

Carriers and the mail make news online

Mail-centered stories frequently appear on social media and online news sites. The following are a few that have come to NALC's attention recently. If you find a story you'd like us to consider featuring, send it to postalrecord@nalc.org.

Carrier inducted into Nevada Boxing Hall of Fame

Ishe "Stitch" Smith, a letter carrier in Las Vegas, NV, will be inducted into the Nevada Boxing Hall of Fame in August. After 19 years as a professional boxer, Smith retired in 2019 and became a letter carrier.

The Branch 2502 carrier will be added to the names of well-known boxers inducted into the Nevada hall of fame, including Mike Tyson, Evander Holyfield, Oscar De La Hoya, Julio Cesar Chavez and others, according to Boxing Scene.

Smith competed from 2000 to 2019 and had a record of 29-11 (12 KOs). He was the first boxer from Las Vegas to become a professional world champion. He was even featured in the first season of "The Contender," a reality TV series about boxers who engage in an elimination-style competition against each other.

Smith said that being inducted into the hall of fame is "right up there" with his many accomplishments, including being the first person from his hometown in Las Vegas to be a finalist in the U.S. National Championships, the births of his three children and overcoming his depression and suicidal thoughts after the murder of his ex-wife in 2017.

Smith said he enjoys being a letter carrier. "It's great; I love it," he said. "I love the camaraderie amongst us carriers. I have a lot of respect for carriers."

During his time as a letter carrier, Smith has been the union steward for a term and the safety officer for a year. "It was a privilege," he said.

"I'm fully invested into [letter carrying]," said Smith. "I treat carrying mail like I did my professional boxing career."

USPS celebrates Underground Railroad heroes, springtime and manatees with new stamps

In early March, USPS released 10 new stamps celebrating 10 important people who were essential to bringing enslaved individuals to freedom via the Underground Railroad. They provided safety by means of secret routes and safehouses.

By the early 1800s, the Underground Railroad emerged to help enslaved people make the challenging and dangerous effort to escape slavery. Over time, it became more systematically organized so that these freedom seekers would have a better chance at escaping. Both "underground" and "railroad" were used metaphorically, and the movement used railway terminology such as "stationmaster," "conductor" and "passenger."

The stamps feature each person's sepia-toned portrait along with the words, "Black/white cooperation trust/danger flight/faith courage/risk defiance/hope Underground Railroad/USA." Those on the stamps are Harriet Tubman, Thomas Garrett, William Still, Harriet Jacobs, Jermain Loguen, Catherine Coffin, Lewis Hayden, Frederick Douglass, William Lambert and Laura Haviland, according to a USPS press release.

As spring is upon us and summer is coming soon, in mid-March the U.S. Postal Service also issued the Garden Delights stamps—three stamps that bring attention to the essential role that



Ishe "Stitch" Smith



hummingbirds play in pollination. The hummingbirds depicted in the stamps hover near sunflowers, cigar flowers, spotted touch-me-nots and zinnias.

Hummingbirds are most active in the spring and summer months and pollinate more than 7,000 flowering plants. They are found only in the Americas, and there are 16 species native to the United States.

Additionally, USPS recently issued a stamp celebrating Manatee Appreciation Day, celebrated on March 27.

Considered one of Florida's keystone species, the West Indian manatee plays an important role in preserving a healthy ecosystem. Manatees are like gardeners of the sea—their main food source is sea grass. So, eating the sea grass allows for more biodiversity and prevents sea grass from overgrowing.

Unfortunately, manatees are endangered despite their lack of natural predators. Manatees dwell in shallow water, which is often affected by environmental factors such as fertilizer, sewage and manure runoff. Boats also pose a threat, as they can have lethal accidents with manatees as they take off from the shore, according to Ocean Today.

The stamp aims to raise awareness about the endangerment of manatees and their habitats, from as far west as Texas to as far north as Massachusetts.

Antarctic 'penguin post office' is looking for new hires

If spending your days in Antarctica counting penguins, sorting mail, selling postage and manning a gift shop with the stench of penguin poo wafting through the air sounds like a good time, the U.K. Antarctic Heritage Trust has three positions open for hire, although being a U.K. resident is required.

