

# National Association of Letter Carriers

## Branch 782

### E.A. Baker Union Update



ARVIN  
DELANO  
MOJAVE

AVENAL  
EDWARDS AFB  
RIDGECREST  
TEHACHAPI

BAKERSFIELD  
LAMONT  
SHAFTER  
TRONA

BORON  
McFARLAND  
TAFT  
WASCO



CHARTERED FEBRUARY 25, 1901

VOLUME LXXXI NUMBER 12

DECEMBER 2009

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**M**ike:



Congratulations to five Letter Carrier “Heroes” who recently appeared on the Oprah television show! Two of those special people were members of Branch 782. Let me reacquaint you with the stories of our two local members...



(left to right) Alan Girard, Oakland, California Branch 1111; Walter Hayes, St. Louis, Missouri Branch 343; Pattie Arismendez and Melissa Kelly, both of Bakersfield, California Branch 782; and, Robert Sweeney, Sacramento, California Branch 133

# As many of you have heard, I recently was invited to go to Washington, D.C.

In order for all of you to understand my mind frame on the subject, before and after the fact, I must first share my story with you from the beginning.

**O**n October 13th, 2006 (after being mandated), I set out to do route 630 at Hillcrest station. Nearing the intersection of Fairfax and Panorama, I noticed a small child stepping down off the curb and entering into traffic. I glanced around to see if maybe there were any adults walking nearby. There weren't any.

Traffic was just zooming by seemingly unaware of the danger the little girl was in. I parked my LLV at an angle so that traffic couldn't hit her, turned my motor off, set my parking brake, and turned my flashers on.

I walked up to the little girl and picked her up. She appeared to be about 2 years old. I asked her, "Where is your mama?" She just glanced around and said, "Mama." She didn't know how to say anything else. She was just a toddler. I walked up to the nearest yard, sat her down, and told her to wait there. She appeared to understand.

After thinking, "If a supervisor sees me parked like *this* I know it won't look like safe parking," I went back to my LLV and quickly re-parked it correctly. I thought about calling my station and letting them know the situation, but first I wanted to attempt to see if anyone in the neighborhood recognized the little girl.

I began ringing doorbells and came across a house where no one answered but I could hear noise. I knocked loudly and a young woman appeared at the door. I asked if she knew who the little girl was. She said, "Yes, that's my daughter!" She said the little girl was supposed to be with her father.

I left the little girl with her mother and went on with my route.

I thought I would call my friend, Shari Coronado, and tell her about the experience but I didn't have time that day. I went back to the office and never discussed it with anyone. I just chalked it up to one of those crazy experiences all Carriers have.

Several weeks later, I was in the office and a fellow co-worker started telling me a story he had heard about a supervisor's daughter witnessing a Letter Carrier rescuing a little girl who was lost. He said the same exact story that had occurred in my situation.

As I listened I thought, "What a coincidence!" He asked me if I knew anyone who'd done this, and I thought about the long-term effects of admitting it was me.

"No," I said, "I don't know anything about it." He said, "Ok, I'm going to tell them I did it." I said "Ok."

Several minutes later my manager, Allen Conner, approached his case and told him the same story asking him if he knew who it was. He said, "Yes, it was me." Allen said, "That's funny. The girl described a Letter Carrier with long hair and

green eyes. That doesn't sound like you." He then turned to me and asked if it was me.

I paused...then said, "Yes."

He asked why I didn't say anything about it. I told him, "It was just something I did. Anyone would have done it." He asked if he could share the story with our station at a stand up and I told him I preferred he didn't. But he insisted, so I asked that he not say my name as the Carrier involved and he agreed.

As he gave the stand up, everyone listened. I held my breath in the background. Sure enough, everyone wanted to know the Carrier involved. I thought to myself, "He *said* he wouldn't use my name." Everyone was looking around trying to guess.

Finally, in response to their questions, he answered with: "Pattie Arismendez." I thought, "Here we go."

Everyone said, "Oh, you're my hero!" "That's great." "Good job!" "You're awesome!"

I went back to my case and answered their questions. Then came the question I dreaded the most—my home girl Shari asked, "Why didn't you tell me?" I told her, "I was going to tell you I just got side-tracked and forgot about it."

Over the next several days it was the topic of several conversations in our corner. I discussed the fact that several Carriers have done incredible things in the past to help people in dangerous situations: Blanco helping a elderly lady who had fallen and broken a limb and no one knew she was there lying injured; Brandy helping an elderly woman getting mauled by a dog and getting mauled by the dog in the process and arriving back at the station with blood on her clothes.

Everyone has a story. We all realized we *all* do these things—not for the recognition, but because it's a Carriers first instinct to help people who need help, regardless of the time restraints on our jobs.

On the funny side, both Bill Bricker and Ronnie Miriles kept saying, "*We've* done plenty of things and no one thinks *we're* heroes." They wove all kinds of scenarios where either Bill would be a witness to a good deed that Ronnie would do or visa versa. They would make an elderly lady cross the street so they could help her whether she wanted to or not.



I thought it was over. It wasn't.

Several weeks later, I received a call from someone doing an article on me. That was last year. As usual I thought, "Ok, *now* it's over!"

A few months later my story was on *lite blue*. Several people contacted me to congratulate me on my heroism. By that time, I was a little more humble just thanking them and accepting the compliment on behalf of all Carriers who try to be helpful in the line of duty.

I received requests from television stations wanting to do stories on me. I declined. Every time someone would say, "You're on *lite blue*. There's an article about you...", Bricker would say, "Jeeze, is this ever gonna end??"

I was thinking the same thing.

Eventually it was 2007, several months had passed and I finally felt it was over.

Then, I received an express mail from Washington D.C. Wondering what it was, I tore it open, only to find I had been nominated NALC Hero of the Year 2006 for the Western Region.

Imagine my shock! I thought of all the people I felt were more deserving than me and I felt like this was just crazy. I called Shari and told her.

She was very excited for me and congratulated me. I told her I wished this would all go away. She told me, "Just relax and enjoy it. You're getting to go to Washington, girl! I'll go with you and then it will be all over."



So I agreed. We were on our way.

In the office we were known as The Hero and Her Bodyguard.

I received an all expense paid trip to Washington D.C., and stayed at a beautiful hotel within walking distance from the Capitol Building and a number of other beautiful monuments and museums. There were delicious breakfasts, lunches and dinners.

The first night we arrived there was a planned twilight tour of D.C. It was so

incredible, with a picnic lunch on the trolley that was absolutely scrumptious. The weather was beautiful. What more could we ask for?

There *were* a few mishaps. But, they were of our own doing of course.

At each stop, the driver would notify us that we had 20 to 30 minutes to see as much of the sites as we could and then return to the bus for departure—stressing that it was extremely important to return on time. Needless to say it was hard to pull yourself away once you were there.

“*Everyone has a story. We all realized we all do these things—not for the recognition, but because it’s a Carriers first instinct to help people who need help, regardless of the time restraints on our jobs.*”

We had gone to the Franklin Delano Roosevelt Monument (which was by far my favorite). The many writings on the various stone walls were so moving that they made us cry. I can only hope that one day my children will come to see this and know that this was what our country was built on.

It was a very humbling experience.

Shari and I had spent several minutes there taking pictures when we realized how much time had passed. And though we weren't even done, we raced back to the trolley. Of course, everyone was waiting for us...

It was another very humbling experience.

We quickly got on the trolley and I told the driver it was Shari's fault before she got on and I then proceeded to try to keep a low profile. From that point on we were branded as "The Shoppers" and the ones they had to keep on eye on or we would all be late.

We didn't know where they got that idea.

On the second day, I had a photo shoot and a video interview in uniform and I was very nervous. We then had a little bit of time for shopping and then met for lunch at Union Station with our union president, Bill Young.

Mr. Young is an awesome man. He made us all feel very comfortable and spoke to every individual there. After lunch we had time to go see some of the sites then go back to our hotel room and get ready for the Heroes banquet the next afternoon.

But first, we had a radio interview. (This, to me, was by far the hardest off all the interviews.)

This was also the final day of all the publicity. I was exhausted and anxious to have it over with because we had to sit in front of everyone at the banquet. There were Congressmen, Senators, mayors, and several representatives from various Unions. There were also representatives from the United States Postal Service among several other people.

I was amazed at the professionalism of our NALC president when he addressed and acknowledged all the people with him. It was obvious that he is very proud of all Letter Carriers and represents our interests to the fullest.

