



Proud TO SERVE

Despite the sometimes extraordinary circumstances, most letter carriers take their role as heroes in stride. From being the first on the scene to going above and beyond to make sure all is well in the neighborhoods they serve, these men and women are the daily heroes that make a difference in the lives of patrons who find themselves in situations where a little extra help is just what is needed. Here are the stories of some of those special letter carriers.

Two times a hero

PTF carrier **James Burnett** answered the call to go above and beyond not once, but twice in the past year. While making routine deliveries last summer, the Levittown, Pennsylvania Branch 4973 member heard cries for help. His patron, Agnes Romanchek, 83, had tripped and fallen inside her home. She had been unable to move or reach the phone, and her leg was bleeding profusely. Burnett entered the residence, immediately called 911 and stayed with Romanchek until the rescue squad arrived. Doctors said that, if left untreated for another hour, she could have bled to death.

In the fall Burnett was again at the right place at the right time. A man had collapsed and fallen down a flight of stairs in a building in Levittown. While waiting for an ambulance to arrive, the

carrier attempted to revive the man by performing CPR and stayed with the man until emergency personnel arrived.

Rescue in the rain

Driving home from work in torrential rain, letter carrier **Dean Dunkel** saw a sedan in front of him hit a patch of standing water, skid sideways across traffic, and roll into a creek running alongside the road. It came to a stop wedged against a culvert with the front submerged and in danger of slipping and being swallowed by the rushing water.

The Cedar Rapids, Iowa Branch 373 member stopped to render aid. The front seat of the vehicle began filling with water, threatening to sink the car with the driver inside. Dunkel acted fast, crawling to the bottom of the flipped car, where he saw the woman struggling. He calmed her, instructed her to release her seatbelt and crawled to the backseat. Once she joined him, he opened the rear door to safety, breathing sighs of relief until emergency personnel arrived.

Quick action foils suicide

While delivering mail, carrier **Royce Rossignol** heard a scream coming from a nearby street on his route. He drove to where he thought the cry was coming from and was met by a neighbor who had also heard it. When they heard another scream coming from the

house next door, the two ran over and saw a man swinging from a rope tied to a tree branch, a noose around his neck. The Maine Merged Branch 92 member called 911 on his cell phone, then grabbed the man and struggled to lift him up, creating slack in the noose as best he could. Police arrived soon and cut the rope, and Rossignol and a police officer administered CPR to revive the man.

Alert carrier halts ID theft

When carrier **Rhonda Russell** noticed that an 85-year-old customer on her route had been receiving a large volume of credit card mail in her name and in the name of her deceased daughter, she grew suspicious. Since the elderly woman had been living in a nursing home for several months, Russell was concerned and reported the issue. Investigation revealed that active credit cards had been issued to the victim and her deceased daughter, each with an additional card issued in the name of an unrelated man.

Making matters worse, more than \$12,500 of the woman's life savings had been withdrawn from her account and a second mortgage applied for in her name. The man was arrested and charged with identity theft and grand larceny, among other crimes. Russell, a New York, New York Branch 36 member, was credited with bringing the situation to light and sparing her customer from further financial hardship.

NEIGHBORHOOD WATCH

WHEN CARRIER MIKE SLESSOR SAW A suspicious vehicle driving around an apartment complex along his route where several home invasions had recently been reported, he alerted police. Because of the Royal Oak, Michigan Branch 3126 member's tip, the two men in the car were placed under surveillance. Slessor, who had just graduated from a local police academy, was credited with helping investigative personnel locate the two suspects that the Novi police chief said were responsible for at least 18 home invasions in the area.

RICHARD MARTIN WAS COMPLETING HIS route when a distressed little girl came up and told him she was lost. Martin, a member of Chicago, Illinois Branch 11, at first wondered if the lass was playing a prank, but the more he spoke with her, the more he realized her anguish was genuine. Fortunately, one of Martin's friends lived nearby, so the carrier took the lost child to the friend's house and notified the police. It turns out the little girl had been abducted from her back yard several hours earlier and had somehow managed to escape, and thanks to Martin's intervention, the child was reunited with her family later that afternoon.

