In Bills's words, "**Stupid with a Capital S!**" That's how we felt when we realized how close we'd come to dying! Because of the blast pattern, it had probably been three claymores that had been set to detonate."



Such was our life on a Navy boat in the middle of the Co Chin River on that one day "in country".

Fast forward to a day twelve months later — and with many more hundreds of days experiences as a combat Veteran — Bill ended his tour in mid-August 1969 and he left to return to "The World".

Sitting on a barstool in the Enlisted Men's Club, he was drinking a PBR (Pabst Blue Ribbon) at Naval Station Treasure Island in the middle of the Bay between San Francisco and Oakland in northern California.



Thousands of USN and USMC personnel preparing for discharge may remember this...

their hardest to kill him, he was getting ready to be discharged and return home.

Bill wouldn't turn 21 until October but he was having that beer on base with a number of other Vietnam Vets who were also going through the process of ending their military service. There were Sailors and Marines who, like him, had managed to survive their time "in country".

He remembers that the television station in the bar was set to a news channel and there was a piece about a music festival that was going on in upstate New York state. That was the first time that he heard about something called "Woodstock"...

His postal career began on July 28, 1980 and, after 28 years he joined "The Last Punch Bunch" on August 2, 2008 when Letter Carrier Bill Curtis retired out of Bakersfield's South Station. (This gave him 30 years and 10 months of federal service.)

Editor-guy note: Bill Curtis remained active in the USN Reserve and retired as a GMGC (E-7) in 1992.

Cherilyn Morgan, USN Veteran NALC Branch 782 Member

After graduating from East Bakersfield High School, Cherilyn worked in a variety of jobs for a number of years. She worked on the obstetrics floor at the old Kern General Hospital as a ward clerk, and later worked in the Bakersfield College bookstore. While living in San Francisco for almost two years, she worked as a sales clerk for an advertising company.

Upon returning to Bakersfield from San Francisco, Cherilyn began searching for employment. Back then, if you were looking for a job, you looked in the newspaper "want ads." One day, she saw an intriguing ad that read "**DECK HANDS NEEDED ABOARD SHIP. CRUISE THE OCEAN AND SEE THE WORLD!**"

She was interested in the idea of travel, and called the contact phone number. She could not believe it, when she found herself talking to a Navy recruiter! After a few more conversations and some completed prerequisites, Cherilyn joined the U.S. Navy! This was around December, 1982.

She was excited about doing something totally different from anything she had ever experienced. Although one of her older brothers had been drafted into the Army close to the end of the Vietnam War, there was no real tradition of military service in her background.

Needing to wrap up her affairs before leaving for boot camp, Cherilyn took advantage of the Delayed Enlistment Program.

In March 1983, she started recruit training in Orlando, Florida. She was older than the other female recruits, who were mostly just out of high school. Cherilyn says that she had an easier adjustment to boot camp life than many of the girls. She attributes it to having grown up with four brothers who were wrestlers, and also having already experienced living away from home for an extended time. She realized that most of the pressure in boot camp was due to the "mental games" played on the recruits by the superiors, so you had to be strong in mind and will.



The next step in her journey was San Diego, CA, where she attended and graduated from Radioman school as an SNRM (E-3 Seaman Radioman). She learned that the job of the radioman was to communicate with military commands (world-wide), and involved the sending and receiving of messages via both paper and voice.

The next three years found her in Naples, Italy. After subsequent re-enlistments, a succession of detailers sent her to Scotland, then to Sicily, back to California in Oakland, to a ship ported in San Diego, to two different commands in Guam, and finally to Hawaii.

Her first duty station was at Naval Computer and Telecommunications Area Master Station (NCTAMS) in Naples, Italy.



Sitting at the NCTAMS Naples bus stop on her way back to the barracks at end of watch.

Standing twelve-hour watches, she soon mastered her responsibilities, which, at that time, meant working with actual physical paper tapes. The message center was a noisy, frenetic environment, because the tapes were constantly being punched on machines and then sent out on tape readers, while paper tapes were simultaneously being received. Cherilyn describes the room often looking like a spaghetti factory!

When she wasn't working, Cherilyn started what became a well-oiled routine wherever the Navy took her. She booked herself on many of the group excursions offered by MWR (Morale, Welfare, and Recreation).

While in Italy, she traveled all over the country, and one of her favorite destinations was the Roman Coliseum. Cherilyn shyly

admits that she really likes to eat, and she thoroughly enjoyed the authentic cuisine served up wherever she went.

Cherilyn's family lineage is Scottish, Welsh and English. When offered a chance by her detailer, she jumped at the opportunity to work at NAVCOMMSTA THURSO in Scotland. The base was located on a cliff overlooking the ever-thrashing North Sea. Cherilyn recalls the intensely fierce winds which often buffeted this location.

The communication center was located underground. When topside, personnel sometimes had to use guide ropes to maneuver from one building to another. One day a sailor that Cherilyn personally knew, and who had just performed in a talent show, went walking by the cliffs alone. He was never seen again and his body was never found. It was believed that the winds blew him over the edge to his death.

At work it was more of the same routine, where she routed incoming and outgoing comm traffic and oversaw the secure disposal of top secret documents that accumulated. In her spare time, Cherilyn made trips to other Scottish cities, and also to London on a sleeper train.

Because she likes to try new foods, she even tried haggis (a dish made of a sheep's vitals mixed with oatmeal and onions, which is then boiled in the animal's stomach). Although she never indicated if she found it tasty or not, it should be noted that it is traditionally eaten in conjunction with one or more drams of Scotch whiskey...

The year and-a-half in Scotland passed quickly and, before she knew it, she was coming to the end of her second enlistment.

Her mother had been diagnosed with cancer; and, Cherilyn received word that the doctors thought her mother might not live long.

Faced with that kind of a decision, Cherilyn got out of the Navy and returned to Bakersfield to be with her Mom and the rest of her family. During this time at home, her Mom seemed to be improving. She even actually encouraged Cherilyn to go back into the Navy. Her Mother knew that Cherilyn had really liked

being in the military. As Cherilyn points out, "I think that my Mom had been so proud to have a daughter in the United States Navy!"

Nine months after having been out of the Navy, and with her Mom's blessing, Cherilyn re-enlisted.

Because she'd been out so long, instead of bringing her back in as an E-5, the Navy dropped her back down to E-3. She was not disheartened though, especially when she found out that her next tour of duty was to be three years at NAV COMMSTA SICILY in Sigonella, Italy!

She was thrilled with getting overseas duty and the chance to see more of Europe.

Cherilyn also remembers that around this time, the paper tape readers were replaced with paper readers by which sheet-size typed pages were transmitted.

Close to the end of that tour, her mother began getting sick again. In order to be closer to her family in Bakersfield, Cherilyn was able to get a transfer to the Naval Telecommunications Center (NTCC) in Oakland.

She lived on base housing on Treasure Island (in the middle of the Bay Bridge between San Francisco and Oakland) and traveled to Bakersfield most days off and every possible weekend.

While her duties in Oakland were similar to what she'd experienced elsewhere, it *was* a little different.

The naval contingent was only a very small part of an operation which was overwhelmingly staffed by civilians. Her three years in Oakland provided her a chance to be very busy with her radioman duties in the message center. And, she eventually worked her way back to E-5.

Unfortunately, after fighting cancer for more than four years, her Mom died in 1990. As a result, Cherilyn found herself spending a lot of her spare time in Bakersfield going through an accumulation of pictures and correspondence which her mom had "stashed". Because of her efforts, each of her siblings was provided with a copy of the treasure-trove of memories. She also visited her father as often as possible, because he was now alone.

Then, Cherilyn was faced with a decision on whether or not to re-enlist.

Her detailer sweetened the pot by offering her a chance to go to a brand new ship, the USNS TIPPECANOE (I-A0-199). The vessel was an oiler which was being commissioned in New Orleans, Louisiana. In fact, the ship was so new that Cherilyn — when she became a member of the crew — was presented with a framed poster designating her as a "Plank Owner." (Google the phrase...)



USNS TIPPECANOE (I-A0-199)

Later, she was fortunate enough to be on the ship to experience its transit through the Panama Canal. "It was fascinating to see how the locks worked as we moved our way up and down through the passage."

The ship made its new homeport in San Diego. There, it provided fuel to many ships in the area. The joke to the crew aboard the ship was that her mission was to “pass gas.”

Cherilyn’s next duty station was NCTAMS WESTPAC GUAM, where much of what she did was familiar. Yet, because of technological advances in the electronic world, the radio world was changing and becoming more computerized. It was at this station that Cherilyn was selected to work for the Command Master Chief, as his office assistant for about a year.

While in Guam, Cherilyn enjoyed her crusade to explore the island. She became active in “boonie stomps” (jungle hikes). She even got into the world of spelunking, caving, and even got to swim in an underground pool by the light of candles. She soon discovered that the people of Guam — as, in Hawaii — have tremendous feasts at their luaus!

After this enlistment ended, Cherilyn actually got out of the Navy a second time, but this time only for about a month. This was within the Navy’s “grace period” which allows one to come back in without loss of rank.

She was then recruited to a ship, the USNS 1ST LT JACK LUMMUS (T-AK-301). Named for a USN Medal of Honor Recipient, the vessel was a pre-positioned cargo ship full of vehicles, tanks, and other supplies which was at the ready for any type of mission support duties. It was also the flag ship of squadron COMPSRON THREE.

Besides performing normal daily radioman duties, she was able to be a part of the ship’s participation in a military exercise in Thailand, which was interesting and exciting.