*Continued on next page...*

# As many of you have heard, I recently was invited to go to Washington, D.C.

*Continued from page 3*

Watching him speak, and watching our union's strength in process, I began to see the importance of all that had occurred since the beginning of my adventure.

I wasn't here because of a single act that I had been a part of.

I was here representing all my fellow Carriers who—**every single work day**—carry mail to our customers and do various other things that are not a part of our jobs but are part of being a compassionate and caring human being. It's inside all off us.

I saw the big picture and it was definitely a humbling experience. I left on my trip thinking I didn't know why they picked me and just wanting all the publicity to end. I came back realizing that it doesn't matter which one of us they pick.

If any one of you is lucky enough to be able to represent all of our other fellow Carriers, be thankful, be proud, and be humble. It is a lesson well learned.

I would like to thank everyone who made this possible for me although I don't know who they all are. With that said, I would like to thank our awesome Union; our President Bill Young; and, his assistant, Linda Giordano, for the wonderful job she did of organizing our trip and making us feel at home.

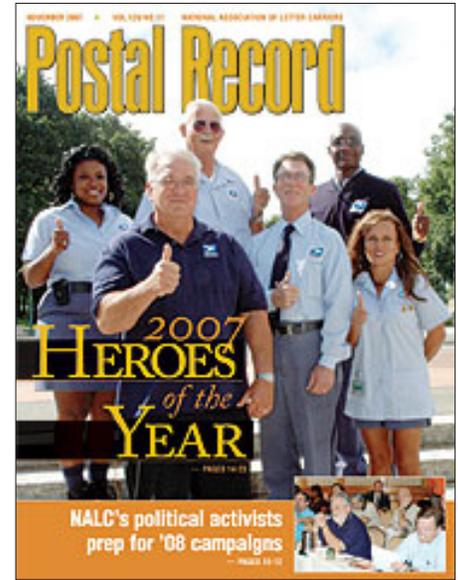
I strongly suggest something to any Letter Carrier who has

the opportunity to travel to Washington, DC. Go there and stop by *our* NALC building! It is right by the Capitol in a beautiful building and everyone is very hospitable.

When I received my *Postal Record*, we were on the cover of the magazine. That was really crazy.

But trust me, Bricker: This is really the last you will have to hear about this subject...Carry on with your mission in doing good deeds. Someday you *will* be appreciated!

And Shari.... thanks for being my Body-guard, you really did represent!



Yours in Solidarity,

PATTIE ARISMENDEZ  
Hillcrest Office—93306



*I wasn't here because of a single act  
that I had been a part of.*

*I was here representing all my fellow  
Carriers who—every single work day—  
carry mail to our customers and do various  
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human being. It's inside all off us.*

PATTIE ARISMENDEZ

This article originally appeared in the November 2007 *Branch 782 E.A. BAKER UNION UPDATE*

# What does Oprah have to do with all of this???



Five individuals—who represented all Letter Carriers—were honored on the Oprah Winfrey Show on November 24, 2009. Actions they had taken were presented in context with the heroic, quick thinking and wonderful things done by many others throughout our country. These are some excerpts from that broadcast.

Oprah opened the portion of her show in which Letter Carriers were highlighted with, “Our next shout-out goes to the hardworking men and women who walk the neighborhoods of America in the rain and the sleet and the snow. You probably had no idea the mail carriers of America did this though...”

She then highlighted the actions of each of them: Alan Girard, Oakland, California Branch 1111; Walter Hayes, St. Louis, Missouri Branch 343; Pattie Arismendez and Melissa Kelly, both of Bakersfield, California Branch 782; and, Robert Sweeney, Sacramento, California Branch 133

Two of those honored were members of NALC Branch 782.

In a video clip, Oprah summarized one of the incidents in this manner, “Down in Bakersfield, California mother of two, Melissa Kelley, was on her route when she came to the rescue of a man being attacked by a ferocious pit bull...Melissa courageously threw her body in front of the man and used pepper spray to fight off the dog...” Melissa responded with, “I

was just at the right place at the right time. He always tells me that I’m his angel.”

Oprah went on to point out the actions of the second member of our Branch in that video clip as she said, “Pattie Arismendez was on the job when she noticed a toddler walking alone in a busy street. As cars flew by, Pattie bravely ran into traffic, safely rescuing the baby.” Pattie noted, “As a mother, I would have been totally devastated.” Oprah continued with, “She then went door-to-door until she found the child’s mother.”

In the live portion of the show, Oprah spoke to each of the Letter Carriers she had gathered for this event. She posed this question to Melissa: “A pit bull?? What made you think you could fight off a pit bull??” Melissa replied, “Mr. Goulard was one of my customers that lived on my route and he’s 75 - 76 years old and I saw the pit bull tear at him and heard him screaming.”

Asking Pattie, Oprah then said “...do you feel really appreciated by your customers?” Pattie’s final reply: “I just love being with them in the public. I feel they’re special people, too.”

Both Melissa and Pattie felt very honored to be a part of something so unexpected and humbling.

For additional details on the account of what Melissa Kelley did, continue to the next page...



# *A Willing Rescuer A Reluctant “Hero”*

**A**fter almost fourteen years with the Postal Service, the day seemed like most other delivery days for Melissa Kelly. About a quarter of her route completed, she was just finishing up some gangboxes on Lacey Street before making the turn onto Avalon Street.

She paused for a second because she thought she heard screaming. Somehow it didn't sound like kids. In fact, she had never heard anyone screaming like this.

As she looked to see where the screaming was coming from, about a half block away she saw a man at the corner of Lacey and South H Street being mauled by a pit bull. He kept trying to get away from the dog and seemed to be staggering out into oncoming traffic and then he fell. She thought she recognized him...*it was Mr. Goulart who lived on Westhaven Avenue!*

Melissa knew she had to do something. Quickly driving to the scene of the attack, she grabbed her satchel and dog repellent and went to his aid. Spraying the dog twice worked because he backed away and, as Melissa screamed at him, he ran off to his yard.

Turning to Mr. Goulart (who is seventy-four years old), she realized that he was hurt pretty badly. His upper lip seemed to have been torn away from his face and was just hanging on. A tooth seemed to be missing. There was blood everywhere. He seemed a little disoriented.

As she tried to calm him, Mr. Goulart kept saying that the pit bull was going to kill his dog “Toby”—cradled in Mr. Goulart's arms during the entire attack.

Other people arrived to help. An off-duty policeman called in police, firefighters and an ambulance. A neighbor was calling Mr. Goulart's family on her cell phone.

Melissa stayed long enough to ensure that things were under control and then left to continue her deliveries.

**T**he rest of the day until lunch was uneventful...except that it was hard to have the whole event replaying continuously in her head and to wonder how Mr. Goulart was doing. But Melissa just kept trying to focus on what she was doing and tried to keep everything normal.

And, for the most part, that seemed to work.

She had lunch with another Carrier and never mentioned what had happened with the dog. But she was really worried about Mr. Goulart. She knew that he had been seriously injured.

She also knew that this was going to be a financial nightmare for his family. Mrs. Goulart told her that they had no insurance and had decided to drive her husband to the hospital in their car because she didn't think that they would be able to afford the ambulance charge.

After finishing her duties, Melissa clocked off, went home and continued to worry about Mr. Goulart. Later that evening, she received a call from him and he thanked her for what she had done. He felt that she had saved his life.

He went on to tell her that in the fall during the attack, he had done serious damage to his mouth. Six teeth had had to be removed and reconstructive surgery would be necessary. And there would have to be other work as well.

**M**elissa never shared her adventure with anyone at the Post Office. She just wanted to “fade into the background”.

Ironically, Mr. Goulart is the father-in-law of a Letter Carrier who works at Stockdale Station, Pattie Goulart. *She* made some phone calls to report Melissa's heroic actions. Otherwise, Melissa's heroic actions might have indeed faded into the background.

Two days after the event, during a standup which was conducted immediately after clocking on, Customer Services Supervisor David Long gave an account of what had occurred. Melissa cringed, but she felt that this would pretty much end her “fame”.

Adding to the irony though, later in the day Bonita Lewis (a fellow Carrier) was talking to one of her customers. She shared the details of Melissa's exploits. Much to her surprise, he told her that he was a reporter for the *Bakersfield Californian* and that he would really, really like to do a story about Melissa. Bonita gave him the phone number of the South Station manager and also Melissa's number. Somehow, word also reached one of the local television stations...

Within a few days, in Melissa's words, “Things just snowballed.” And it didn't make her very happy.

All she wanted to do was just take the focus off her. She felt that she hadn't done anything really special. She just happened to be there at the right time.