The position is highly coveted—last season there were 6,000-plus applicants

for only three positions, which is a 0.05 percent acceptance rate, making it 60 times more difficult to be hired than to be accepted by Harvard University.

The lucky three selected will train from August to September, then will be shipped off to Port Lockroy, a historic British base on Goudier Island, from November to March 2025. Their main responsibilities coincide with the needs of the 18,000 passengers who arrive by cruise ship and want to send postcards and buy gifts from the shop during the five months they are stationed there. However, one fun responsibility is counting the colony of gentoo penguins living in Port Lockroy.

Hopefully the individuals chosen like their co-workers, because they are mostly cut off from internet and phone service and the three share a bunk room for their entire their stay. Moreover, the application indicates that the terrain does not allow for runs or walks around the island, adding to their time spent together, according to the *Smithsonian Magazine*.

The Port Lockroy post office on Goudier Island, Antarctica



Online news (continued)

Adding to the penguin stench, employees might also stink without running water, as they take showers only when welcoming cruise ships invite them aboard.

Rare Z-grill stamp expected to sell for up to \$6 million

Although the rare stamp's original value in 1868 was 1 cent, it is now expected to rake in somewhere between \$4 million and \$5 million at an auction set to take place on June 14 in New York, NY.

There are only two known Z-grill stamps in existence, and one is held by the New York Public Library, so this is believed to be the sole one accessible to private collectors. Along with its rarity, the stamp's value comes in part from the waffle pattern embossed in the stamp—the Z grill. The embossing was added to the stamps after the Civil War to stop people from cleaning and reusing the stamps. It made the post marking ink seep through the stamp, causing it to be impossible to clean; thus barely any survived. The Z-grill is otherwise unremarkable; it merely depicts Benjamin Franklin in blue ink.

"It's considered the trophy of collecting United States stamps," Charles Shreve, the stamp collection manager for the current owner of the Z-grill, William Gross, told CNN.

The Z-grill was originally produced in 1868. Then, in 1916, this specific stamp was discovered, and it reemerged in 1957. Its first sale was in 1975 when it sold for \$42,500. Then, two years later it sold for more than double, at \$90,000. It was resold several times until 2005, when the stamp was traded for a block of Inverted Jennies valued at \$3 million. According to CNN, the Z-grill stamp is expected to be the most expensive stamp ever sold in the United States.

"The person who buys it will have something no one else can," Gross told *The New York Times*.

Illinois family finally receives letter sent 80 years ago

More than 80 years ago, a letter was addressed to a family in Illinois, and in early January it finally arrived.

The letter was found by the DeKalb Post Office in Illinois in January. The address did not have a house number, only a street name, which the post office says is probably why it was initially lost, according to *USA Today*. The Postal Service told *USA Today* that, in most cases, "lost mail" is found and sold at flea markets, antique shops and online, and later given to USPS to be re-entered into the system.

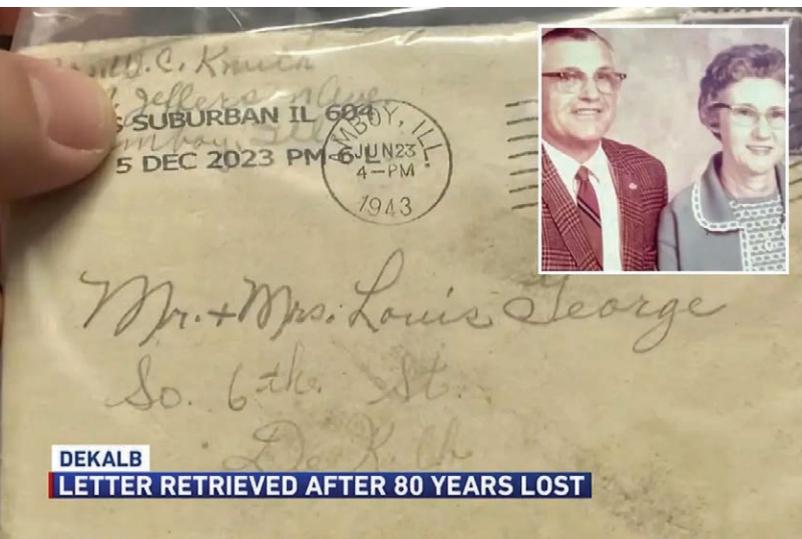
The letter was addressed to Louis and Lavena George in June 1943 and expressed condolences to the couple, who had recently lost their daughter, Evelyn, to cystic fibrosis. Although the couple have both since died, it was delivered to Grace Salazar, one of the Georges' living daughters.