Cherilyn’s next, and final, duty station was NCTAMS EAST-PAC in Wahiawa, Hawaii. It was located in a serene setting in the middle of a pineapple plantation close to the famous surfer hangout at North Shore.

It was at this command where Cherilyn got promoted to First Class Petty Officer RM1 (E-6).

Nearing the end of that enlistment, she was faced with a quandary on whether — after over sixteen years in the Navy — she should sign up one more time. Cherilyn struggled with her decision. She still enjoyed the Navy, the people, and the travel, but her father was now ailing and she felt that she should be with him.

The only duties the detailer offered were on aircraft carriers, and she had talked to enough radiomen through the years to

know the kind of berthing and living arrangements she might find shipboard.

It didn’t seem like it was something that she wanted to do at the end of her career. As an E-6, she anticipated that most of her work would be in managing the work that others would be doing.

Cherilyn left the Navy in April 2000. Many fellow Navy friends were amazed that she wouldn’t have just hung around for another four years until she retired. However, she knows that she made the right decision and she’s never looked back.

For her, it was time for her life to take a different direction. When she was hired in November 18, 2000 to work for the United States Post Office, Cherilyn did indeed find herself doing just that!

Because Cherilyn did the military buy-back of her military time, she didn’t lose “credit” for any of her time in the Navy. When she one day does retire from the post office, she is going to be better positioned to continue in her adventure to see some more of the world. Her present dream is to spend more time traveling in the United States.

Doing this interview has given her an opportunity to look back at her life, and Cherilyn had this to share about her military experiences, “There is such beauty here and even the most ardent of travelers can never see it all. I thank God He has given us life, liberty, and a beautiful homeland. I thank Him for allowing me 16 wonderful years in a peacetime Navy. Not all have been so blessed. I still can’t believe I was ever a part of it. I was a very unlikely candidate for an organization like that when I think of all the real heroes through the years. I truly appreciate my country more than ever. May God continue to bless us and may we be worthy of His blessings!”



In E-6 Dress Blues, the three hash marks signify 12 years of service.

“I do solemnly swear that I will support and defend the Constitution of the United States against all enemies, foreign and domestic; that I will bear true faith and allegiance to the same; and that I will obey the orders of the President of the United States and the orders of the officers appointed over me, according to regulations and the Uniform Code of Military Justice. So help me God.”

Mark Carter, U.S. Coast Guard Veteran and retired postal employee, is a member of the Associated Veterans of Bakersfield Honor Guard which provided full military honors to Jesse Avalos at his funeral services at Union Cemetery in Bakersfield, California.



Mark Carter presents a memorial box of cartridges expended during the salute to Mary Lou Avalos, widow of NALC member and Veteran Jesse Avalos.

Mark Carter, USCG Veteran Former NALC Branch 782 Member USPS Retiree

Mark (“Slammer”) was an NALC Letter Carrier from November 1978 until 2000 when he changed Crafts, became a Custodian, and ultimately retired from the USPS in February 2012.

Before those 34 years as a postal employee, he was in the U.S. Coast Guard from 1974 - 1978. Following bootcamp, where he was a member of the elite Honor Guard unit O-B94 at USCGTRACEN ALAMEDA, he was assigned to Coast Guard Station San Juan, Puerto Rico.

While doing the normal painting and other duties that would be assigned to an E-2, he was asked by a BM2 if he wanted to work in the mailroom. For the next six months, he picked up the station mail at the post office in town and returned to sort the mail to the appropriate recipients.



Mark saw “The Grinder” at the Coast Boot Camp in Alameda, California every day.

Because he also stood twelve hour watches in the radio shack as part of his assigned work, Mark applied for training as a Radioman, was accepted, and was then transferred to the “A” School at USCGTRACEN PETALUMA in 1975.

Following graduation, he was assigned to the Coast Guard 7th District in Miami, Florida and spent a lot of time in Key Biscayne and Key West. He spent so much time that he got pretty tired of the humidity and the swamps.

He learned of a temporary duty assignment with the Naval Arctic Research Lab; and, when approved, he found himself in Pt. Barrow, Alaska from January to May 1976. His job was to keep radio comms with three camps out on the ice floes. He no longer complained about the humidity and found it a completely different world. “When I got there, there was *total* darkness *all* day.



“When I left in May, it was starting to get a little lighter each day. And, after returning to the “Florida Sunshine” and humid conditions, I began to

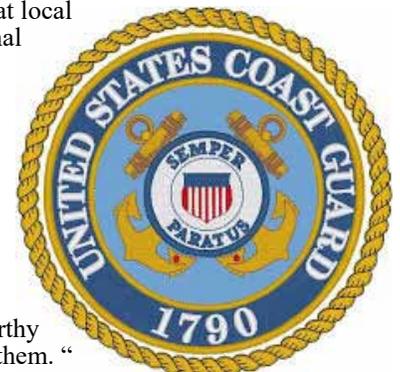
think about trying to transfer back to a California unit so I could be closer to home and farther away from some of the mugginess I no longer wanted to be around”.

The USCGC VENTUROUS (WMEC-625) — a 210 foot medium endurance cutter which was homeported in San Pedro, CA — needed an RM3...

From 1977 to 1978, Mark cruised off the southern California and Mexican coasts. Generally, the two week patrols were drug interdiction or search and rescue missions for the crew of 70. He enjoyed spending time up on the bridge when they were underway and he had no other duties.

As a military Veteran, Mark has chosen to give back. He is a member of the Associated Veterans of Bakersfield Honor Guard. Their primary purpose is to perform Military Rites for departed veterans. They also perform at local memorial services and national veterans holidays. This team also Presents the Colors at community functions.

When asked why this volunteer activity is so important to him, Mark points out: “I didn’t really do anything special in my military career. Our veterans who pass away are really worthy of any honor that we give to them. “





A picture of Marine Corpsman PO3 Forrest L. Clark on Rendova Island with a USMC Raider Battalion on 30 June 1943. If you look closely at the picture, Forrest is the guy **NOT** carrying a weapon. His med bag is in the foreground. The picture was originally featured in "Look" magazine.

On December 9, 1941, seventeen year Forrest Clark old lied about how old he was and enlisted in the U.S. Navy. Trained as a Corpsman, he was assigned to duty with the Marine Corps.

He then found himself "island hopping" in the Solomons. (Think of Guadalcanal!) He became a *very* experienced corpsman. (Those with military combat background will, no doubt, value *THAT* last sentence with a sense of personal appreciation!!)

Forrest saw *so* much death and destruction. But, in many senses, he was no different than any other young men of his generation. ***It is no wonder that they are referred to as members of the "Greatest Generation!"***

On April 22, 1945, he and Pauline Dolores Maggard were married. At the end of his War, he was discharged and returned to Bakersfield.



Wedding picture of Forrest and Pauline "Dee" Clark

There were things about civilian life that were good. He got to stay home with his beautiful wife and family. But, he felt that there was more that he should be doing with his life.

Forrest reenlisted, as a Medic, in the U.S. Army in 1946 and had many more adventures. Really! He **REALLY** did!!!

He was assigned to a Mobile Army Surgical Hospital in Korea. (If you overlook the humor in the television show M.A.S.H., you get a glimpse into the extent of the injuries and death that Forrest dealt with.)

He was then "voluntold" to apply for a new duty. His extensive experience in jungle warfare helped him to become a graduate of the very first official U.S. Army Green Beret training course. He went on to become an instructor.

Assignment to the US Army 3rd Field Hospital, Saigon, (in conjunction with two and-a-half more Vietnam tours of duty) provided additional "experience" for him.

Although Forest would probably have stayed in the Army longer, he didn't care for the changes it was going through; and — after 24 years of creditable service — he retired on September 30, 1966.

When he returned home, he had an opportunity to apply for a job at the Post Office. He became a 93306 Letter Carrier.

Over the course of the next 20 years, he never talked about the extensive and inspiring personal

things that he'd accomplished. It wasn't his way. And then? Forrest quietly hung up his satchel and retired in 1986.

Forrest had problems with his hearing. The years and years of gunfire and explosions had taken their toll. Because of that, he didn't talk a lot at work. Most who worked with him remember him as a quiet guy who just came to work, did what he had to do and then left.

They probably didn't know how much he **LOVED** to fish. Almost every long weekend found him taking his entire family with him to fish at Balch Park and other locations. Family vacations were centered on fishing. Yes, his family confirms Huntington Lake and other spots held a special place in the heart of Forrest Clark!

Forrest's son, John, provided a number of different memories including, "Dad hated, **WITH A PASSION!!!**, casing mail."

Also: ***Picture a Kentucky Fried Chicken having an "All You Can Eat Day"...***

John remembers that Forrest, "Kool-Aid", and a number of postal employees went to the KFC on Niles. The second time that they went, they were told that "Kool-Aid" was **NOT** allowed into the building!!!

His son went on to recount that there were many times that Forrest would join his family for lunch at Rosa's on Columbus Street because it was so close to his route.

The sources for much of this info were John Clark and his wife, Kathy. They left no doubt of the impact that "Dad" had on their lives. It is evident that the man, Forrest, has left quite a legacy!!!

John matched Forrest with a six year hitch in the USMC. Like "Dad", he then retired from the U.S. Army. *But, he has no intentions of becoming a USPS Letter Carrier...*

— *In Memorium* —
Forrest L. Clark
 February 12, 1924 — August 20, 2017
 Laid to rest at Bakersfield National Cemetery 9/1/2017

Honor Flight Kern County (HFKC) is one of 136 hubs from around the country that is part of the Honor Flight Network. HFKC is an all volunteer non-profit created to honor veterans of Kern County and surrounding areas and veterans as far away as the San Fernando Valley. There are approximately 46,000 veterans in Kern County with over 8,000 of them World War II and Korean Veterans. Our mission is to honor and send America's veterans to Washington D.C. to see the memorials built in THEIR honor for their service to our country – at no cost to the veteran. Top priority is given to our most senior veterans – World War II veterans – and those from any conflict that are terminally ill – followed by Korean and Vietnam veterans. Every veteran accepted by HFKC for this honor travels at no cost to him/her due to the generosity of tax deductible donations from our community. The trips include all air and ground transportation, meals, overnight accommodations, and guided tours.