Initially, Melissa told her station manager that she didn't want to do any kind of media thing. Eventually, after some prodding, she said that she would do it for him. But, the idea of getting in front of a camera was making her more and more nervous and she later told the station manager that she had changed her mind and that she just wanted to go out and carry her route and let things just calm down.

Later that day, she received a call from her supervisor on her cell phone. She decided that she didn't want to answer his call because he was probably going to want her to come in to do some kind of an interview. Soon, she received a call from her station manager. She decided that if she answered he would try to get her to come in to talk in front of their camera. She just didn't want to do that.

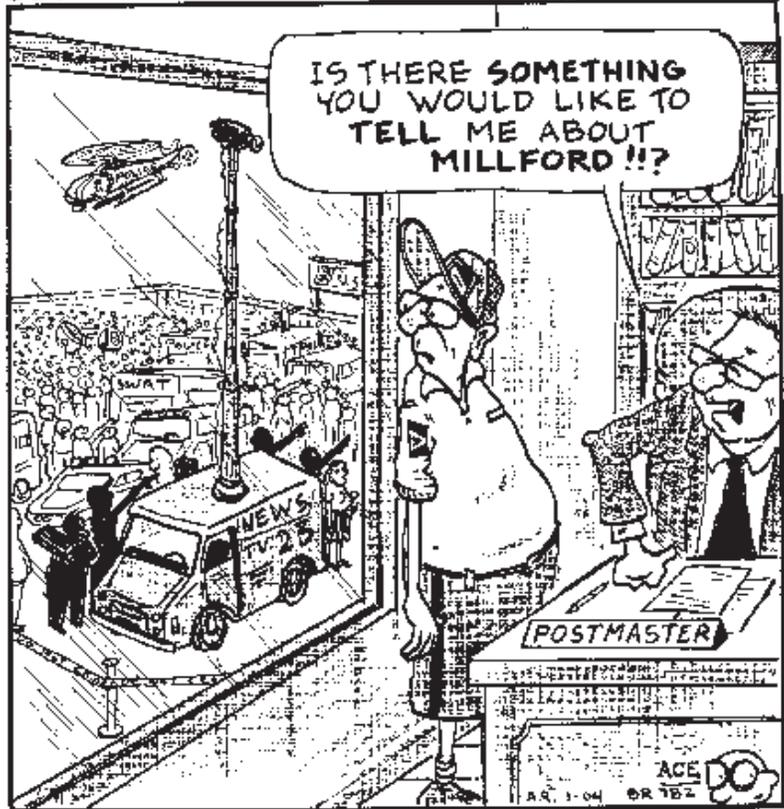
Before much time had passed, the station manager was driving up to her on the route. He asked her if she would mind coming back to the station just to talk to some media representatives. Melissa said that she would because they both felt it would be important to do something to show how traumatic a dog attack could be.

When they showed up at South Station, Melissa had to confront her biggest fear: *a television camera aimed right at her.*

(What really bugged her, at the time, was that it had been raining that day and she felt that she looked all bedraggled and didn't have the opportunity to look better.)

That evening, one of the lead stories on Channel 29 featured Melissa—in front of the camera—telling the viewers what had happened to Mr. Goulart and what she had done to stop the dog attack. Many of those viewers were co-

OUT THERE



workers who were already at home. Others were still at work when the Station Manager announced, "Melissa's on the television!" They all rushed to the swingroom to see the story air.

The next morning, there was quite a stream of South Station employees to Melissa's case to offer their congratulations and to ask her what it had been like to "be a star". Although still uncomfortable with all the attention, Melissa handled it graciously and coped with some of the good natured ribbing.

Shelia Wiley asked Melissa why she hadn't said anything about the event when they'd had lunch on the day of the attack. Melissa told her that she just didn't want to bring any kind of a spotlight on what she'd done.



Mr. and Mrs. Goulart, Mellisa Kelly and—of course—"Toby" pictured here during a much more pleasant gathering.

Like many, many other Letter Carriers all over the country, Melissa has always delivered more than just the mail. She cares about the people she serves. Often, she does "little things" (paying postage dues so customers don't have to go the Post Office, returning puppies, taking the time to talk to people who have no one else, etc).

On Route 414 she got to know a family which was going through rough times. One of the young boys reminded her of her oldest son when he was that age. She bought clothes for the children because she knew that there was a need.

In a very real sense, Melissa's actions are special because they typify what Letter Carriers all over this country do each and very single day: "We Deliver."

This article, by Basil Zuniga, originally appeared in the February 2008 *Branch 782 E.A. BAKER UNION UPDATE*

# Minutes of the November 2009 General Meeting

The regular meeting of Branch 782 was called to order by President Mike Towery at 7:00pm on the 24th day of November, 2009 at the branch office, Bakersfield. The flag salute was led by Sgt. at Arms, Jerry Patterson. All members of the Executive Board, except Kim Gerdes, were present. The stewards were present from Arvin, Brundage, Camino Media, Delano, E.B, Hillcrest, Lamont, Oildale, Shafter, South, Avenal, Taft and Stockdale. Also present was the Newsletter Editor - Basil Zuniga, Assistant Editor - Jason Munoz, Branch Photographer - Anita Holderman, and Emma Gonzalez of the Social and Recreation Committee. The minutes were accepted as read with no additions or corrections for October 27, 2009 general meeting.

**Communications:** HR 2647 was passed, Dues Increase Pay Period 1, 2010 by \$0.01, and 2010 CSALC-NBA joint training to be held Friday and Saturday, May 21-22, 2010 at the Hilton Pasadena.

**Application for Membership:** 1 from Tehachapi, Heather Helen Lemmermann.

**Reports of Standing and Special Committees:** Teresa Ortega reported that the picnic is still pending, cannot pick a date until January but possibly will be 3rd week in April. Basil Zuniga reported that last month Newsletter folding was done by Downtown with a good turn-out. Next month will be 93304 turn. Basil also wanted to let members know that he received information from a Carrier in Ohio that was implemented the Flat Sorting System (FSS) and he was thinking about setting up a telephone conference so that she can tell us what's going on and how it's working, stating organizations learn from others. President Towery stated that Bakersfield is not on the schedule for F.S.S. Basil also wanted to get the word out that any articles/pictures are appreciated. He wants to have more retirees recognized. President Towery thanked Assistant Editor - Jason Munoz, for the work he has done.

**New Business:** Voting to be done.

**Unfinished Business:** None

**Improvement of the Association:** On MIARAP- John Ortega stated it's "plugging along", evaluating October Offices now. This process takes account to our surrounding. Auxiliary help needs to put in time clock and have the 3996 filled out. Parcels will be counted next time as "chunkies". Basil added, "If you do your route as if someone is there, you will do everything by the book. Do your job the way you're supposed to, i.e.: lunch, breaks.

**Good of the Association:** Darryl Holderman motioned to have the December 15, 2009 general meeting catered for the holiday. Danny Blair 2nd the motion. Monies to be taken from "Refreshment/other category Funds". Possibly having "Champs" be the one catering at approximately \$15 a head. All were in favor. President Towery reported that there was a pay raise of 1.9% that went into effect on November 21, 2009. He also stated that there were 2 of our Bakersfield Carriers that were on the Oprah Winfrey Show that aired today acknowledging their heroism, Melissa Kelley who

saved a man from two attacking pit bulls and Patty Arismendez who rescued a toddler that had wandered alone into traffic. Out of fourteen Carriers across the nation, 5 were picked to be on the show and 2 were from Bakersfield. He is very proud of those Carriers and added that there are hundreds of carriers that do heroic deeds and thinks nothing of it and continues about their routes and both stated that it was no big deal; it was needed to be done. He also thanks Mabel Bullis for filling in for Kim Gerdes as Secretary. Mark Ramirez wanted to remind everyone that open enrollment is from November. 9 – December 14, 2009. winning \$40. Meeting was suspended pending the vote tabulation. Mrs. Anspach, a guest from the Make-A-Wish Foundation made a special presentation about the new Kern County chapter. She shared how lives can be touched through participating in Make-A-Wish. Mike pointed out that this was not an endorsement but information for the membership. The meeting was called back to order after a short break with the results of the ballot at 8:15pm.