ST. PAUL, MINNESOTA BRANCH 28 letter carrier **Travis Bacon** was delivering mail to one of the homes on his route when he noticed a strong sulfur smell as he approached the home's front door. Fearing a natural gas leak, Bacon used his cell phone to call 911. Authorities arriving on the scene entered the home and confirmed Bacon's suspicions, and thanked the letter carrier for his quick reaction.

A SHINY OBJECT NEAR A MAILBOX CAUGHT **John Hyers'** attention as he delivered his route one spring day. Upon closer inspection, the member of West Coast Florida Branch 1477 was certain it was a diamond ring he had seen on the hand of his customer, Mrs. Burchan. Hyers picked up the ring, wrapped it in a napkin, and placed it in Burchan's mailbox. The next day, the grateful woman was waiting for Hyers at her mailbox to thank the carrier for his sharp eye and his honorable action.

NEARING THE END OF HIS ROUTE, LETTER carrier **Armando Bautista** observed a man he had never seen before loitering close to where he was delivering and became suspicious. As the San Jose, California Branch 193 member delivered packages to his last house, he heard the mailbox slam closed at the house where he had just been and saw the suspicious man walking away with the mail. Bautista called 911, then flagged down a passing sheriff's deputy, who arrested the man for mail theft.

GARRY BARNARD WAS CONDUCTING HIS daily route when he smelled the odor of gas as he was approaching a resident's home. The Harrison, Arkansas Branch 2277 member immediately notified a neighbor, who in turn contacted the local gas company. Barnard was credited with helping avert a potential neighborhood catastrophe.

ANTONIO GAMBOA SPOTTED SOMEONE HE didn't recognize coming out of a residence on his route, so the member of Garden Grove, California Branch 1100 asked a neighbor standing nearby if the stranger belonged there. While the pair talked, a dog belonging to the building's owner began to bark loudly, prompting the owner to come outside and confront the out-of-place individual. Sensing something was wrong, Gamboa and the neighbor contacted police, who quickly arrived and arrested the apparent intruder.

"MAILMAN, PLEASE help me," read a note **Anthony Turner** found in a customer's mailbox while delivering mail. Turner discovered his elderly customer was without a phone, electricity or heat and he notified police and social services. "The police said the woman was without food or utilities and that if I hadn't called, it could've ended badly," the Cleveland, Ohio Branch 40 member

said. "I'm glad she knew she could ask me for help."

SPOTTING AN UNACCOMPANIED 3-YEAR-OLD while delivering his route one day, letter carrier **Leonard Brown** stopped to ask if she was lost, and discovered that she had wandered away from her baby-sitter's house. The child didn't know the baby-sitter's last name, so Brown called 911 for assistance. By the time police arrived, the baby-sitter had come looking for the girl, who was identified and the child was returned to her care. The child had wandered about three blocks. Neighborhood residents praised the Tulsa, Oklahoma Branch 1358 member as a hero.

A 6-YEAR-OLD GIRL WALKED UP TO Cleveland, Ohio Branch 40 member **Lois Buddie** as she was completing her route to ask for help. "She said she didn't know her address," said Buddie. "She knew a phone number, so I called it on my cell phone." Within minutes, the girl's baby-sitter, grandfather and mother were rushing to Buddie's location. The girl was supposed to wait for her mother after school, but decided to walk home. She ended up walking seven miles in the wrong direction. The child, who was tired and scared, said she finally approached Buddie because a letter carrier is "someone you can trust."



Cleveland, OH Br. 40 carrier Lois Buddie helped a 6-year-old girl find her family after the child decided to walk home from school by herself and became lost.