“The Greatest Generation” deserves nothing less from us – they SAVED THE WORLD!! For information on how you can help support our mission to send our veterans to Washington D.C. to see THEIR memorials – please call 661-544-VETS (8387). All donations are 100% tax deductible. 501(c)3 # 45-4520992

What can you do to help?

Help us sign up Veterans, Guardians & Volunteers. We are actively seeking Veterans, Guardians and Volunteers for Honor Flight Kern County. Go to our Applications page to download applications. Feel free to contact us for information.

Your donations help us send our Veterans at no cost to them and they are tax deductible. You or your company can be a sponsor to send our Veterans on their Honor Flight. Sponsorship opportunities are available. Sign up here. As always, feel free to contact us for more information.

Help send our Veterans off and greet them when they return. Their hero's send off and greeting is well deserved. These events are a moving experience for all who attend. Come out and take part! We could not accomplish this mission without your help. Thank you for your support!



With your generous donations these American Heroes receive a hero's send-off in Bakersfield and a hero's welcome in Washington, D.C. Once in DC, the veterans spend their time on guided tours to see many of the memorials in D.C., including the WWII, Korean, Vietnam, Lincoln, Women's, Navy, Marine, and Air Force memorials as well as the Changing of The Guard, at the Tomb of the Unknown Soldier, in Arlington National Cemetery.

Time is of the essence – please help us!

Oftentimes, gratitude is expressed in words such as “Thank You,” but it's rarely followed up with any tangible expressions. The creation of the NALC Veterans Group is intended to be something tangible and useful.

The NALC Veterans Group is designed to provide NALC members who are military veterans access to the information and tools specific to veterans' rights and benefits within the U.S Postal Service. It seeks to provide all NALC members who are also military veterans—active full-time and part-time Letter Carriers, as well as retired Letter Carriers—resources, rights information and a sense of camaraderie. The Veterans Group will provide the ability to connect with fellow NALC veterans and stay informed on issues of importance to Letter Carrier Veterans. Members receive a pin as a symbol of gratitude for your military service and membership in the NALC.



**You continue to serve your country—
THANK YOU!**

NALC Veterans Group

**Complete this form and mail it to:
NALC Veterans Group, c/o NALC,
100 Indiana Ave., N.W., Washington, DC 20001-2144**

NAME: _____

ADDRESS: _____

CITY, STATE, ZIP: _____

NALC BRANCH NUMBER: _____ BRANCH OF SERVICE: _____

I BELONG TO THE FOLLOWING VETERAN GROUP(S):

AMERICAN LEGION DISABLED AMERICAN VETERANS VETERANS OF FOREIGN WARS

OTHER: _____

A LIFETIME AGO...

OPENING A DA NANG MASH UNIT

by Al Ainsworth, NALC Branch 82 Retiree
U.S. Naval HM3, 1963 - 1966



The Pacific Stars and Stripes headline on Saturday, May 7, 1966, read: "DaNang Combat Hospital 'Finest' Since WWII."

Well, it's been more than 50 years since I reported and returned from a year's duty at the 50-acre Naval Support Activity Station Hospital along the South China Sea in East DaNang, Vietnam. The memories are so distant, it seems like a lifetime ago. In some cases it is more than a lifetime ago...many did not return, and, in some cases, I was their first stop on the way home. Unfortunately, more have died after they returned home as they took their lives--and the same situation exists today following their return from the Middle East.

Dedication is an over-used word, but in service to our country and brothers-in-arms it is not. Every time I reminded a Marine he could return home if he were hospitalized two times for more than 24-hours, he refused, saying, "I have to go back and help my buddies." Dedication.

I often saw Marine General Walt crying as he awarded Purple Hearts to wounded Marines.

Our first night in October—that happened to be the night we arrived, in the pitch-black at DaNang Air Base—we lost two corpsman on the DaNang River in LTMs running without warning lights as the two landing crafts collided and two hospital corpsman hit their heads on the hull. Despite all the experienced medical personnel we had on board, we were not able to save them. They were both married, with children. Yes, reality hit, we were

in a combat zone and every one of us could die any place, at any time.

After we arrived at quarters—a "hotel ship"—we learned the hospital had been satchel-charged and the Seabees were "repairing" the Quonset hut facility. Days later we were informed some of the staff (307 enlisted men and 29 officers) would stay and help "repair, guard and ready" the facility while others would be sent to Okinawa, Yokota and Guam. We were the first to arrive. Proudly, I got to stay. And even stand bunker watch at night, occasionally returning sniper fire.

War humor was often on display. One wee-hour event was when our communications system failed during periodic bunker checks. Again, it was pitch black and I heard someone and yelled, "Halt, who goes there!" when all of a sudden Thompson yells, "Halt, hell, shoot 'em!" as he falls off of his perch, dropping a grenade on the ground in the bunker. Fortunately, he had not pulled the pin.

Another time, Bridges was having trouble adjusting to life in Vietnam, and was in the outhouse, when there was sniper fire, he came running out of the outhouse, his pants hanging around his ankles, tripped and did a face plant. Several us were nearby and broke out in laughter.

While sleeping in our quarters at night whenever we heard sniper fire or mortars we rolled out of our bunks and put on our hard hats... often times spending the rest of the

night on the floor. The nice thing about Vietnam nights is you did not need a blanket, a sheet was more than enough, so the floor was OK.

We finally opened for the troops on January 10, 1966. Soon, we were maximizing use--just before the first Tet Offensive.

The Unit served the I-Corps region, just south of the DMZ and had specialists in neurosurgery, orthopedics, anesthetics, hematology, dermatology, pathology, corpsman, opticians, dental technicians and, of course, surgery techs. Of the first 500 treated, 300 were sent back to duty that might have been sent to Clark Air Force Base in the Philippines or back to the United States.

I worked 12-hour night shifts, seven days a week on the surgery ward and Intensive Care. During the days I relieved in the surgery-orthopedic clinic repairing wounds, apply splints and casts and readying for transport or surgery.

There were many tragic cases, but one that sticks in my mind is a Marine that had his flamethrower explode on him. He had third-degree burns over 80 percent of body and was comatose. He survived Vietnam, but his prognosis was dire and I doubt he survived. He was to go home in four days, following his second three-month extension.

And there were not just amputees, but double, triple and quadruple amputees. And, they were all so young.

One night when I was working in Intensive Care I heard a patient call

my name, I turned around and it was Salazer, a corpsman I went to Corps school with, who was wounded on the field of battle with the Marines. His leg was shredded and was being flown to Clark Air Force Base.

The effects of war could happen at any time. A Marine lost his life when he was on a barge crossing the DaNang River. He slipped off and was sucked into the prop, both legs were amputated and he bleed out before we could get him back on the barge. Death was not always caused by enemy fire.

Battle casualties are often treated 20-30 minutes after being hit. They were air evacuated via helicopter from either the field of battle or "C" Medical Company, 3rd Battalion, 3rd Marines.

U. S. Naval Captain Bruce Canaga, senior medical officer, who often stood atop his bunker trying to spot the snipers, said "...the fact the staff is exceedingly capable and efficient is attested by the statistics that show a figure of almost 800 out of the 1,200 patients admitted have been returned to full duty."

The staff also provided medical service to foreign nationals, U.S. contract workers, Merchant Marine personnel and "third country" forces and several children, including a Montagnard girl from the highlands who lost part of her foot in an explosion. She was the delight of the compound. We also treated several VC POWs while I was there.

The hospital also treated Vietnamese civilians. It quickly became a service the corpsman relished as they traveled in a 15-mile radius to bring medical treatment to many people who had never had medical care before in their lives.

To get a smile from a small child, an aged "momma-san" or a wrinkled-face village chief was reward enough for the medical teams.

There were other commitments for medical personnel such as man-

ning several dispensaries and dental clinics aboard floating vessels, sick bay at Camp Tien Sha and the "White Elephant"—the headquarters for Naval Support Facility.

Another rewarding moment was coordinating relief efforts by my local church to a DaNang orphanage—clothing, food, school supplies and other necessities.

There were also a few bright moments as "The Duke" John Wayne visited the troops in the hospital. I met him in ICU and his presence was undeniable. I got to interview Ohio State University football coach Woody Hayes for the base newspaper. While Bob Hope performed at the airbase, Eddie Fisher (one of Elizabeth Taylor's many husbands), Jackie DeShannon (*Give Peace a Chance*) and Ann Margaret entertained East DaNang troops. We also had our choice of brief R&R trips to Saigon, now Ho Chi Minh City, Tokyo, PaNang, Singapore and Hong Kong.

Combat was an experience I will never forget and one that I do not want to repeat.

from the editor-guy

When I first met Al Ainsworth, he was the newsletter editor for NALC Branch 82. Although he has been away from that job and has been a retired Letter Carrier for many years, he remains an energetic activist who advocates for better working conditions.