These are the final election results of the election for 2010 National Convention Delegates (certified by the Election committee) which was conducted on this date: Mark Ramirez- 8; Emma Gonzalez - 3; Rolando Trevino - 9; Frank Martinez - 7; Pam Smith - 12; Mike Meza - 13; Norma Hamer - 6; Shari Sharp - 8; Rick Gerdes - 6; John Ortega - 20; Lucinda Martinez - 27; Danny Blair - 19; Jeff Harrington - 9; Teresa Ortega - 16; Mabel Bullis - 11; Anita Holderman - 30; Jerry Patterson - 9; Diana Chavez - 10; Paul Salazar - 8; Debbie Guillet - 13; Basil Zuniga - 32; Kim Gerdes - 22; and Jason Munoz - 16. There are 23 candidates, 29 are allowed to go but not all will get funding. All the delegates that are to go must meet requirements which are to attend 10 out of the 12 general meetings.

The 50/50 MDA Drawing was won by Sheila Wiley,  
**Financial Secretary's Report:** Anita Holderman reported that \$7,250.68 was collected for the month of November.

**Treasurer's Report:** Molly Biggar reported:

Beginning Balance	\$69,687.70
Dues Income	\$12,976.64
Interest Income	\$13.40
Total Balance as of Date: 10/30/09	\$82,677.74
Total Expenses	\$36,523.01
Ending Balance as of Date: 10/30/09	\$46,154.73

The \$300.00 Drawing would have been won by Alma Marquez except she was not present. There were 41 members present. The meeting adjourned at 8:26pm.

Respectfully Submitted,

MABEL BULLIS  
Filling in for Kim Gerdes

**DOWNTOWN STATION**

Dale Pearce  
Javier Cruz

**SOUTH STATION**

100% Union!!!

**EAST BAKERSFIELD**

100% Union!!!

**HILLCREST**

A. White

**BRUNDAGE**

David Kinglee

**DOLE COURT**

100% Union!!!

**STOCKDALE**

Ron Huston  
James Oh  
G.S. Saran

**CAMINO MEDIA**

F. Medina, Jr.

**ARVIN**

100% Union!!!

**AVENAL**

100% UNION!!!

# NON-MEMBER LIST

## September 2009

**BORON**

100% Union!!!

**CALIFORNIA CITY**

100% Union!!!

**DELANO**

C. V. Quebral  
L. A. Campos

**EDWARDS**

100% Union!!!

**LAMONT**

100% Union!!!

**McFARLAND**

100% Union!!!

**MOJAVE**

100% Union!!!

**RIDGECREST**

S. R. Pierce  
H. G. Blanco  
R. M. Noke  
T. K. Miller

**SHAFTER**

L. M. New  
M. D. Voights

**TAFT**

B. W. Krier  
K. J. Hughes

**TEHACHAPI**

V. L. Johnson

**TRONA**

S. L. Walent  
B. R. Dame  
K. K. Treat

**WASCO**

100% Union!!!

*Basil, 416 of the 439 craft employees in cities we serve are NALC members! We have achieved a total of 94.7%.*

*Submitted by KIM GERDES  
Branch 782 Recording Secretary*

# The Biggar Picture

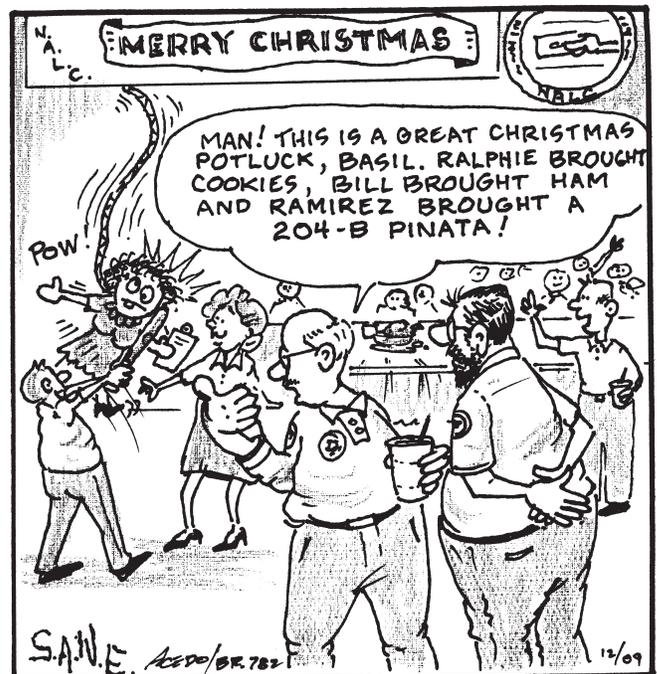
## CATERED DINNER AT 12/15/09 GENERAL MEETING FROM "CHAMPS BBQ"

On the menu: Deep Pit Beef , Pulled Pork,  
Coleslaw, Potato salad, Red Beans & Rice, Rolls

All we need are desserts. If you could spread the word...

Thanks!!

Molly Biggar  
Branch 782 Treasurer



# 2009 NALC HBP Info

NALC Health Benefit Plan	1-888-636-6252
*Hospital Pre-Certification	1-877-220-6252
*** Mental & Substance Precert.	1-877-468-1016
Drug Prescription Retail	1-800-933-6252
CareMark Hearing Impaired	1-800-238-1217
*** CareMark Specialty Pharmacy	1-800-237-2767
*** Durable Medical Eqpt.	1-888-636-6252
CareMark Specialty Pharmacy	1-800-237-2767
Durable Medical Equipment	1-888-636-6252
Nurse Assistant (24/7)	1-877-220-6252
CareMark Pharmacist	1-888-636-6252
Enhanced Eldercare Services (24/7)	1-877-468-1016
CIGNA PPO Dr's & Facilities	1-877-220-6252
***CIGNA Transplant Approval	1-800-668-9682
Quest Diagnostics (Lab Services)	1-877-220-6252
Quit Power (Smoking Cessation)	1-877-784-8797
CIGNA Health Rewards (Discounts)	1-800-870-3470
CIGNA Dental Discount Program	1-877-521-0244
**** Disease Management Program	1-800-227-3728
MEDICARE Managed Care Plan	1-800-633-4277
OPM Retirement Info Center	1-888-767-6738
Federal Information Center	1-800-688-9889
Social Security Administration Info	1-800-772-1213

\* Failure to pre-certify will result in a \$500 reduction in benefits paid by the Plan. Must notify the Plan prior to hospital admission with doctor name and dates. \*\* Mail order drug prescription program long term (maintenance drugs) 60 day supply: \$8 generic, \$24 name brand; 90 day supply: \$12 generic, \$35 name brand. Retail Pharmacy, you pay 25%. MEDICARE 60 day supply: \$7 generic, \$20 name brand; 90 day supply: \$10 generic, \$30 name brand. Network Retail Pharmacy you pay 15% of the cost of the prescription. Prior approval required for some drugs. Must call the Plan. \*\*\* **Prior Approval Required.** \*\*\*\* Asthma and Diabetis.



**Branch 782  
Health Benefit  
Representative**



**Mark  
Ramirez**  
(661) 834-5011

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

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

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

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

**Preferred Provider (PPO)**  
**Cost: \$15.00**  
**Co-pay per office visit**

**Preferred Provider (PPO)**  
**Deductible**  
**\$250 Individual**  
**\$500 Self & Family**  
**Per Calendar Year**

## Contact Information

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

# NALC Health Benefit Plan Open Season for 2010 November 9 through December 14, 2009

Another year is drawing to an end, and it is time to consider your health plan choice. The NALC has negotiated with OPM an excellent Health Benefit Package (HBP) for all Letter Carrier union members. Our premiums have increased slightly, but our Health Plan benefits have improved.

NALC Health Plan Director Tim O'Malley and his staff have provided members with a health benefit plan that all members can be proud to be a part of. Our surgical benefits are still excellent, and along with our out-patient coverage, they have improved.

Chiropractic coverage has also improved as has our accidental dental injury benefit. Our Disease Management Program, 24 hour nurse hotline, maternity care, enhanced eldercare, mental health and substance abuse programs are there 24/7.

Our PPO providers—through CIGNA—offer a weight loss program. There is also a smoking cessation program, “QuitPower”, which is FREE to our members.

Another change that our members will be pleased to have is our out-patient Accidental Injury Coverage. When you receive care within 72 hours of an injury and utilize a PPO facility for splinting, strain, fracture, or minor stitches, *and* the attending physician is non-PPO, our Plan will pay the physician at the PPO negotiated rate. This issue has been a problem in the past because patients have no control over the attending physician. Our Health Benefit Plan has taken this step to keep down unexpected costs, which cause problems to our members.

Also, for 2010, if we use QUEST Labs or LabCorp labs for covered lab services, we pay nothing! There is not even a co-payment!

Eye exams for covered diagnoses such as cataracts, diabetic retinopathy, and glaucoma are part of our plan. Our Plan participates with CIGNA, LIFESOURCE transplant network, for a transplant procedure. Members must pre-certify as with any in-patient hospital stay.