Eye on the ELDERLY

HEARING A TENANT SHOUT HIS NAME

instantly alerted letter carrier **Tom Bennett** as he was delivering to an apartment complex on the route he's had for 20 years. A 77-year-old wheelchair-reliant customer had fallen the night before. She managed to crawl to the door, but was unable to open it. The Tulsa, Oklahoma Branch 1358 member called 911 and then attempted to find the apartment manager to get a key, but the office was closed. Bennett stayed until the ambulance arrived, consoling his customer and assuring her through the door that help was on the way.

BROOKLYN, NEW YORK BRANCH 41 member **David Lundy** became aware that an elderly woman on his route was unable to properly care for herself. The letter carrier and his wife took it upon themselves to check on her, attempted to locate her family for help, and often checked in on her after work hours. After almost a year of persistence and caring, they got the woman into a nursing home, where she's receiving medical attention, food and proper hygienic care. Lundy and his wife were presented with a certificate of commendation from the High Point Police Department.

WHEN DES MOINES, IOWA, LETTER CARRIER Johnny Stevens noticed that the mail had not been picked up by a homebound, elderly customer, the Central Iowa Merged Branch 352 member immediately told his supervisor, who notified the police of his concern and asked them to perform a safety and welfare check. Within a short time, the police and an ambulance responded. With the aid of a locksmith, the emergency crews entered the home, where they discovered the woman incapacitated on the floor. She was taken to a local hospital.

WESTCHESTER MERGED, NEW YORK BRANCH 693 member Joe Cataldo noticed that an elderly woman on his route was not picking up her mail. Knowing this was unusual, the letter carrier rang the doorbell but received no response. When he noticed lights were on inside, he went to a neighbor to explain the situation and they agreed it merited intervention. Cataldo called his supervisor to ask him to call the police, and as the carrier continued on his route, he heard emergency personnel responding. The patron had been lying on the floor inside, unable to summon help.

WHILE DELIVERING MAIL, NEW JERSEY

Merged Branch 38 member **Ronald Allen** realized something was wrong with a customer on his route and called his supervisor to contact the authorities. When responders entered the home, they found an 80-year-old woman confined to her bed, incoherent and desperately needing medical attention.

AS LETTER CARRIER MICHELLE DONNELLY was delivering mail to a house on her route, she saw an elderly woman collapse as she approached her front door. The Central Iowa Merged Branch 352 member quickly called 911 for help and stayed with her customer until paramedics arrived. Upon being released from the hospital, the patron said, "I might not be here today if it wasn't for the kind lady carrier who saved me."

FOUR DAYS' WORTH OF ACCUMULATED

mail worried carrier **Mark Belluco**. He called out for the elderly customer, and heard a weak call for help in response. Belluco's patron had broken her hip in a fall. She had been lying on the floor for four days and become severely dehydrated. The Rochester, New York Branch 210 member quickly summoned authorities, who took the woman to the hospital. Neighbors praised the carrier's efforts. "Hats off to Mark! We are happy that he is our mailman," Clara Cassata told *The Rochester Democrat and Chronicle*.

IT WAS A NEARLY 100-DEGREE DAY when **Victor Phillip** walked past Ursula Dennis' house on his route. He noticed she was sweaty and talking to herself incoherently, and became very concerned because he had never seen her like that. The 76-year-old woman had been working in her yard that morning and had become disoriented. The Fayetteville, North Carolina Branch 1128 member sat his customer down on the steps and dialed 911. At the hospital, Dennis was discovered to have a heart disease that can lead to a stroke, heart attack or heart failure. "He was so courageous," she told *The Fayetteville (NC) Observer*. "He saved my life."

WHEN CARRIER ALEX CRIEGO NOTICED

that mail had not been picked up at an elderly couple's residence for two days, he had an inkling something might be wrong. The Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania Branch 84 member notified the Bridge-

ville Post Office, where a supervisor contacted the local police to investigate. Once police arrived, they were able to enter the home and discovered the couple, both in their 90s, on the floor. The wife, who was the caretaker, had apparently collapsed a few days earlier and broken her hip. Her bedridden husband, who attempted to come to her aid, had also collapsed on the floor and was found to be dehydrated. Emergency responders credit Criego's actions with saving his customers. This is not the first heroic act by the carrier—Criego has been recognized for going above and beyond the call of duty three times during his 22 years with the Postal Service.