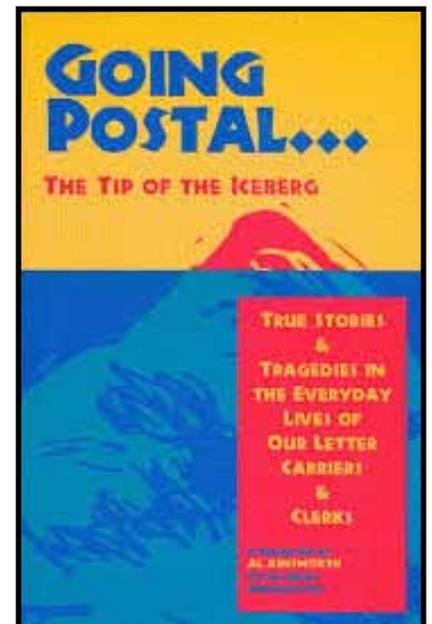
This particular piece is courtesy of the February 2017 edition of the Portland, Oregon to NALC Branch 82 *B Mike*.

Basil Zuniga

Al Ainsworth is the self-published author of *Going Postal...The Tip of the Iceberg*. He is a retired Portland, Oregon Letter Carrier who delivered mail for 25 years for the USPS.

He also served as an NALC Shop Steward and union officer for more than 20 years and is still serving the National Association of Letter Carriers Branch 82 as Director of Retirees.

For further information please call 503-246-0386, e-mail chewah@teleport.com or write 10345 SW Ridgeview Lane, Portland, Oregon 97219.



GOING POSTAL II... Still Fighting for Dignity in the Workplace

The second book in the series describes working conditions of postal employees, the USPS stonewalling a disabled worker's Rights, and a collection of short stories you may recognize...

Steve Hakias, USA Veteran NALC Branch 2008 Retiree

This guest article is by Steve Hakias, President of NALC Branch 2008. It is a moving testament in one Veterans's personal story.

On Veterans Day we honor those who wore a uniform and served in one of the Branches of the Armed Services of our country. On Memorial Day we honor those who died while in uniform in defense of their country.

Some of our younger generation may have lost the **TRUE** understanding of the need to honor **ALL** Veterans and to also remember those who never came home.

However, as the war goes on in so many different locations around the world and there are more and more casualties, a Day of honoring takes on a real significance. For those of us who have been in battle it is more than *just* a day. It has name and it has a place.

For me, it was in the summer of "70". I had just turned twenty and — as a gift from Uncle Sam — I was assigned to the 199th Light Infantry Brigade. I was a replacement for casualties that were inflicted to my platoon during the Cambodian invasion. A helicopter dropped five of us off in elephant grass in the middle of nowhere to join our squad.



That was when I met John Lightsey. The squad leader pointed me out to John and said, "This FNG is yours. You teach him."

It happened that quickly and

so did our friendship. It turned out John was from a place called Odum, Georgia and grew up on a farm. He would tell me about the times he would have drinking moonshine and meeting girls after church and what a happy life he had back "in the world". He chewed tobacco and he told me it was to prevent getting worms.

If there ever was a definition of a good old boy, Lightsey sure fit it. Every night after setting up our "hootches" Lightsey would read from the Bible he carried with him.

We all had an assignment in our squad, and mine was to carry ammunition for the 60 caliber machine gun. John's was to "walk point". (As point man, you walk ahead of everyone and make sure everything is safe before waving everyone else to follow you. It would make anyone nervous.)

On the other hand carrying this can of ammo around was no picnic. I cannot tell you how many times I felt I could not walk another step carrying around all my gear **AND** that damn can of ammo!

Well, one night after we set up, John said to me, "Steve, I've got ten months in country and I'm 'gettin' short'. I got a bad feeling. Would you consider switching places with me?"

Hell, it was like I hit the Vietnam Lotto! I told him, "No problem." He was doing me a great favor. Good-bye ammo can!

We had been out in the field for quite awhile when we got orders to come in. We were going to a gravy assignment as security guards at a Fire Support Base.

I'd hit the Lotto, again! "No more walking through the jungle. No more walking point. No more worrying about booby traps. I'd died and gone to heaven!" And, John was ecstatic! (When you get down to two months before you get to go back home, all kinds of things go through your brain.)

The next two nights were great, one of the guys received Jiffy Pop from home and we heated up some C4 and the pop corn was poppin'. Lightsey and I built ourselves a little hootch with some sandbags and our ponchos.

On the third night it had gotten dark so I went into the hootch and went to sleep. John was going to stay up awhile. At about midnight, John grabbed me by the shirt and was shaking me as he screamed, "**THEY'RE COMING THROUGH THE WIRE!!**"

With that, I grabbed my M-16 and bandoleers of ammo and ran out. We were twenty steps from the hootch when a mortar round blew it to kingdom come. **JOHN HAD HAD SAVED MY LIFE!**

The blast knocked us both on our ass but we were OK. We got up and saw the NVA coming through the wire and ran towards them. That's when the second mortar round hit.

I looked over to see John laying on his back with a stomach wound. It was real bad. He was calling for a medic but we were all pinned down. Nobody could get to him. It seemed like an eternity as he kept calling for help.

I have a real hard time with that even to this day.

John Lightsey went to heaven that night. And *every* day since has been Memorial day for me and the memories of my friend.

I would ask, if you do find yourselves saying a prayer this Veterans Day, please add John to your prayer!!! I owe my life to him!!

This article was originally published in the Branch 782 newsletter in October 2007. It was reprinted from the NALC Branch 2008 Suncoast Letter Carrier. Steve Hakias passed away a few years ago. I'm thinking that — to the very last breath that he took — Steve was still grateful to John Lightsey and treated each one of his days as if it was truly a Memorial Day...

*What did you see out there, my lad,
That has set that look in your eyes?
You went out a boy, you have come back a man,
With strange new depths underneath your tan.
What was it you saw out there, my lad,
that set such deeps in your eyes?*

— JOHN OXENHAM

Courtesy of "THE NINTH MARINES"
A Brief History of the Ninth Marine Regiment (1942 - 1945)

Save this with your important papers!

WHEN AN ACTIVE LETTER CARRIER DIES...

- ✓ Notify employee's immediate supervisor, postmaster and personnel section (if any). Give supervisor locker keys and badge as well as information on time and place of memorial services. Check with USPS personnel or postmaster for benefits for spouse and any dependent children.
- ✓ Fill out forms (obtain from USPS personnel section or postmaster): application for death benefits under the retirement system; claim for unpaid compensation; claim for FEGLI death benefits.
- ✓ If the carrier had a TSP account, notify the TSP Death Benefits Processing Unit, Fairfax Post Office, DEDIS—P.O. Box 4450, Fairfax, VA 22038-9998, or call 877-968-3778.
- ✓ Notify the carrier's NALC branch.
- ✓ If veteran, notify the Veterans' Administration local office.
- ✓ Notify banks and other financial institutions.
- ✓ Call the local office of the Social Security Administration or toll-free 800-772-1213.
- ✓ Notify insurance companies (life, health, home, automobile, etc.). If the carrier had a policy with NALC's Mutual Benefit Association, write to 100 Indiana Ave. NW, Room 510, Washington, DC 20001-2144 or call 202-638-4318. If the carrier belonged to the NALC Health Benefit Plan, write to 20547 Waverly Court, Ashburn, VA 20149 or call 703-729-4677. **Note:** Health benefit coverage for a surviving spouse and dependent children continues automatically if carrier had family coverage at time of death *and* if a monthly survivor annuity is payable.
- ✓ Have mortuary officials obtain enough certified death certificates for your needs (they can suggest how many).

WHEN A RETIRED LETTER CARRIER DIES...

- ✓ Notify U.S. Office of Personnel Management (OPM), Retirement Operations Center, Boyers, PA 16017, or call toll-free 888-767-6738 and provide: full name of deceased; date of birth; date of death; Social Security number; CSA claim number; and survivor's name, address and relationship to the deceased.
- ✓ For quicker action, provide the above information to NALC's Director of Retired Members, 100 Indiana Ave. NW, Washington, DC 20001-2144, 202-393-4695, or call toll-free 800-424-5186 only on Monday, Wednesday or Thursday, 10 a.m.-noon and 2-4 p.m. (Eastern). NALC will alert OPM so that survivor benefits will commence as quickly as possible, and will send you the application for death benefits under the retirement system, and the claim for death benefits under FEGLI.
- ✓ Return any uncashed annuity checks to the address on the accompanying Treasury Department envelope. If payments are being deposited directly to a bank or other financial institution, contact them with the retiree's date of death and advise them to return any future payments to the Treasury Department.
- ✓ Call the local office of the Social Security Administration or toll-free 800-772-1213.
- ✓ If the retired carrier had a TSP account, notify the TSP Death Benefits Processing Unit, Fairfax Post Office, DEDIS—P.O. Box 4450, Fairfax, VA 22038-9998, or call 877-968-3778.
- ✓ Notify the retired carrier's NALC branch.
- ✓ If veteran, notify the Veterans' Administration local office.
- ✓ Notify banks and other financial institutions.
- ✓ Notify insurance companies (life, health, home, automobile, etc.). If the carrier had a policy with NALC's Mutual Benefit Association, write to 100 Indiana Ave. NW, Room 510, Washington, DC 20001-2144 or call 202-638-4318. If the carrier belonged to the NALC Health Benefit Plan, write to 20547 Waverly Court, Ashburn, VA 20149 or call 703-729-4677. **Note:** Health benefit coverage for a surviving spouse and dependent children continues automatically if retiree had family coverage at time of death *and* if a monthly survivor annuity is payable.
- ✓ To request a duplicate 1099R, Statement of Annuity Paid, call 888-767-6738. Callers will need the former carrier's CSA number and the last four digits of their Social Security number.
- ✓ Have mortuary officials obtain enough certified death certificates for your needs (they can suggest how many).