The NALC HBP has always provided discounts to our members who have Medicare.

Our Drug Prescription Program does have an increase in our co-pay for 2010. Members will pay \$8 for a 60-day supply of generic drugs and \$43 for a 90-day supply. New is an “NALC Select generic” for certain drugs which will only cost our members \$5. \$12 for a 60 day supply generic and \$65 for a 90 day name brand. Medicare members will pay \$7 for a 60 day supply generic, and \$37 for a name brand. For NALCSelect generic, with Medicare, \$4 for (only certain drugs) \$10 for a 900day sup-

ply generic, and \$55 for a 90-day supply of name brand.

All of our members can get their prescription drugs and refills at any CVS/Caremark retail store, at the same price as mail order.

New for 2010 will be the “Specialty Drugs”. These are the “bio-tech drugs” that must receive prior approval before ordering. Some of these drugs can cost thousands of dollars per prescription!

For a complete NALC HBP summary, visit the website at [www.nalc.org/dept/hbp](http://www.nalc.org/dept/hbp). To enroll in the NALC HBP, during Open Season: Use the Employee self-service kiosk and follow the instructions. If this is not available, call PostalEASE at 1-877-477-3273. If you have problems, contact Human Resources Shared Services Center (HRSSC) Option 5 at 1-877-477-3273. If you are a Retiree, you may also contact OPM's Open Season Express Line at 1-800-332-9798 or log on to [222.gov.retire/fehb](http://222.gov.retire/fehb).

MARK RAMIREZ

NALC Branch 782 Health Benefit Plan/  
Mutual Benefit Plan Representative

OUT THERE



## NALC Health Benefit Premiums for 2010

Active Duty Members  
Bi-Weekly Charge

Annuitants & Survivors  
Monthly Charge

Self Only	\$44.57	Self Only	\$147.00
Self and Family	\$86.11	Self and Family	\$299.74

# Future Letter Carrier Adem Keahi Ruelas

MIRAIP has brought many changes. Since I became an Unassigned Regular, I have bounced from one route to another. Although I miss my route and my customers from route 5, which is now an auxiliary, I have since opted on route 2—and along with that—I now have a new set of customers.

There is one particular little young man (as cute a bug!) who has attracted my attention. He is overly captivated with postal carriers.

His mom, Cindy Ruelas, was able to locate a postal carrier Halloween costume for him. I was so tickled by her son that I have asked for her permission to write a little about him and for her to send me a little information about her young man. The following is from her.

NORMA HAMER  
Shafer Shop Steward

*Here's a little about my lil guy...*



Adem Keahi Ruelas is 4 years old. He's had a fascination with the mail and Carriers well since he began walking.

He's not in school yet but next year he will start kindergarten. He loves trains and cars like most boys do.

He has been asking me for the Postal worker costume for a month now and finally he has it. Now nothing can keep this little mail carrier from trick or treating. It comes with the shirt, pants, hat, and mailbag with the USPS logo. He's already gathered up "mail" to deliver or just go for a walk.

Well I hope this helps

CINDY RUELAS

It brings a smile to my face when I think about young Adem growing up and actually becoming a mail carrier! He lives on a street that is close to the end of my route and after a long day, it is nice to see someone who really wants to see you!

NORMA HAMER  
Shafer Shop Steward



# In Jerry's World

I'm sorry that I haven't written in a long time. Part of this is due to the fact that I have been taking care of my son since his return from Iraq. I have had to take quite a few trips back and forth from the VA hospital in Los Angeles.

As I was down there, I noticed the CFC (Combined Federal Campaign) flags were out. They caught my eye because, as a Shop Steward, I have always tried to get people to participate in CFC. I suddenly realized that, for the last two years, we haven't received any kind of recognition in our office for our participation. And, all of a sudden, it started to bug me.

Last year, I contributed \$1,300 and—again—there was no recognition.

I decided to go into the building and ask some questions about why no awards are given out anymore. I met with the chairperson of the Los Angeles CFC. He told me that he doesn't handle the Kern County area. So, I later made a few phone calls and talked to the lady in our area. She said that everything is passed out around the first of the year. I told her that Wasco hadn't had any awards in the last two years. She told me that everything is sent out. Somebody, somewhere has dropped the ball.

Then, I got upset. I told her what I had done last year and that I didn't know if I was going to participate any more. She said she was going to look into it and make it right. I then reconsidered because I know that the money contributed through CFC is really important.

Later, I wrote this article because I felt that somebody needed to know about this.

After Basil got the article for the newsletter, he also made some phone calls. Eventually, I got a phone call from Bakersfield Postmaster Jim Broulliard. He is the Chairperson of the CFC in Kern County. He apologized for the problem. He didn't know exactly how it had occurred, but he promised to take care of it. He also made it very clear to me that the CFC is very important to him.

I'll keep my eye out and see how good a job that the Bakersfield Postmaster has done. I guess that I can step down from my soap box and go back into my normal mode of just carrying mail.

JERRY PATTERSON  
Wasco Shop Steward

S.A.N.E.



A.C. DeB.

# GOVERNMENT CONTROLLED HEALTH CARE WILL PUNISH LETTER CARRIERS

Health care costs are up, but not damaging our standard of living. Our costs are very manageable because the Post Office is covering 75% of our insurance as a benefit of employment instead of higher pay. In 2000 Letter Carriers paid 1.33% (with a family plan) of their gross annual pay for H.C. When I left the service in August, 2008 it was 2.51%. (\$1,322.00 per year) It would have to. Understandably, medical costs have gone up because of advanced technology and reams of new training for doctors & all medical personnel. Currently, we Letter Carriers have the power to choose among several private insurance companies every year! It's damned near impossible to get rid of any politician ever, much less get them to follow the Constitution of the United States which they are currently using as a door mat! If the Democrats force their Government Control upon us, then our insurance can't help but increase and what caretakers are willing to be bossed around by unqualified bureaucrats telling them what and when and where to do their jobs that they trained for years to do will know what it's like to be a Letter Carrier bossed around by an out-of-control supervisor! I don't want my doctor forced to be bossed around by some idiot from the government who put their Medicare system into trillions of dollars of debt!

PAY PERIOD 01-1983: A brand new deduction from our paychecks appeared! 1.29% for Medicare or \$12.29 (annual gross carrier pay was \$24,399.33) The government took \$317.19 for the 1983 year. By 2007 they took \$776.59 at an increased 1.38% The Union "missed" this additional tax on us for which we receive nothing, yet I've never heard one of our Union leaders try to get this additional burden removed. Hell, our national building is physically directly down the hill from the Capital of the United States of America, maybe a 5 minute walk and you're in the chambers of the House of "Representatives" or the Senate chamber! How the hell could they have missed this additional tax or did they just not care? They ripped me off for \$14,248.23 through August, 2008 for Medicare which the Democrats in their 2,017 pages of Government Control of Health Care are going to cut funding in half!

Second, our nation's economy and the fiscal stability of our national and state governments are already in the tank because of the government's out-of-control meddling and fiscal insanity. These elitists in politician's suits are not "public servants" but little dictators who will force whatever taxes and forced mandates upon the citizens of this once great country that they desire. Their universal coverage will raise costs, while shackling businesses & local governments like slaves and eliminating all private competition just as OBAMA has promised the union collective.

Third, just work on "our friends" in congress to scale back the 5.5 billion pre-funding for retiree health benefits. Universal, Government Controlled Health Care is SLAVERY not a "solution". If this monstrosity passes, our children, families and friends will be at the mercy of the government. This is the reason that our predecessors left "other countries" and revolted against their tyrannical oppression which was minor compared to the current dictators in charge.

BILL CURTIS  
Branch 782

---

## Somebody Has To Pay

The debate on health care reform has been intense. I want to present some questions and some information. Most of this is done to clarify—at least in my own mind—what I see of the bigger picture. Despite where you stand on this side of the debate, one issue seems fairly evident to me: Our health system does have problems. And, those problems are getting worse.

To look at it another way, if the grading system of "No Child Left Behind" was applied to the U.S health care system, the problems would be even more apparent. But there is nothing in place to address those problems in a systematic and systemic manner. And part of this is because so much of the dynamic has been guided by the reality of the dueling health care legendary interest groups,

So, what are some of the issues?

There are many hidden costs of the American system of health care on the American economy. What is the price tag to

all of us for uninsured Americans? Just how good is the quality of our health care—do normal folks really get "bang for our bucks"? Who does get the bang for the bucks? Who has to pay?