CASEY GRIFFIN WAS CONCERNED WHEN he received a phone call from a woman from New Mexico whose mother lives on Griffin's route in Amarillo, Texas. The carrier usually checks in on the elderly customer, but that day the daughter was worried because her mother had not answered the phone. The Amarillo Branch 1037 member clocked off to go home, but instead went to the customer's home to check out the situation. The resident didn't answer the door, but when Griffin noticed the lights were on, he called the home security company. When responders arrived, they smashed a window to gain entry and discovered the elderly woman disoriented on the floor and requiring medical attention. She was rushed to the hospital while Griffin stayed at the home to board up the broken window.

WHILE DELIVERING MAIL, BANGOR, MAINE

Branch 391 member **Teresa Parsons** and her supervisor noticed an elderly woman on the ground. They immediately approached to help, and discovered the woman had broken her leg. The two postal employees comforted and stayed with the customer until paramedics arrived.

NOTICING MAIL AND NEWSPAPERS ACCU-

mulating, but seeing the patron's car still in the driveway, Santa Clara, California Branch 1427 member **Chester Fernando** grew concerned. When no one answered his knocks on the door, he called 911. When police arrived, they discovered an elderly man who had suffered a stroke three days earlier and had been without assistance. ☒

Carrier, pepper spray save the day

Letter carrier **Melissa Kelley** was delivering mail in residential Bakersfield, California, when she heard screams coming from nearby. As she turned to find their source, she spotted two pit bull dogs running toward Joseph Goulart, one of Kelley's elderly customers, who had been out walking his own dog.

The member of Bakersfield Branch 782 immediately ran over and positioned herself between the 74-year-old man and the attacking dogs, then successfully used her pepper spray to ward off the canine offensive and drive the animals back into their yard.

"I heard she was pepper-spraying the dogs real hard," Goulart told Bakersfield television station KBAK. "I could barely see her when she was running them back into the gate."

"I was in the right place at the right time," Kelley told the station. "I feel anybody would have helped in that situation."

A neighborhood's 'eyes and ears'

Driving to his next park point, letter carrier **Paul Knudsen** saw one of his customers running out of her house, screaming, "My baby is dead! My baby is dead!" Knudsen, a member of St. Paul, Minnesota Branch 28, immediately parked his LLV and used his cell phone to call 911 while he headed toward the house.

Inside, the carrier found a 3-year-old boy, lying motionless on the floor next to a large television set. The mother told Knudsen that the TV had fallen and hit the boy on the head, causing a nasty gash. Recalling his Navy first aid training, Knudsen first determined that the child was not breathing,

nor could the carrier detect a pulse. He asked the frantic mother to wait outside for the paramedics, and proceeded to perform CPR on the boy.

After a few moments, some color returned to the child's cheeks and Knudsen was able to feel a weak pulse. Shortly, police and paramedics arrived and took over the resuscitation effort, but Knudsen waited until the lad was loaded onto the ambulance before he went back to delivering his route.

The next day, the boy's parents gave Knudsen the sad news that paramedics had been unable to save their child, but they let the carrier know how grateful they were for his efforts.

"We are the eyes and ears of the neighborhoods we deliver to," Knudsen told Branch 28's newsletter, *The Twigs*. "I'm proud to be a letter carrier and proud to know I was there to help and support someone in need."

A carrier now, but always a Marine

Robin Sisco was shocked to see a car plunge to the ground from the second story of a parking deck near the main post office in Columbia, South Carolina. Sisco, a member of Columbia Branch 233 who once served in the Marine Corps, raced to the wreckage and despite the risk of an explosion, put her military first aid training to work in assessing the situation. When she reached through the car's shattered windows to check the driver's vital signs, however, she was dismayed that she could not detect a pulse. Unfortunately, responding EMTs were unable to revive the woman, and investigators determined afterward that the driver had suffered a heart attack, which caused her to lose control of the vehicle.