If the spouse of a retired Letter Carrier dies, call the NALC retirement office for instructions on how to restore annuity to full amount, switch health coverage from family to self (unless dependent children, and change beneficiaries).

Hi, Basil~

This is Tami Foshee. This was a recent post on Facebook about a local Carrier. Thought you might want to use it for the Veterans' issue.

So, I have to get this off my chest!

We had a lovely neighbor named Billy who served in the Marine Corp and who always had a Marine Corp flag flying. Sadly, cancer took him — but his flag continued to fly.

And, it became a bit thread-bare and faded.

One day, Billy's wife contacted us. She asked if we had left a present at her house... We replied, "No, not us."

She told us that someone had left a brand new Marine Corp flag at the house for her. Ron said he would come over and change it out for her but that we couldn't take credit for the gift.

She asked around but no one knew anything. It was a mystery.

Today, Ron and I were in the front yard and our mail man, Paul (*SIDE NOTE: By far the best Mail Man EVER!!!*), stopped and gave us our mail. The conversation turned to the ones who we had lost in our neighborhood.

"Yes," he said hearing Billy's name, "I know." He went on to tell us, "I saw Billy's flag and, since I am also a Veteran, I got a new flag and left it for his wife."

WHAT!!! Are you kidding me?

What an absolute kind, wonderful and generous act! And the flag was left a while back!!! I thanked him and told him how grateful we were and I asked if I could tell Billy's wife who had left the flag.

He kinda hemmed and hawed a bit. But, he finally said, "Yes."

He expected nothing for this kindness but boy did he get *OUR* respect and gratitude!

He ***TRULY*** paid it forward!

Billy's wife was also incredibly touched by Paul's act of generosity. So I wanted *everyone* to know what a wonderful, kind, generous and humble man Paul is (besides being a GREAT mail delivery person)!

I want to to acknowledge that there really are ***TRULY*** good and kind and generous people left in this world.

THANK YOU, PAUL and God bless you!

BETH CHEATWOOD
Bakersfield, California

Editor-guy Note:

*Thank you Tami Foshee!!
The fact that you shared this with me
means that I could share it with others!*

“An injury to one is an injury to all..”

Our members have experienced devastating losses to their homes in the Fires in Sonoma and Napa County. In the blink of an eye, many of my members were fleeing for their lives when the fire storm hit Santa Rosa early Monday morning.

The fire jumped across a 6 lane freeway and ignited a neighborhood. ***So far, eight Carriers have lost their homes and we are hoping this will be the last!***

We are setting up a fund to assist our Brothers and Sisters — which includes Retirees — to help them get back on their feet. If you would like to assist, please mail a check to:

**Branch 183 Fire Relief
888 3rd Street
Santa Rosa CA 95404**

Please make sure any checks are made out to NALC Branch 183 and in the memo write “Fire Relief”

Our Branch will be working with Ukiah Branch 1563 and Napa Branch 627 to insure that their members have not lost their homes. I can be reached at (707) 318-1821 for further information.

In Unionism,

JERRY ANDERSEN
President, Branch 183
National Association of Letter Carriers

Editor-guy Note: *McFarland Shop Steward Bonnie Whitbey let me know about this Facebook post. Thank you SO much, Bonnie!!*

I'd like to first start off by extending a huge, **HUGE** "Thank You" to NALC Branch 782 Recording Secretary



Fighting Muscle Disease

Kim Gerdes for taking the time to drive up to Clovis with me! It was an awesome drive up there and an awesome drive back. I thank you for your companionship, your help, and also for your encouragement when it was all over!

ALSO, I want to give another **HUGE** "Thank You" to NALC Branch President Mike Towery!!!!!! He met me at the Branch office and loaded all of the Fred Acedo **Out there** cartoon books into my truck. "Mike, your help was SO greatly appreciated! It was a **GREAT** idea to load the night before instead of the morning of! It was a great suggestion!"

This was the first time I had ever attended an MDA Walkathon.



I thought that I would go up there with the intention of selling



the cartoon books to raise money for MDA. I also thought that there would be other vendors there selling items to help raise funds for the MDA. After being there for a little bit, the realization set in that it was **not** a time for fundraising. Most of the MDA children, their families, and caregivers had already done the majority of their fundraising *prior* to the MDA Walkathon.

While the MDA Walkathon in Clovis was mainly an "Appreciation Day" for the family and caregivers, there were a host of vendors that handed out information about wheelchairs or provided services for hospitals, caregivers, etc.

We did sell two of the cartoon books. Not a lot, but it was worth the effort, right Kim? **KIM, THANK YOU AGAIN!!**

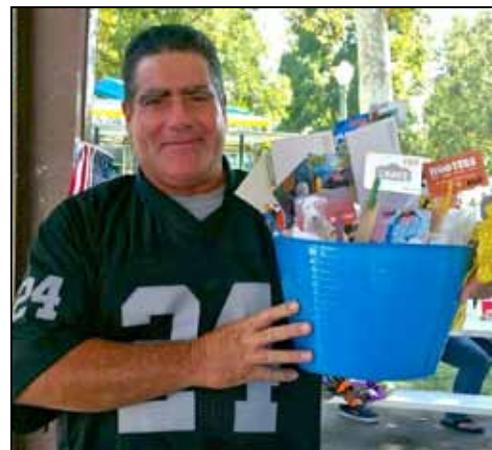
Listen to this: I have heard that it takes anywhere from \$800 to \$2100 to send a child to MDA camp.

To maximize the MDA fundraiser that we planned for our our annual Branch 782 picnic, I went around to several vendors who were in Clovis and I asked them for donations so that I could raffle off an even bigger and better basket of "goodies" — **AND THE BASKET ULTIMATELY WOUND UP WITH AN AMAZING TOTAL VALUE OF \$481.90!!!!**

The amount of tickets we sold for our MDA Basket totalled \$1,290.00; and, a total amount of \$1,310.00 was actually collected because my husband Robert's co-worker, Manuel, gave Robert \$20 on the Monday following the picnic to throw into the donation pot. He wanted to contribute to a good cause. (*Thank you to Manuel for your selfless compassion and generosity!!!*)

That means that **WE** in NALC Branch 782 were able, in this one single event, to **GENERATE** — with the two cartoon books that we sold — **MORE THAN \$800 TO THE MUSCULAR DYSTROPHY ASSOCIATION!!!** Thank you to **EVERY SINGLE PERSON** who purchased a ticket to help out MDA! The winner of the raffled basket was Steve Carter.

Steve is an NALC Branch 782 Letter Carrier who, after having transferred to Oregon (and becoming a member of NALC Branch 82 in Portland), worked out a transfer back to Bakersfield) in order to get out of the rain. He now works at as a Letter Carrier in Bakersfield's Dole Court Station!



Going around to businesses and asking for a donation took a bit of time and more than a bit of courage. But, it was definitely rewarding in the

Steve Carter's \$5 ticket got him a prize worth more than \$400! And, helped generate \$1300 for MDA!

end! **TOGETHER, WE WERE ABLE TO DONATE HUNDREDS OF DOLLARS TO THE CAUSE OF FINDING A CURE FOR THIS DREADED DISEASE!**

I look forward to doing even more for the Muscular Dystrophy Association in the future!

NORMA HAMER
Shafter Shop Steward
and NALC Branch 782 MDA Coordinator

And Branch 782 members offer our thanks to Norma Hamer for getting us more active in supporting the MDA!!!



“Open Season”

November 13, 2017 and ends December 11, 2017

The NALC Health Benefit 2018 “Bi-Weekly” premiums for active Carriers are posted on the following pages. If you compare our coverage to that offered by others, you will realize that the NALC HBP is a better choice!

Our NALC Health Benefit Plan is a fee for service, and a “NOT FOR PROFIT” insurance Plan! **PLEASE**, compare NALC Health Benefit Plan premiums **AND** benefits during this year’s Open Season sign up period!

Retired Letter Carrier premiums are located on the “monthly” Non-Postal Premium column on the next page. You have to be a dues/per-capita paying Retiree in order to enroll in our NALC Health Benefit Plans. NALC membership doesn’t have to stop when you retire! It should continue by continued enrollment in **OUR** union-owned Health Benefit Plan. It strengthens our Association. *And, it is better for retired Letter Carriers, too!*

If you have any questions at all, please contact me at this phone number: (661) 398-6075.

MARK RAMIREZ
NALC Branch 782 NALC Health Benefit Representative

Once you have decided to enroll, access *PostalEASE* via the web at [HTTPS://LITEBLUE.USPS.GOV](https://LITEBLUE.USPS.GOV), an Employee Self-Service Kiosk (available at some facilities), or by calling the Employee Service Line at 1-877-477-3273, option 1; TTY 866-260-7507. We strongly recommend that if you are enrolling in Self Plus One or Self and Family that you use the web version of *PostalEASE* and not use the phone. Use your USPS Employee ID number (EIN) found at the top of your earnings statement and USPS Self-Service password to access LiteBlue and *PostalEASE* via the web. Use your USPS EIN and current 4-digit USPS PIN to conduct self-service telephone transactions on the telephone using IVR. If you don’t know your USPS Self-Service Password, you can reset your USPS Self-Service Password (and USPS PIN) using the Self-Service Profile 9SSP Application at WWW.SSP.USPS.GOV or via links provided on the LiteBlue and Blue logon pages.

The quickest way for your election to be processed is for you to use *PostalEASE*. However, if you are unable to use *PostalEASE*, you may also complete the *PostalEASE* Worksheet (available at LiteBlue) and mail it to the HR Shared Service Center at: HRSCC, Compensation/Benefits, P.O. Box 970400, Greensboro, North Carolina 27497-0400.