Ultimately, it gets down to the bedrock issues for most people: What's all this mean to me? Am I going to pay more? Am I going to get less?

Some of the side issues seem to generate a lot more heat in the debate: illegal aliens, death panels, "socialization" of health care, and other things such as abortion. Fueling the intensity are those who are passionate in their beliefs that to change what we have is either, 1) a fall into Communism; or, 2) the Holy Grail. Not a whole lot of middle ground here to work from.

But, when people actually take the time to think about it, there is agreement that things are out of whack.

Now, the realization that something needs to be fixed isn't just something that raised it's head on January 20, 2009. It has long been recognized that health costs are escalating. Back in 1993, the ill-fated Clinton attempt to reform health care ran into a

buzz saw. And, since that time, the costs have continued to spiral upward. Probably, because of the political ramifications, no significant action was taken by any of the Administrations since that time. In fact, if you think about it from a health standpoint, “The Health Care Patient” has been in a Washington paralysis due to ideological and policy divides.

What are some of the facts?

I know that many, many factors figure into life expectancy and quality of care and can determine how results are determined; however, the U.S. health care system (when compared to the rest of the world) ranks as the 37th best. Number 36 is Costa Rica and Slovenia comes in at 38. Also, Americans spend more than any other country in the world on health expenses: one out of every six dollars spent goes to health care or insurance premiums.

So, we spend more than any other country in the world and get health care which is ranked at #37... So where in the heck does the money go?

Health care premiums to insurance companies have more than doubled since 2000. Oddly enough, the increased money hasn't been directed toward health care. “Administrative Costs” have taken the lion's share. Profit—as a reported item—doesn't seem to be the culprit. However, companies (to recruit/retain/renumerate their folks) provide increasingly excellent pay and benefits.

Now, this (in and of itself) is not a bad thing. People *should* be compensated for their dedication, work and provision of services. But, think of this in the context of the Postal Service. How many of those highest paid Postal employees actually have anything to do with moving the mail? By the same token, how many of those very well compensated insurance company executives have anything to do with actually providing health care.

Specifically, something I was able to find out: Private insurance companies have reported (on average) that 30% of their budget goes to Profit, Administration and Marketing costs. In contrast, Medicare spends 2% on Administration and Marketing. Where is the difference? Money has to be going somewhere.

And, while I'm asking questions... Do you have health insurance? Yes. You pay for it, right? Yes. So does the Postal Service. The issue is that *somebody has to pay*.

The population of the United States is almost 308 million. There are 47 million Americans without any health insurance. That means that about a sixth of our population has no coverage at all. Do you think they get sick? When they get sick what do they do? Well, it's actually pretty simple.

Most of them try home remedies, over-the-counter medications and hope that things don't get worse. Sometimes their ailments can become serious. Usually, they will try to tough it out. And, when things get really bad, they go to an emergency room to obtain care.

And, so referring back to my prior question: Do they have health insurance? No. So who pays for it? *Somebody has to pay*.

You pay. Health providers charge insurance companies for the services they provide. Sometimes those charges seem ludicrous (you've all heard of those outrageous charges for Tylenol charged by hospitals?) but there is a reason: *Somebody has to pay*.

Insurance companies know that they are going to have to deal with justified charges. As a result they build the costs into *their* charges. (I wish I could substantiate this next fact, but I am going to source it to an NALC training program that I went to.) I was

told that “\$992 per year of your money “ goes to pay for the uninsured. And, this—even without having the documentation before me—makes sense, because *somebody has to pay*.

Speaking of paying, the health care problems raise their head in many different and devastating ways. Half of all personal bankruptcies are due to health care costs. Hospitalization costs can be absolutely astronomical.

If you've had any kind of major health issue, think about it. You start getting bills in the mail. Sometimes there can be some big dollar costs in the column which says something like “Pay This Amount.” And, then (if like me you have the NALC HBP) you get things which tell you that your insurance has paid and that you are now only obligated to pay the remainder. Sometimes the amount you could have paid is staggering and takes your breath away—until you realize that you are the beneficiary of being able to afford health insurance. And *then*, you should be extremely grateful.

“Health care costs are also the main cause of 25% of all housing problems.” If you are faced with increased health costs (medications, doctor visits, lab fees, diagnostic procedures, etc. and etc.) you have decisions to make. Do you buy food? Can you afford a car? Can I buy a house or do I have to rent? Where can I afford to live?

These are an example of some of the “hidden costs” for health care in our country. Because...*somebody has to pay*.

I think that our system is sick. It costs too much. It covers too little. It excludes too many.

And, it's getting worse.

Is there a cure? What is the aim of reform? Well, as I understand it, the goal is to provide a quality health care which is guaranteed, affordable and exists for everyone. It would also protect families' financial health so that they would not have to face bankruptcy when dealing with major health issues. The care would also be portable in that your health care wouldn't rely on where you worked.

It's interesting. When I first began thinking about this was when Bill Curtis (Branch 782 Trustee, dyed-in-the-wool Republican and vocal advocate of his beliefs) began railing against Hillary Clinton many, many years ago. She was/is a lightning rod when the health care issues come up for him. I didn't pay too much attention because I was more than happy with my choice for health care.

I have belonged to the NALC Health Benefit Plan for over thirty years. It has always provided me with a way to raise those eight children that my wife and I were blessed with.

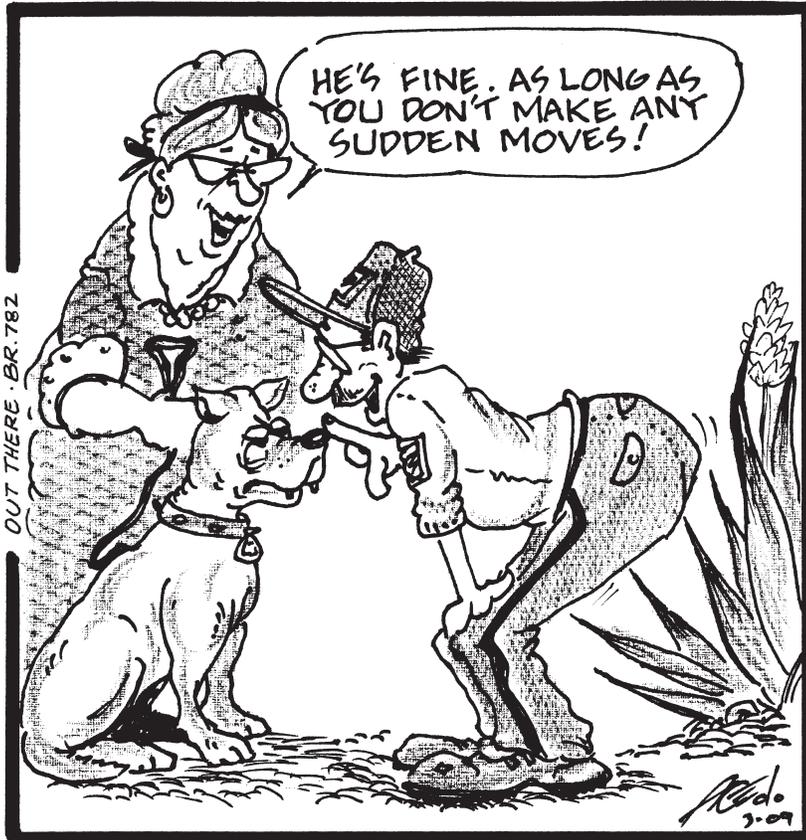
One of the reasons that I am concerned is that I have been told that negotiations between the USPS and NALC are always contentious. Stands to reason.

I've also been told that the major issue that raises it's head in Contract negotiations is always the benefits that the Postal Service has to provide. A major chunk of that benefit package is our health care. The USPS is always looking for ways to limit its liability and lower the percentage that they have to pay towards our health care. And my point is?

If they pay less, the issue comes back to that central issue: *somebody has to pay*. Anyway, something to think about...