As he started to deliver mail to an apartment building on his route, letter carrier **John Pinheiro** heard a smoke alarm going off inside one of the vacant units. "I smelled something," said the member of Hartford, Connecticut Branch 86, "so I started knocking on doors and ringing doorbells," waking one man from a sound sleep and rousing another family. When he located the source of the odor and saw smoke seeping from under the apartment's door, he ran outside and helped direct responding fire fighters to the source of the blaze. The fire wound up destroying two apartments and damaging two others, but no one was injured. Grateful residents and the local fire chief praised the letter carrier for his actions, which the modest Pinheiro shrugged off. "I was just in the right place at the right time," he said.

When an out-of-control small passenger car swerved from its lane, crossed the median and came straight toward carrier **Manuel Torres'** vehicle, quick thinking and good driving skills kept him calm and in control and he narrowly avoided a head-on collision. The careening car plowed into shrubs and a fence post nearby, coming to rest on its side after striking a

stone wall and rolling over. Torres went to the aid of the car's driver, and the vehicle ignited moments after the driver climbed out the window. The Christiansted, Virgin Islands Branch 6413 member and a neighbor who had heard the crash joined forces to extinguish the blaze just before emergency personnel arrived at the scene.

St. Louis, Missouri Branch 343 member **Elbert Spiva** was concerned when he noticed smoke coming out of an apartment building. Seeing that no one was home, the carrier called the fire department, which responded immediately and was able to put out the fire. Spiva is credited with helping to prevent extensive damage to the building. ☒

The logo features the words "FIRE & RESCUE" in a bold, sans-serif font. The letters are filled with a gradient of orange and yellow, giving them a fiery, glowing appearance. The text is set against a white background within a blue-bordered box.

NEIGHBORHOOD WATCH

FLAMES COMING FROM A COMPOST bin alarmed Lansing, Michigan Branch 122 member **Colleen Martin** as she was delivering her route. Although small, the fire was threatening a customer's nearby shed, so the carrier immediately got a hose to extinguish the flames and spray the shed to cool it off, saving it from any fire damage.

PTF CARRIER CHRIS BOURG was delivering his route when he saw a 9-year-old boy with his finger mashed in the tightly closed door of a car parked on the street. No adults were present, so the Houston, Texas Branch 283 member ran to the boy and helped him free his finger. Bourg then walked the youngster to his house across the street and he was taken to the emergency room. The child's grandparents had gone into the house to get something while the youngster waited at the car. Doctors said that had the trauma lasted any longer, the child's finger would have needed to be amputated.

PARENTAL INSTINCT KICKED IN FOR carrier **Shana Downer** when she saw a 2-year-old girl, barefoot and clad in a diaper and T-shirt, lost, crying and heading straight for an intersection. The Wichita, Kansas Branch 201 member ran over to scoop her up and waited on the corner with her, hoping that if she stayed a few minutes a parent or caregiver might appear. After about 10 minutes with no sign of a guardian, Downer called 911 and handed the child over to authorities before returning to her route. Police canvassed the neighborhood until finding a neighbor who recognized the child, who was promptly reunited with her family. "I did what any parent would do," Downer said. "I am glad I was able to get her home."

CARRIER STEPHEN NUGENT noticed a frantic customer while he was delivering his route. The Tampa,

Florida Branch 599 member dismounted from his LLV to see what was the matter—and discovered a rattlesnake at the customer's mailbox. Using a garden tool, Nugent was able to kill the snake, and the patron was very relieved he had come to her aid.

TRICIA WALLACE SAW AN ALARMING sight while delivering mail: a man attempting to break into a home on her route. The Bellingham, Washington Branch 450 member immediately notified police, who were able to apprehend and arrest the man after a brief foot chase.