FURTHER INFORMATION AVAILABLE AT LiteBlue

Plan information for the USPS Health Benefits Plan is available at LiteBlue at [HTTPS://LITEBLUE/USPS.GOV/USPSHBP](https://LITEBLUE/USPS.GOV/USPSHBP). Before you decide to enroll, read the *Summary of Benefits and Coverage* which provides a helpful overview of what the USPS Health Benefits Plan covers and your share of health care costs.

Per Pay Period Premium Contributions for USPSHB Plan

First CCA Appointment

	Total Premium	What USPS Pays	What YOU Pay
Self Only	\$165.00	\$125.00	\$40.00
Self Plus One	\$330.00	\$214.50	\$115.50
Self and Family	\$495.00	\$321.75	\$173.25

All Subsequent CCA Appointments*

	Total Premium	What USPS Pays	What YOU Pay
Self Only	\$165.00	\$125.00	\$40.00
Self Plus One	\$330.00	\$247.50	\$82.50
Self and Family	\$495.00	\$371.25	\$123.75

*After initial appointment of a 360-day term and upon reappointment to another 360-day term

Questions relating to your benefits?

Please contact the HRSSC at 1-877-477-3273, option 5; TTY 1-866-260-7507.

Type of Enrollment	Enrollment Code	Non-Postal Premium				Postal Premium	
		Bi-Weekly		Monthly		Bi-Weekly	
		Gov't Share	Your Share	Gov't Share	Your Share	Category 1 Your Share	Category 2* Your Share
High Option Self Only	321	\$229.25	\$78.79	\$496.71	\$170.71	\$72.42	\$66.06
High Option Self Plus One	323	\$491.00	\$187.06	\$1,063.83	\$405.30	\$173.42	\$159.78
High Option Self and Family	322	\$518.78	\$172.93	\$1,124.03	\$374.68	\$157.36	\$143.53
CDHB Self Only	324	\$160.70	\$53.56	\$348.17	\$116.06	\$48.74	\$44.46
CDHB Self Plus One	326	\$347.62	\$115.87	\$753.17	\$251.06	\$105.44	\$96.17
CDHP Self and Family	325	\$353.37	\$118.45	\$769.96	\$256.65	\$107.79	\$98.32
Value Option Self Only	KM1	\$131.89	\$43.96	\$285.76	\$95.25	\$40.01	\$36.49
Value Option Self Plus One	KM3	\$285.28	\$95.09	\$618.11	\$206.03	\$86.53	\$78.93
Value Option Self and Family	KM2	\$291.77	\$97.26	\$632.18	\$210.72	\$88.50	\$80.72

* Category 2 denotes the premiums for active duty Letter Carriers

Since 1950, the NALC Health Benefit Plan (HBP) has provided Letter Carriers and their families with first-rate health insurance. The NALC's health plan is a natural choice because — as the only health plan owned and operated by Letter Carriers — it pays particular attention to **OUR** needs. And because NALC HBP is a not-for-profit organization, its **only** focus is the health of its members **NOT** on making profits for shareholders.

The Plan's mission is to provide our members accessibility to quality medical care while maintaining a comprehensive benefit package. We pride ourselves in offering excellent benefits with affordable premiums for our Health Benefit Plan members.



2017 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
 Prescription Drug Program 1-800-933-6252
 CVS/Caremark Specialty Pharmacy 1-800-237-2767
 Durable Medical Equipment 1-855-511-1893
 "24/7 Nurse Hotline" 1-877-220-6252
 CVS/CareMark Pharmacist 1-888-636-6252
 Solutions for Caregivers (24/7) 1-877-468-1016
 CIGNA PPO Locator Line 1-877-220-6252
 CIGNA Organ Transplant Approval 1-800-668-9682
 Quit for Life (Tobacco Cessation) 1-866-784-8454
 CIGNA Health Rewards (Discounts) 1-800-558-9443
CIGNA Plus (Dental Discount) 1-877-521-0244
 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 Bakersfield (661) 631-9258
 Shared Services Option 5 live person 1-877-477-3273

NALC Health Benefit Plan
 20547 Waverly Court
 Ashburn, Virginia 20149

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

NALC Drug Prescription "Claims" Filing
 P.O. Box 521926
 Phoenix, Arizona 85072-2192

OptumHealth 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

NALC Health Benefit Plan Members:

The NALC Health Benefit Plan does not cover "Dental" except in cases of accidental injury to teeth. See plan brochure for coverage.

But we do have a Dental Discount Program!

Members covered under the NALC HIGH OPTION PLAN must enroll BY PHONE ONLY! The member must call 1-877-521-0244. The cost is \$3.75 per month for "Self Only" \$5.50 per month for "self and family". The savings/discount is around 25%.

Once you have enrolled in Dental Discount Program, you will log on to www.CignaPlussavings.com. On this site (in the right corner), it will show "FIND A DENTIST". Type in your city and zip code, and select a dentist. Or print the page/pages and call the dentist you have selected to make sure they are accepting new patients and that they are STILL ENROLLED in the CignaPlus savings dental program.

Preventive Care Children/Adults Available (See Brochure) Prevents Serious Illnesses, Flu, Tetanus, Pneumonia, and Shingles. Many immunizations are Free (Adult/Child) when administered at a PPO pharmacy/facility. Some will require a prescription from the Doctor.

The NALC Consumer Driven HP and the Value Option HP can utilize this **CIGNA PPO/OAP NETWORK** or by calling 1-855-511-1893.

OPTUMHEALTH BEHAVIORIAL SOLUTIONS is also available to the Consumer Driven/Value Option. You must pre-certify. Call 1-877-468-1016.

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

PPO Deductible: Per Calendar Year
 \$300 "Individual"
 \$600 "Self & Family" or "Self Plus One"

Many immunizations are Free (Adult/Child) when administered at a PPO pharmacy/facility. Some will require a prescription from the Doctor.

URGENT CARE

Sendas Urgent Care: 9450 Ming Ave., Bakersfield (661) 587-2500
 M-S 8 a.m. - 9 p.m. Saturday/Sunday 8 a.m. - 8 p.m.
 ASK FOR OTHER LOCATIONS

Accelerated Urgent Care: 9710 Brimhall, (661) 829-6747
 9500 Stockdale Hwy, (661) 735-3943 8 a.m. - 9:30 p.m. daily
 ASK FOR OTHER LOCATIONS

Our PPO doctors and facilities—through (OAP 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!!!

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

Insights shared by Mark Ramirez

“If we knew what we were doing, it wouldn’t be called research”.
Albert Einstein

“We all understand the twinge of discomfort at the thought that we share a common ancestor with the apes. No one can embarrass you like a relative.”
Dr. Neil DeGrasse Tyson

“We only have to look at ourselves to see how intelligent life might develop into something we wouldn’t want to meet.”
Stephen Hawking

Being a scientist is like doing a jigsaw puzzle in a sandstorm at night, with some pieces missing, with no idea what the finished picture will look like.
Anonymous Scientist

“Intelligence, is an accident of evolution, and not necessarily an advantage.”
Isaac Asimov

“Gullibility is a knife at the throat of civilization.”
David Wong

“Earth provides enough to satisfy every man’s need, but not every man’s greed.”
Mahatma Gandhi

“That’s human nature. Nobody does anything until it’s too late.”
Michael Crichton

“The old cliché still holds true, If you won’t stand for something, you’ll fall for anything !!!”

“Try being informed, instead of, just opinionated !!!!”

“The advertising industry’s prime task is to ensure that uninformed consumers make irrational choices thus undermining market theories that are based on just the opposite.”
Noam Chomsky

“Uninformed people can be easily manipulated.”
Benjamin Carson

“In physics you don’t have to go around making trouble for yourself. Nature does it for you.”
Frank Wilczek

“Freedom is lost gradually, from an uninterested, uninformed, and an uninvolved people.”
Thomas Jefferson

“SCIENCE IS EITHER PROVEN OR DISPROVEN!!! IT IS *NOT* JUST ONE’S OPINION!!!



“Post-Mark” Ramirez on a personal mission to take the veil away from apathy in the world.

“A society is defined, not only by what it creates, but by what it refuses to destroy.”

John Sawhill

“The superior, man seeks what is right; The inferior one, what is profitable.”

Confucius

“Everything is theoretically impossible, until it’s done.”
Robert A. Heinlein

“If you are not angry, YOU are not paying attention !!”

“Science is organized knowledge. Wisdom is organized life.”
Immanuel Kant

“If you make uninformed decisions, you are NOT wise. If you are just opinionated, You are a FOOL.”
Author Unknown

“Science is about knowing; engineering is about doing.”
Henry Petroski

“Science is the key to our future, and if you don’t believe in science, then you are holding everybody back.”
Bill Nye

“Science never solves a problem without creating ten more.”
George Bernard Shaw

“If I were ever abducted by aliens, the first thing I’d ask, is if they came from a planet where people also deny science.”
Dr. Neil DeGrasse Tyson

We don’t devote enough scientific research to finding a cure for jerks.
Bill Watterson

MARK “Post-Mark” RAMIREZ
Golden Empire NALC Branch 782 HBP Representative

DOHERTY & DONELON SCHOLARSHIPS

Deadline: This form must be returned to NALC Headquarters no later than December 31, 2017.

Eligibility

- Applicant must be the son, daughter or legally adopted child of a letter carrier NALC member in good standing—active, retired or deceased. Stepchildren and grandchildren are eligible if they live with the letter carrier in a regular parent-child relationship.
- Applicant's parent must be a member in good standing of NALC for at least one year prior to making application.
- Applicant must be a high school senior when making application and must submit the form provided at right, signed by the NALC member and an officer of the member's NALC branch. This form must be returned to NALC Headquarters by December 31, 2017.