Their daughter Jeanette also read the letter and said, "It just sort of put me in touch with my parents' grief and the losses my family went through before I was even born."



Z-grill stamp

The letter addressed to Louis and Laverna George (who are pictured, inset)



DEKALB
LETTER RETRIEVED AFTER 80 YEARS LOST

Convention news and deadlines

Several deadlines for the 73rd Biennial National Convention Aug. 5-9 in Boston are drawing near.

Delegate eligibility lists for the convention have been mailed to every branch. The lists must be completed and returned to the office of Secretary-Treasurer Nicole Rhine at NALC Headquarters no later than June 5 for branch representatives to be registered as convention delegates.

All proposed amendments to the *NALC Constitution* to be submitted for consideration at the convention must be received by Rhine's office by June 5 as well. That date is 60 days in advance of the convention, as prescribed by the *NALC Constitution*. Proposed amendments will appear in July's *Postal Record* for members to review.

Resolutions to be considered by delegates also must be received by the June 5 deadline to be printed in the *Resolutions and Amendments* book provided to delegates. Resolutions received after June 5 still may be considered at the convention.

Branches wishing to sell items in the designated branch sales area during the convention must contact Rhine's office to secure guidelines and forms. The completed forms must be returned to Headquarters by June 5 as well.

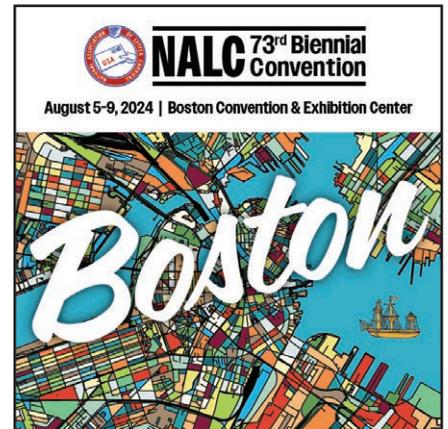
Airfare discount

Delta Air Lines is offering special discounts for NALC members traveling to Boston for the convention. To see if the discounts apply to you, call Delta Meeting Network at 800-328-1111 and refer to meeting event code NY38N. You also can insert the meeting event code on Delta's website to search for a flight.

Wheelchairs and scooter rentals

Electric mobility scooters and wheelchairs are available for rent from Scootaround. For reservations or for more information, call 888-441-7575 or go to scootaround.com/en/nalc-73rd-biennial-national-convention.

Go to nalc.org/convention for more convention news. **PR**



Regions 14 and 15 RGA appointed

NALC President Brian L. Renfroe appointed **Anthony Bossi** as a regional grievance assistant (RGA) for Region 14 (central and eastern Connecticut, Maine, Massachusetts, New Hampshire, Rhode Island and Vermont) and Region 15 (western Connecticut, northern New Jersey, New York and the territories of Puerto Rico and the Virgin Islands).

Bossi began his postal career in 2006 as a part-time flexible in Cambridge, MA, and later transferred to Lowell,

MA. He has served as a steward, assistant secretary, secretary and vice president for his branch, Massachusetts Northeast Merged Branch 25. He completed Step B training in 2017 and graduated from Formal A and Beyond training in 2018. After completing arbitration advocate training in 2019, Bossi became a local business agent/national assigned assistant for Region 14, a position he held until he became RGA in April. Bossi is a 2023 graduate of the Leadership Academy. **PR**



Anthony Bossi