A WOMAN BEING HELD CAPTIVE BY her boyfriend in his apartment was finally freed thanks to Longmont, Colorado Branch 1105 member **Stanley Martinez**. The woman had been locked in for a period of two weeks and was never allowed out without her boyfriend. The accused man had changed the deadbolt on the door, taped and caulked the windows, and took other measures to make sure no one could see what was going on. One day the victim was able to convince her abusive captor to let her go with him in order to send a fax at the apartment complex office. While there, she surreptitiously made contact with Martinez, whom she implored to call police. The suspect was arrested shortly thereafter.

HEARING A CUSTOMER'S CRIES FOR help, carrier **James Setten** entered the woman's home and discovered that 12 sheets of sheetrock had fallen on her and pinned her against a glass table that could have broken at any time. She was unable to move and had impaired circulation. The Minneapolis, Minnesota Branch 9 member was able to lift the sheetrock off her and comforted the woman. After assessing her and determining that she had sustained no serious injuries, the carrier continued on his route. ✉

Carrier wrestles pit bull

Raymond Rivera Jr. was outside his home when he saw a pair of pit bulls get away from their owner and begin attacking two little girls, who were playing nearby on a bike and a skateboard. Quickly grasping the perilous situation, the NALC member ran to the rescue. One dog was biting one of the girls in the face, so Rivera's only recourse was to grab the animal and wrestle it off her while a neighbor helped contain the other dog. The San Antonio, Texas Branch 421 member held the dog in a choke hold until authorities arrived—some 45 nerve-racking minutes later. The girl received more than 100 stitches to her face and body, and required plastic surgery as well. Her mother told local news outlets that if it hadn't been for Rivera, her daughter might have been killed.

Educational television

Carrier **Maria Lemos** was headed toward the office copy machine when she noticed clerk Tisha Keyes standing nearby, gasping for air. "Are you having an attack?" asked the member of Garden Grove, California Branch 1100. Keyes, unable to speak, grabbed Lemos' arm and the carrier suddenly realized that the clerk was, in fact, choking. "I proceeded to do what I remembered seeing on TV—the Heimlich maneuver," she said. After several tries, Lemos managed to dislodge the offending item from the clerk's throat. "I held her until I knew she could walk to a chair," Lemos recalled. Once she was satisfied her co-worker was going to be all right, the letter carrier returned to her duties.

If it looks like a bomb...

Something about a package left in a West Plains, Missouri collection box struck letter carrier **Carl Farruggia** as not right. The member of Springfield, Missouri Branch 203 immediately used his cell phone to alert his postmaster to the situation. Law enforcement investigators soon arrived and determined that the package did, indeed, contain a bomb, and they were able to disarm the device. Later, the West Plains city council presented Farruggia with a plaque to recognize "his alert observation and quick actions." ✉

HELP on the Way



Palatine, IL Br. 426 carrier Robert Hecker was recognized by the lieutenant governor of Illinois for administering CPR to a man who collapsed at a football game.

Palatine, Illinois Branch 426 member Robert Hecker

was watching his son's football game when there was an urgent call for help from someone in the crowd. Another father attending the game had collapsed, the victim of a heart attack. Hecker rushed over and started CPR. After a few minutes, the man started breathing and regained consciousness, but again stopped breathing before paramedics arrived. Hecker, along with another parent, restarted CPR until someone brought out a portable defibrillator from the school, and the carrier was once again able to revive the man as authorities arrived.

A cry of "Help me, please!" is what carrier Daniel Graham heard as he was making a delivery. When he turned around, he saw Wonevia Penney slumped over her porch railing. He approached the woman, who told him her back was hurting, and helped her sit down as he called 911. The Central Iowa Branch 352 member stayed with the patron, wiping her tears and holding her hand until paramedics arrived. He helped emergency personnel by answering their questions as best he could while they loaded her into the ambulance. Continuing with his route, Graham spotted a Jeep driving by that he frequently saw at the woman's house. He stopped the man to ask if he knew Ms. Penney and discovered it was her son and informed him of the situation.