Requirements

- All applicants must take the Scholastic Assessment Test (SAT) or the American College Test (ACT) in either their junior or senior year. A copy of the official scores from the administering organization must be received at NALC Headquarters by midnight, March 31, 2018. (Computer-generated printouts of test scores will not be accepted.)
- All biographical questionnaires and secondary school reports must be received at NALC Headquarters by midnight, March 31, 2018.

Regulations

- Scholarship is to be used toward pursuing undergradu-

ate degree at an accredited college of recipient's choice.

- Winners may accept other college scholarship assistance in addition to the NALC award.
- Any change of schools or course of study must be done only with the permission of the NALC Scholarship Committee.
- A transcript of grades must be forwarded to the committee at the end of each school year.
- If winner suffers certified serious illness, scholarship will be held in abeyance for not more than one year.
- If unusual conditions are going to require an interruption in schooling, recipient must state reason(s) in writing to the Scholarship Committee and request that the scholarship be held in abeyance. Request(s) will be reviewed by the Committee and a decision rendered.
- If the NALC member is suspended by his/her local NALC branch or enters supervision, scholarship will be cancelled.

Terms of awards

- The official scholarship judges will award one William C. Doherty Scholarship in each of the five USPS Regions and one John T. Donelon Scholarship. Winners are judged on the basis of secondary school records, personal qualifications and test scores. As in the past, the scholarship judges will consist of experienced persons in the educational field. Decisions of the judges will be final.

- Doherty Scholarship awards will be \$4,000 per year and the Donelon Scholarship award will be \$1,000 per year. Each scholarship is renewable for three consecutive years thereafter providing the winner maintains satisfactory grades. Award money will be deposited annually with the college. It will be credited to the winner's account to be drawn upon under the rules and regulations which the college has established for handling scholarship funds. Award money is to be used for required college fees, including room and board and transportation fees.
- Children of NALC national officers are not eligible.

In honor of NALC's president from 1941 to 1962, the **William C. Doherty Scholarship Fund** will again award five \$4,000 scholarships to children of members in good standing. The **John T. Donelon Scholarship Fund** will award one scholarship in honor of Donelon, longtime NALC assistant to the president. Applicants must be high school seniors and must meet all of the following eligibility criteria to be considered.

SCHOLARSHIP APPLICATION

Date _____ (PLEASE PRINT CLEARLY)

Please send instructions as to how I can compete for a scholarship award. I am a senior in the 2017-18 school year.

I am the daughter son active
 *stepdaughter *stepson of retired
 *granddaughter *grandson deceased

letter carrier _____

of Branch No. 782 City Bakersfield State CA

My name is _____

My address is _____

City _____ State _____ ZIP _____

Phone No. _____

Signature of branch officer

Signature of NALC parent member
(or spouse if deceased)

Printed name of branch officer

Last 4 digits of Social Security No. _____

Title _____ Date _____

This form must be returned no later than December 31, 2017, to the NALC Scholarship Committee, in care of the National Association of Letter Carriers, 100 Indiana Ave. NW, Washington, DC 20001-2144.

* *Stepchildren and grandchildren are eligible if they live with the letter carrier in a regular parent-child relationship.*

N.A.L.C. BRANCH 782'S

ANNUAL PICNIC

Sunday October 8, 2017

Tammie Foshee ran the games at our Branch 782 picnic, so she may have a list of the results.

Members Norma Hamer and Mark Ramirez WON and were undefeated in the "Corn Bag Toss Contest" and were awarded \$10 gift cards.

The Branch 782 Picnic, hosted by Teresa Ortega, was excellent!!! Tacos, sodas, water, ice cream, chips, Spanish rice, refried beans, chips, hot dogs, a 50/50 drawing, MDA drawing for a gift card basket with lots of prizes, and candy (thrown by Teresa)! IT WAS GREAT!!!

I hope others write an article about the picnic. **Thank you Pam Smith and Vince Gonzalez for taking such great pictures!** Thank you to **ALL** of the other volunteers, too!!!

MARK "POST-MARK" RAMIREZ



Many, many, many more Pictures on our website at WWW.782NALC.COM!!





IF I'VE TOLD YOU ONCE ...

When my kids were young, I felt as though much of my communication with them took place in repetitive sound bites that I could utter without actual thought: "Don't touch that; it's dirty!" "Why didn't you go before we left the house?" "Hold my hand in the parking lot." "Stop touching him/her." "Where was the last place you saw your other shoe/the house key/your trumpet/the dog?" "Wash your hands. Use soap." The kids are grown and gone so now my husband gets the canned speeches: "You really should try before we leave the house." "Where was the last place you saw your keys/your cell phone/the remote control?" "Did I accidentally lock you out of the dishwasher, again?" "Close enough does not work with laundry baskets/garbage cans/toilet bowls." (He might be thinking of leaving too but I keep hiding his car keys. Just ask him.)

At work, and certainly when it comes time to write another article, I feel like I'm repeating myself constantly. But, unlike talking to my children or my husband, my audience changes from month to month as we continue to add new members every few weeks for the last three years, so I shall, once again, offer my Top Ten greatest hits:

Did you talk to your steward? Some problems can be addressed and resolved by getting your steward involved early. Were you denied a day off when the quota wasn't filled? Were you bumped from a hold-down and you don't think it was done properly? Did management mess up the holiday schedule again? In many cases, the intervention of the steward can fix these things before they become grievances.

Fill out a 3996. If you have more work than you believe you will be able to complete, without running, without skipping your lunch or breaks, without tossing parcels toward porches, without giving excellent service to your customers, you absolutely, positively, **must** fill out a 3996 informing management that you will need additional time. This form will protect you and help your steward when he needs to file a grievance. Do it every time.

Management doesn't "give" you time. When you fill out the 3996, you inform management how long it will take you to properly, professionally, deliver the mail. They have the opportunity to approve or deny the time. If it is denied, that doesn't mean the mail will automatically deliver itself and it certainly doesn't mean that you should work unsafely or work through your lunch to make up time. It just means that they will have to address the issue later in the day. As long as you keep management informed, **it's not your problem.**

Do not argue over the phone. Carriers frequently have their 3996s denied in the morning with the instruction to call later in the afternoon. Often this is done because the morning boss looks like a hero getting all the mail delivered on "under-time". By the time you call, that boss is long gone and the afternoon boss is in a panic because the phone is ringing off the hook and they are scrambling to get the mail delivered on overtime. **It's not your problem.** If the boss yells or asks stupid questions

like, "what have you been doing all day?" the proper answer is, "I did not call to discuss my day. I called for instruction. Do you want me to continue delivering or do you want me to bring the mail back." If the instruction is to be back at a certain time, follow it, even if it means bringing back mail.

There is no such thing as The Five Minute Rule. At the end of the day, there are certain functions, spelled out in the M-41 that are carrier p.m. duties. These duties include disposition of all mail brought back from the street and the return and clearing of accountable mail. In some offices, on some days, some carriers may be able to complete all of these tasks in five minutes but in general, it takes more than five minutes to find a clerk willing to clear your accountables. The fact is, it takes what it takes. Mail brought back from the street is not to be left for the next day.

Always fill out 3971s in triplicate. When you request time off, make three copies of the 3971 and have one of them signed and dated as received by a member of management and immediately returned to you. When the other two copies get lost among the piles of paperwork on the bosses' desk, you have proof of your request. If management fails to act on your request within contractual timeframes, you will automatically be approved *provided you have the signed and dated receipt.*

Fill out 3971s for prime time vacation as well as non-prime. Buffalo city stations have a calendar of primetime summer vacations but it is still necessary to have an approved 3971. Your name on a list may not be enough if management claims you don't have enough leave balance to grant you the time off.

Don't jeopardize your health or safety under any circumstance! If it's hot, take the time to hydrate and cool off when necessary. When it's cold, seek warmth. Don't leave your truck running or your seatbelt off to save time. Park only at safe park points. If you are injured, follow your doctor's instructions. Don't allow management to rush you back to work before your body is healed. You only get one body and you're going to want its parts to last a long time.

Wear sunscreen. This could fall under the last topic but it's important enough to deserve its own spot on my list. Skin cancer can range from disfiguring to deadly. Minimize your risk as much as possible.

Watch out for each other. Each of us is but a small part in a much bigger world. If someone in your office is being treated disrespectfully, instead of fading into the background, stand up for them. You'd be surprised how solidarity can change the atmosphere in an office. Have each other's backs.

Have a great summer. Take some time to relax and enjoy doing the things that you love with the people you love.

~ In Unity and solidarity,

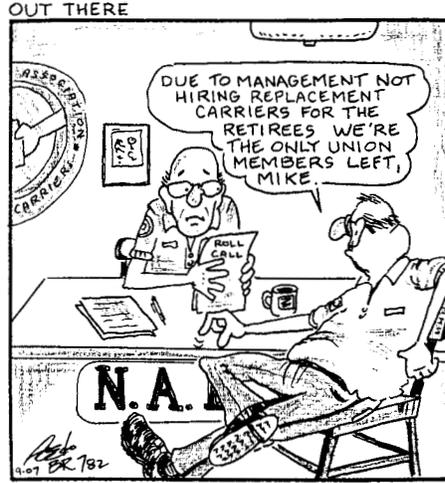
Susan Lewis, Executive Vice President

Article courtesy of the Buffalo, New York NALC Branch 3 BUZZ published in July 2016

This is a sample. You are looking at page 74 in the *NALC Editor Resource Book*. There are 176 pages in this book that explore glimpses into our lives as Letter Carriers from January 2003 to July 2016 ...