BASIL ZUNIGA

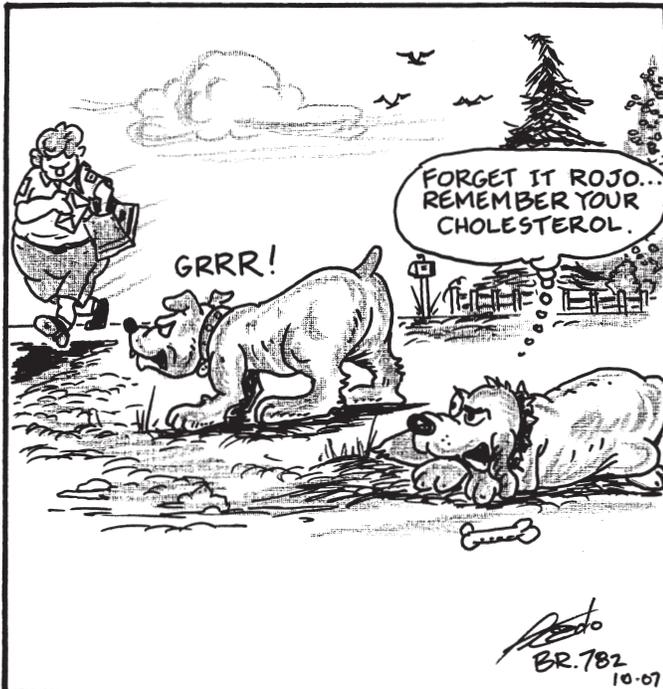
# "OUT THERE"



HAVE AN IDEA FOR FRED???\*

FRED ACEDO  
BR. 782 S.A.N.E.  
P.O. BOX 6532  
BAKERSFIELD, CA  
93386-6532

OUT THERE



OUT THERE



# Third Party Claims

by Steve Halkias  
President, NALC Branch 2008

Sometimes, delivering mail on our busy roads can be treacherous. Our members have had their share of non-preventable accidents that have caused severe injuries.

Some of these injuries have been caused by a “third party” (for example, a negligent driver on the road, a customer’s unleashed dog, or a broken porch step are all “third party” claims).

In these types of accidents, the Federal Government has a right to try and recover its injury-related expenses from the third party. This happens regardless of what you say or do. Many times, I will receive a call from a Carrier who was bitten by a dog saying, “I don’t want to file a claim against the homeowner.” The USPS gives you no choice.

Injury Compensation goes over every claim and—if they see a potential third party claim—they send you a letter. They will also inform you that you have three choices: 1) Hire an attorney to sue the third party; 2) Try to settle with the third party; 3) Assign the USPS to pursue the case for you.

If you do not pick one of the three, OWCP may determine that you have forfeited your right to receive compensation. So, now it boils down to pick one of the three.

I will go out on a limb and tell you point blank: **GET AN ATTORNEY!!!!!!**

There is no way that you can think of all the repercussions that can happen from an accident that is not handled properly. Just for an example, I know of two female Carriers who were bitten by a dog. Both Carriers worked in Clearwater. One was represented by the Postal Service and the other by an Attorney. The one represented by the USPS received \$700.00 and the one represented by an Attorney received \$7,000.

Why? One was represented by an Attorney who took into account the scar left by the bite where the Postal Service did not. The Postal Service will guarantee you 20% of the “net recovery” from the insurance company. The net recovery is *after* expenses such as property damage, vehicle damage, destroyed clothing and the USPS attorney fees and court costs. If there is anything left over, you get 20%...

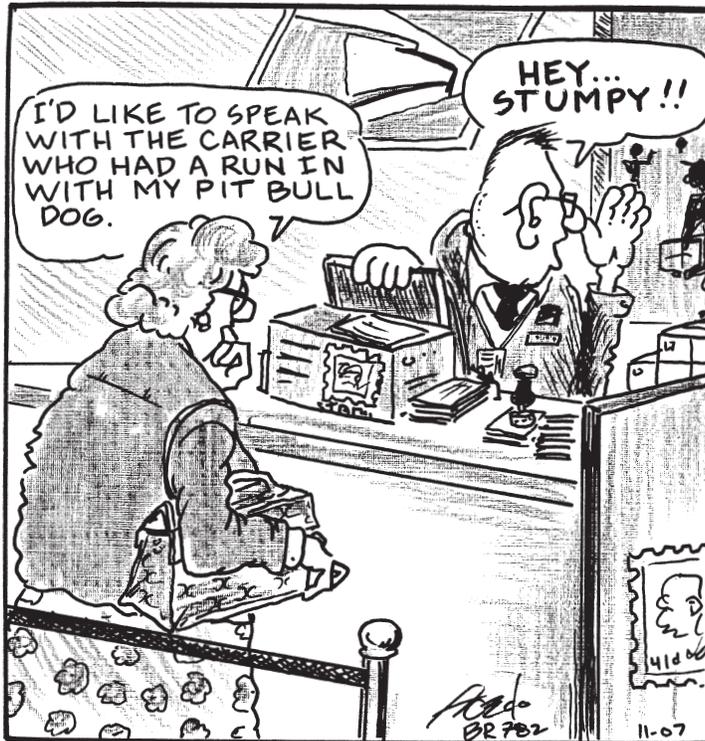
I am not an Attorney. I cannot advise you how to handle your claim. But, I *can* advise you to see an Attorney because I have no doubt that you will be better represented by an Attorney than by the USPS.

The days of getting hurt at work and you can work light duty

or limited duty are long gone. People are being marched off the workroom floor every day as a result of being hurt on the job and not being able to perform their duties.

In the past, employees have had difficulties finding an Attorney to deal with the Postal Service or who knows how to deal with third party claims. This has resulted in dozens of phone calls to the Branch office from Attorneys trying to figure out the system.

## OUT THERE



In an effort to see that our members receive the best representation possible, we have retained the services of Attorney James G. Souza. If the name sounds familiar, it should. He is the son of our Past President and retired National Assistant Secretary-Treasurer James Souza. Attorney Souza is already representing some Carriers in the Tampa and Saint Pete post offices and is very familiar with the Postal Service. Feel free to call him about any questions pertaining to third party claims or any other matter that may need an Attorney’s services.

Article courtesy of the Florida Branch 2008  
*Suncoast Letter Carriers’ Update*  
published in November 2009

**December 2009 Branch 782  
General Membership  
Meeting  
Drawing** **\$350**

*There is one “catch”... You have to be present to win.*

# You Can't Say Nobody Ever Told You....

by John Howell—President, NALC Branch 133

These are trying times for our members.

Excessing has not started yet, but Management has requested the moves start just after the first of the year. There is still no news on where all these Carriers (at least 63 out of our Branch) will be excessed to. This is only the first round of excessing so our PTFs still can see no daylight as to when they may be converted to Full-Time.

From what Management has told me, the Flat Sorting Machines have been delayed with one expected to be delivered in June 2010 and another in August 2010. I understand that it takes—from delivery to sequencing flats for the selected units—approximately 60 days.

Once your flats are given to you, in sequence, your routes will be adjusted again and there will be more routes taken out and more of our members excessed. So you see, the next several years are not going to be pretty.

In some of our units, Management is telling the Carriers (when they ask for the time the Carrier believes it will take him/her to do the assignment that day) that “the route didn't earn the amount of time the Carrier is requesting.” This is simply another of Management's attempts to use DOIS as the gospel.

It's really quite simple. When the supervisor comes to you in the morning, look to see how much mail you have left to case. Determine if there are any unknowns (such as heavy DPS volume, heavy parcels, heavy accountables, etc.). In your head, or on a piece of paper, determine your approximate leaving time based on the above and estimate how long you believe it will take you to pull down the route and clock on to the street. Now, based on your volume and whether or not you have circular coverage, how long does it take you to do the street portion of your assignment?

You then tell the supervisor your estimate work load for the day. **DO NOT ARGUE WITH THEM.** They may have a different opinion. That's fine. If you want to tell them how you came up with the estimate, do it. That's fine. If they don't approve the time you requested, that's fine.

In the later case, go out on your assignment, do your job safely and efficiently and make sure you call in if you find that you cannot complete the assignment in the time that Management authorized.

What you have to understand is that the amount of time it takes you on your assignment every day is being tracked in any number of ways. Let me repeat that once more to underscore that point. This time, read this aloud so that you can actually hear the

message: *What you have to understand is that the amount of time it takes you on your assignment every day is being tracked in any number of ways.*

You are generating numbers each and every day that you are on your assignment. How long did it take you to carry mail on a day when you had a certain amount of volume? When analyzing those numbers, why did it take you less time to deliver the mail on a Saturday when you had more mail than you usually do?

