

Proud TO SERVE

Hero? Many people hear the word and think of fire fighters, police officers or soldiers. But for many, it also calls to mind another person in uniform: their dependable letter carrier.

Across this nation, letter carriers are often the first to discover people in need due to medical emergencies, accidents or fires. The following reports are offered to honor the actions of those carriers whose quick thinking and speedy reactions have saved lives, averted disasters and spared others from harm.

Frantic rescue effort

Walking her route, **Andrea Faulkner** was startled by cries for help from a customer's home. The Grand Rapids, Michigan Branch 56 member entered the home and immediately realized the woman inside wasn't breathing properly, so she called 911.

Some minutes passed before fire department EMTs arrived to find the letter carrier dripping with sweat as she aggressively performed CPR on the woman. Despite Faulkner's intense effort, the woman couldn't be revived. Nonetheless, the carrier earned high praise for her commitment to her patrons' well-being.

"Her dedication to duty and willingness to go above and beyond the nor-

mal expectations of her job reflect a positive image on her and are in keeping with the finest traditions of public service," Mike Myers of the Grand Rapids Fire Department stated in his nomination letter for a special recognition award for Faulkner.

Regular customer rescued

Most times when **Ron Farnsworth** reached the apartment building that is the only residential stop on his route, he would go to the door of Tom Crowell's unit to deliver one of the boxes of books that arrived regularly. When the elderly patron didn't come to the door one day, the carrier suspected something was wrong. As he rang the doorbell and then knocked, he heard what sounded like garbled speech.

Trying the doorknob, Farnsworth found it was unlocked. He stuck his head in and could see Crowell laying on the floor of the kitchen. Kneeling at the man's side, the Coeur d'Alene, Idaho Branch 1260 member quickly determined he had suffered a stroke, called 911 and stayed with him until help arrived. Farnsworth's actions went unreported for many weeks. It wasn't until a thank-you card from Crowell's family showed up at the post office that his coworkers became aware of the carrier's dramatic experience.



Grand Rapids, Michigan Branch 56 member **Andrea Faulkner** received the City Manager's Special Recognition Award for her valiant effort to save a customer by performing CPR. Pictured with her are Grand Rapids Postmaster **Chris Tinkham** (l) and Grand Rapids Mayor **George Heartwell**.

As Roger Perry was delivering his route one summer day, he saw a normal sight: a young girl playing outside of her grandparents' home. His next sight, though, made him anxious—a 4-foot rattlesnake, coiled and ready to strike. The Huntington, West Virginia Branch 359 member immediately grabbed the little girl and ran to alert her family for assistance in killing the snake before any injuries could occur. Perry was commended for his bravery and quick thinking.

A bank robbery in the area made members of the Tarpon Springs, Florida, community uneasy. Surveillance video released to the media showed a man with a weapon who forcefully removed cash from bank drawers. When carrier **Dennis Pross** was approached by bank tellers and shown pictures from the video, he recognized the person as a homeless man who lived on a vacant lot on his route and contacted police. The successful identification led to a police lineup and the eventual arrest of the suspect. Bank employees thanked the Clearwater, Florida Branch 2008 member for his help in solving the case.

Working her assigned route, Joanne Reno noticed unusual activity at a customer's

home. She called her husband and her supervisor, both of whom called 911. Police soon arrived at the residence and discovered a burglary in progress. Officers were able to take the suspects into custody. The Uniontown, Pennsylvania Branch 520 member was commended by many area residents for her role in thwarting the theft.

A vehicle moving suspiciously slowly caught the attention of **Roy Gilliam** as he was delivering the mail. The Houston, Texas Branch 283 member continued on his route, but when he reached the house of a retired police officer, he relayed his concerns to the ex-lawman. The customer called police, who checked out the situation and apprehended three individuals for suspected burglary. Officers said they believed the suspects tried to break into at least three homes and hit a nearby apartment complex. A baby was also discovered in their vehicle. Houston police said Gilliam played a critical role in ending the crime spree—the second time in two

NEIGHBORHOOD WATCH

years that he has been recognized for such a feat.