Originally published April 2009



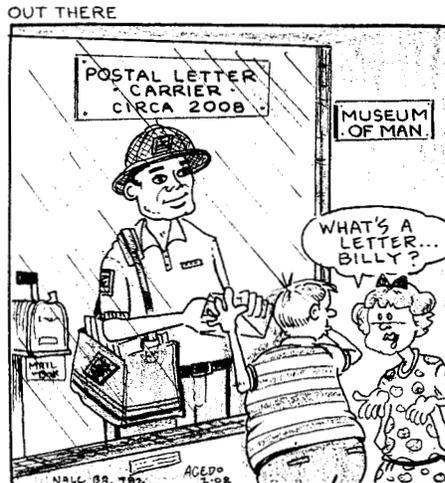
Originally published April 2009



Originally published May 2009



Originally published May 2009



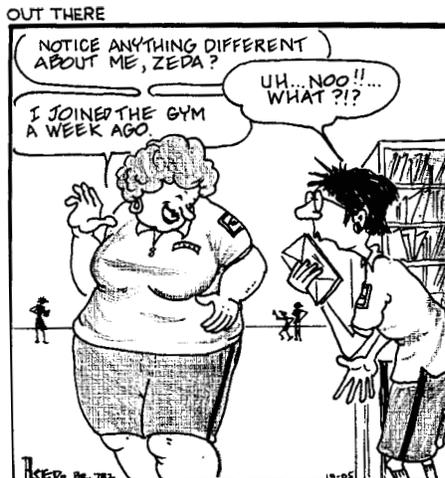
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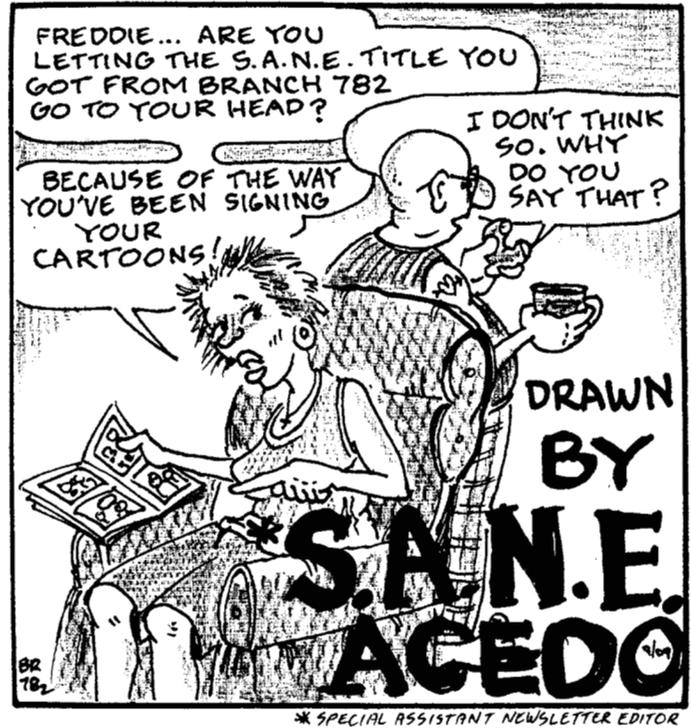
Originally published May 2009



from the editor-guy

The *NALC Editor Resource Book* is Volume II of Fred Acedo cartoons. It presents almost 1100 of Fred Acedo's cartoons published in our newsletter from 2003 - 2016. This book builds on the almost 500 cartoons in the original **Out tHeRe** book which featured his work from 1993 through 2002. *Welcome to Volume II!*

You may have questions about how this book can be used or whether or not it will be a good investment. You can call me at the phone number listed below. You can write to me, or you can e-mail me at BRZIII@AOLCOM. I would be glad to answer your questions or give you an idea of how this product can be a creative tool for your current or future NALC editor in presenting information to NALC members. *(Please follow this trail ***)*



This book is an excellent book of clip art designed specifically for, by and about NALC members and our world. (Yes. I am biased. I believe that this **IS** an excellent book of clip art! I hope that you agree...)

Additionally, an index is provided that links ALL of the cartoons in both the original **Out tHeRe** and in Volume II to assist editors in searching out cartoons by topic (e.g. dogs, injuries, supervisors, etc.).

Basil Zuniga

.....
Please send me one or more *NALC Editor Resource Books!* I want Fred's cartoons!
Base cost is **\$30** but you can donate more. (Cost covers wear & tear, paper, toner, etc.)
*** **SPECIAL OFFER:** I will include a copy of **Out tHeRe** with this order. **500 more cartoons!**
When you order, please indicate if you are an NALC Editor!
.....

NALC Branch 782 ● 2628 F Street ● Bakersfield, California ● 93301 ● (661) 205-1603

Curious about what you might be getting? Check out the sample featured on the preceding page.

from the editor-guy

I consider myself extremely fortunate for numerous and extremely varied reasons.

My wife is probably the “hottest” great-grandmother in the entire history of the world!!!!!! Despite being an old, paunchy, short little old retired Mexican mailman kinda guy with a long white beard, I can still walk up the stairs. In retirement, I have had a chance to get to do a really cool thing — *highlight the lives of the many Letter Carriers who have been a part of my world for so much of my life!*

Also, I have many friends like Bill Curtis who share wisdom they have encountered through their journeys in cyber space. This is only one of Bill’s many submissions...

“Most seniors never get enough exercise. In His wisdom God decreed that seniors become forgetful so they would have to search for their glasses, keys and other things thus doing more walking. And God looked down and saw that it was good.

Then God saw there was another need. In His wisdom He made seniors lose coordination so they would drop things requiring them to bend, reach & stretch. And God looked down and saw that it was good; then God considered the function of the bladders and decided seniors would have additional calls of nature requiring more trips to the bathroom — thus providing more exercise. God looked down and saw that it was good.

So if you find as you age, you are getting up and down more, remember its God’s will! It is all in your best interest even though you mutter under your breath...

Nine Important Facts To Remember As We Grow Older

OUT THERE



- #9 Death is the “Number 1” killer in the world.
- #8 Life is sexually transmitted.
- #7 Good health is merely the slowest possible rate at which one can die.
- #6 Men have two motivations: hunger and hanky panky, and they can’t tell them apart. If you see a gleam in his eyes, make him a sandwich!
- #5 Give a person a fish and you feed them for a day. Teach a person to use the Internet and they won’t bother you for weeks, months, or maybe years unless you give them your email address...
- #4 Health nuts are going to feel stupid someday, lying in the hospital, dying of nothing.
- #3 All of us could take a lesson from the weather. It pays no attention to criticism.
- #2 In the 60’s, people took LSD to make the world weird. Now the world is weird, and people take Prozac to make it normal.

AND, THIS, TOO...

“Out tHeRe”



OUT THERE



#1 Life is like a jar of jalapeno peppers. What you do here today may be a burning issue — *somewhere else* — tomorrow...

Please share this wisdom with others while I go to the bathroom.”

Finally — to top all of this off — I get the chance to see each and every one of Fred Acedo’s **Out tHeRe** cartoons before anybody else except his wife, Toni!!!

Yup. Life is Good!

BASIL ZUNIGA

“Out tHeRe”

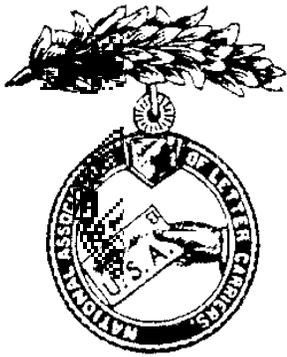


OUT THERE



“Out tHeRe”





Branch Officers

President	Mike Towery	(661) 331-9171
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Recording Secretary	Kim Gerdes	(661) 834-2059
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E.A. BAKER UNION UPDATE is published monthly by Merged Branch 782 of the National Association of Letter Carriers, AFL-CIO.

The opinions expressed in this publication are those of the writer and are not necessarily those of the publication staff or of the Officers of the Branch.

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

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

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

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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USPS Social Recreation Rep	Frank Martinez	(661) 703-4212

**Branch 782
Website
www.782nalc.com**

Rick Plummer, Webmaster





National Association of Letter Carriers
 "Golden Empire Branch 782"
 2628 "F" Street
 Bakersfield, California 93301
 (661) 331-9171

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

General Meeting Wednesday October 25, 2017 7:00 p.m.

Branch 782 Office
 2628 "F" Street
 Bakersfield, California

FORWARDING SERVICE REQUESTED

Each and EVERY month, Branch 782 sponsors a drawing to encourage YOU to come to our Meeting*

This month YOU could win \$300!

**THE FINE PRINT: To win the money YOU have to be present when YOUR name is drawn...just like Art Mooney was in March!!*

Debbie Guillet proposed a By-Laws change. The current language reads "A drawing using the current membership roster provided by the Financial Secretary will be conducted at the regular meeting of the Branch with the beginning amount of fifty dollars. If the member whose name is drawn is not present at the meeting, the amount will increase fifty dollars each successive month until it reaches five hundred dollars and will remain at five hundred dollars until there is a member present whose name is drawn. Once there is a winner, the amount of the drawing will start again at fifty dollars. Members must be present to win unless their absence is due to attendance at the State or National Conventions."

The proposed new language reads "A drawing for five hundred dollars, using the current membership roster provided by the Financial Secretary, will be conducted at the regular monthly Branch meeting. Member must be present to win unless their absence is due to attendance at the State or National Conventions."

"OuT tHeRe"



You get more in the Web Version! 20 pages in print version...and, 40 in the web version! Check it out!!!