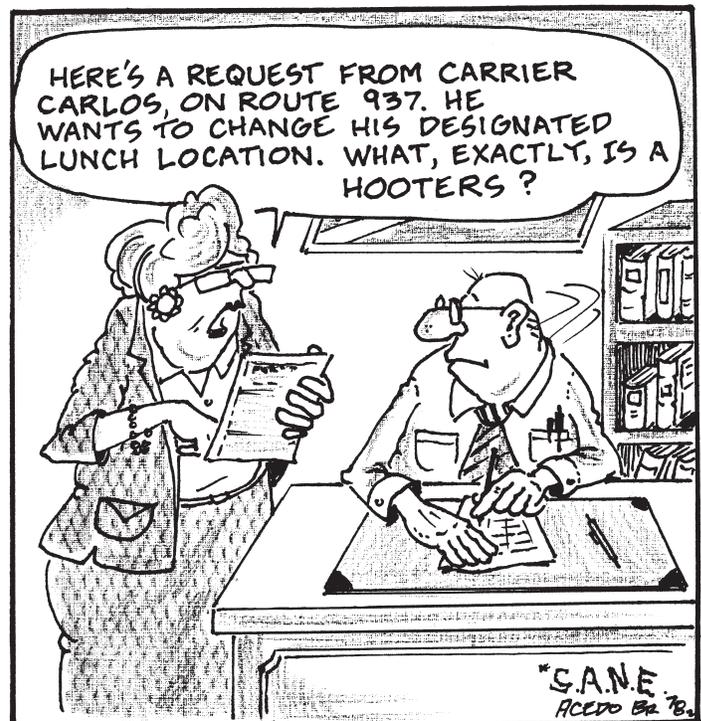
The assignment that you have is either one that you bid or were assigned to. Management is going to adjust that assignment, at some point, and the time you take on the assignment will be considered in that adjustment.

I am not telling you to slow down. I am telling you that you should not be running your assignment to make some goal that Management comes up with. Do your route Safely. Do your route Efficiently. Do your route Professionally. Take your breaks and lunch when and where you are supposed to. Only take the authorized time when having your lunch or breaks.

While we have many challenges ahead, we have made it through the worst economic years in our country's recent history. It should be downhill from here on out.

Here's wishing each and every one of you, and your families, an enjoyable and safe Holiday Season. Bless you all, and thank you for allowing me to represent you—the members of Branch 133.

Article courtesy of the Sacramento, CA  
NALC Branch 133 *Swing Room Gazette*





# Branch Officers

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.

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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**Mike Towery** (661) 331-9171  
**Darryl Holderman** (661) 589-1683  
**Kim Gerdes** (661) 834-2059  
**Molly Biggar** (661) 832-0393  
**Anita Holderman** (661) 589-1683  
**Mark Ramirez** (661) 834-5011  
**Jerry Patterson** (661) 203-9718  
**Lucinda Martinez** (661) 327-2898  
**Bill Curtis** (661) 323-1107  
**Danny Blair** (661) 397-8107

## NALC Branch 782 Shop Stewards

Avenal (93203)	Vacant
Arvin (93209)	John Ortega (661) 809-8140
Delano (93215)	Jerry Patterson (661) 599-6859
Lamont (93241)	Darryl Holderman (661) 589-1683
McFarland (93250)	Robert Campos (661) 805-1034
Shafter (93263)	Norma Hamer (661) 619-1465
Taft (93268)	Mike Meza (805) 625-4541
Alternate	Debra McClain
Wasco (93280)	Mabel Lyons (661) 900-8892
Downtown Station (93301)	Kim Gerdes (661) 834-2059
South Station (93304)	Darryl Holderman (661) 589-1683
South Station Alternate	Bonita Lewis (661) 589-1683
East Bakersfield (93305)	Paul Salazar (661) 327-7637
Hillcrest Station (93306)	Pam Smith (661) 979-5854
Brundage Station (93307)	Mabel Bullis (661) 496-5679
Brundage Station Alternate	Emma Gonzalez (661) 834-8658
Dole Court (93308)	Mike Towery (661) 862-8033
Dole Court Alternate	Teresa Ortega (661) 201-3086
Stockdale Station (93309)	Randy Courson (661) 345-0256
Stockdale Station (93309)	John Ortega (661) 809-8140
Camino Media (93311/13)	Mike Meza (805) 625-4541
Camino Media Alternate	Gina Garcia (661) 809-8016
Mojave (93501)	Vacant
California City (93504)	Paula Hogg (760) 373-8963
Edwards AF Base (93526)	Larry Beem (661) 949-2280
Tehachapi (93561)	Mary Morphis (661) 822-6614
Trona (93562)	Vacant
Boron (93516)	Paula Hogg (760) 373-8963
Ridgecrest (93555)	Lynnell Howell (760) 371-1039

**Branch 782  
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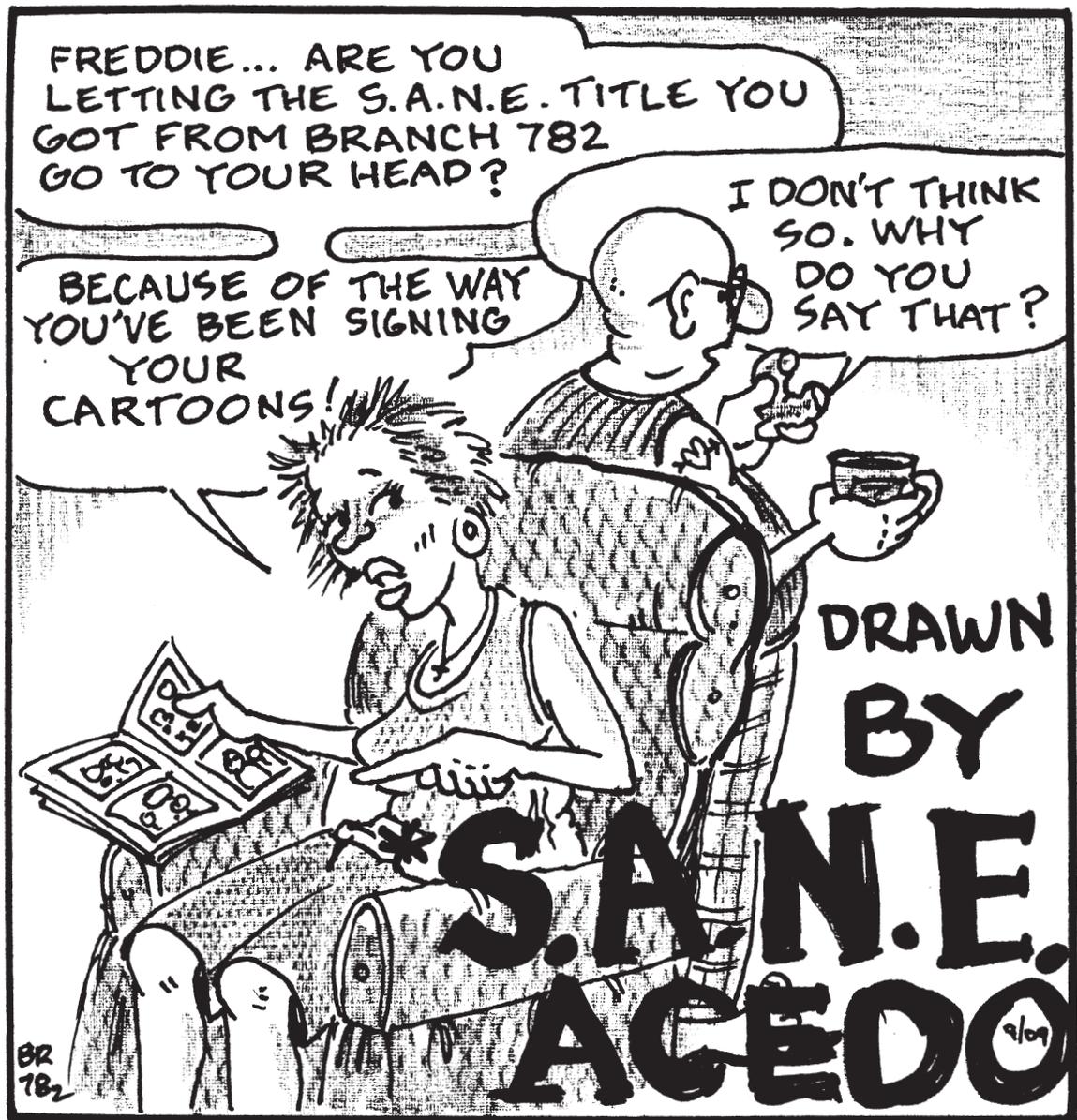
ADDRESS SERVICE REQUESTED

**General Meeting**  
**Tuesday**  
**December 15, 2009**  
**7:00 p.m.**

Branch 782 Office  
2628 F Street  
Bakersfield, California

TIME-VALUE MAIL—PLEASE EXPEDITE

*December Meeting is Different!*  
*Be here on December 15...*



\* SPECIAL ASSISTANT NEWSLETTER EDITOR