Carrier Keith Sutcliffe was stranded on his route, waiting for a vehicle maintenance co-worker to deal with a battery problem in his LLV. As his co-worker turned onto the street where Sutcliffe waited, he suddenly stopped and jumped out to aid a woman being chased by a dog. A severely injured man lay nearby. Sutcliffe, an Orangeburg, South Carolina Branch 1782 member, rushed to join his co-worker, calling 911 and staying to assist emergency personnel.

Delivering mail on her route, Charlotte, North Carolina Branch 545 member Cheryl Kohlage encountered a 7-year-old boy wandering alone around the neighborhood. Noticing that he was hot, tired and thirsty, she offered the child some cold

water and asked if he was lost. He told her he was visiting relatives in the area, but lived in West Virginia. He gave Kohlage his home phone number, but was unsure of the relatives' number. The carrier called 911 as she waited with the boy. Police told her the parents had just reported him missing, and notified them that Kohlage was with their child and would remain with him until they came to pick him up. The boy had wandered more than a mile from the relatives' residence.

Cries for help alerted Robert Keseck as he was delivering his route. They led him to a woman lying face down on the ground. He ran over to her and tried to calm the woman, who told the carrier she had been lying there for a long time. The Providence, Rhode Island Branch 15 member carefully helped her stand, got her into the house to warm up as he called 911, and waited for emergency medical personnel to arrive.

Northfield, New Jersey Branch 903 member Glenn Milke became concerned when he noticed a customer's newspapers scattered outside the home and learned that she had not attended her regular bridge meeting. Milke called 911 and notified a neighbor, who entered with the police and discovered the patron incapacitated on the bathroom floor in need of medical attention. Milke is credited with helping save the woman's life.

On his way to pick up his daughter on Christmas Eve, carrier **Joey Fife** came upon an SUV that had flipped upside down on the interstate. Running to the vehicle, the Charleston, West Virginia Branch 531 member climbed inside to check on the driver, who was hanging upside down, suspended by her seatbelt. He remained until emergency services arrived.

Carrier Paul Birch was eating lunch in a parking lot when he noticed the windows of a nearby vehicle were fogged over. Moving closer to investigate, he saw blood smeared on the window and the sole occupant thrashing about, suffering from several life-threatening, self-inflicted stab wounds. The Anacortes, Washington Branch 1527 member, who is also a volunteer fire fighter, summoned police and began to administer

first aid. Officers responding to the incident said Birch's actions may have saved the victim's life.

Glen Burnie, Maryland Branch 4422 member Jeanne Hall was delivering mail on her route on one of the coldest days of the year when she came across a customer desperately attempting to get across the street from her house. The customer, who is physically challenged, relies on an automatic system that calls 911 and notifies family members if she falls. When the woman realized her phone line was dead, she panicked and went outside, calling for help. Hall immediately went to get assistance. The patron later declared she was never so happy to see someone in her life.

Working his night job as an EMT for the local fire company, carrier **Angelo LaBuono** responded to a building fire. When the structure collapsed, the Philadelphia, Pennsylvania Branch 157 member pulled a fellow fire fighter from the rubble and performed CPR until his vital signs came back. Although the fire fighter succumbed to his injuries a few days later, his life was extended long enough for his family to say good-bye. LaBuono received an award from the county district attorney for his actions.

Approaching a patron's house to make a delivery, carrier **Jim Van Schindel** saw through a window that she was lying on the floor. Speaking to her, the Elmhurst, Illinois Branch 825 member learned she had been unable to move since collapsing two days earlier. He immediately notified authorities. "Perhaps too many people take our letter carriers for granted, or don't see them as lifesavers," David Sosna, the customer's son, wrote in a letter to the post office, "but the life-saving help Mr. Van Schindel provided is something I'll never forget."

While delivering mail, carrier Ray Artis saw a man apparently suffering a heart attack. He immediately called 911 and stayed with the man until paramedics arrived. Emergency officials confirmed the man was indeed having a heart attack and would have died if the Pensacola, Florida Branch 321 member had not stepped in. ✉