A 14-year-old girl who was crying and obviously very distressed approached **Charles Spivey** as he worked his route. After calming the teenager, the carrier learned that a man had attempted to pull the girl into his pickup truck. Spivey immediately reported the incident to the police and as he related the girl's description of the vehicle, he realized he had seen it several times along his route throughout the day. The girl was unhurt and the Indianapolis, Indiana Branch 39 member turned her over to the care of the police before he returned to delivering mail. Soon thereafter, he came across the pickup truck again. He reported the sighting to the authorities, who apprehended the man. ☒

Comatose driver nearly bakes in sweltering vehicle



Late on a sweltering afternoon, **Jackie Daniels** was leaving work when she alertly noticed a small, elderly woman slumped in her car in the post office parking lot. The carrier hurried over to the car and rapped on the window, but the woman was unresponsive. Fortunately, the vehicle was not locked, for when Daniels

grabbed the handle and pulled open the door, she felt a blast of heat like she was opening an oven.

The woman, still restrained by her safety belt as she lolled toward the open door, remained comatose despite the fresh air. The Naples, Florida Branch 4716 member hurriedly called both 911 and her office for assistance and stayed with the woman until a medical crew arrived to take her to the hospital.

Prompt, life-saving response

Going about her daily routine, **Cynthia Fodor** heard the sound of a smoke detector. Looking in the direction of the sound, she saw heavy smoke billowing from the chimney of a house. She went to the door and rang the bell, but no one answered. The Lehigh Valley, Pennsylvania Branch 274 member promptly used her cell phone to contact both the fire department and the building's landlord, who lived nearby.

Fire fighters saved a woman from inside the smoky building. The woman was told by paramedics that she had dangerously low blood pressure and that Fodor's actions had saved her life. Fire department officials concluded the fire had started when the furnace malfunctioned.

"In an increasingly uncivil and disengaged society, Cindy Fodor stands as an example of professionalism and caring," neighbors Suzanne and Guy Kratzer wrote to the postmaster. "We are very privileged to be on her daily route." ☒

FIRE & RESCUE

Early Saturday morning on his rounds, **Bruce Vang** noticed flames shooting from a green waste container adjacent to a house and up against a wooden fence. He sprinted to the customers' door, pounded on it vigorously, then ran back to the fire before anyone responded. He picked up a garden hose and proceeded to aim a blast of water at the blaze, which by then had spread to the fence and was moving toward a nearby stack of firewood. The customers quickly joined Vang and were able to put out the fire without having to call the fire department. Once the Carmichael, California Branch 4494 member saw that things were under control, he calmly walked off to continue his route. "We are so grateful for his quick thinking," resident **Connie Common** wrote to the local postmaster. "Our lives right now would be so different if he had not gone above the call of duty."

It seemed to be a normal workday for **Reggie Cervantes** right up to the time he noticed black smoke coming from a canyon near the end of his route. Because there had been a recent major fire in the area, the Garden Grove, California Branch 1100 member carrier feared this could signal the start of another brush fire. Cervantes drove

"Our lives right now would be so different if he had not gone above the call of duty."

—**Connie Common** praised Branch 4494 member **Bruce Vang** after the carrier put out a spreading fire using a garden hose

toward the smoke and saw it was coming from a home at the end of his route. As he got closer, he saw flames crawling up the side of the house and going over the fence that separated the property from the next house. He knocked on the front door, not knowing that the

residents had left just minutes before. When he got no response, he went next door and asked the neighbor to call 911. The carrier then returned to the first house, where he found the front door was unlocked and entered to make sure no one was at risk. As he finished his survey, the neighbor arrived to check for the family pets that he thought might be inside. Fire fighters arrived just in time to quash the flames, which had just crept up to the attic. Officials said that in another five minutes, major damage would have occurred.

Flames shooting from a home on his route stopped carrier **James Hladky** in mid-stride. The Fremont, Nebraska Branch 89 member immediately called 911 and then rushed to alert the residents, who included a newborn baby, a mother and three other children. The mother was unaware of the fire and followed Hladky's direction as he used his experience as a volunteer fire fighter to safely and calmly evacuate the family from the house. He comforted them and waited with them until the fire department arrived to take over before he continued on his route. The house sustained only minimal damage due to Hladky's quick actions. ☒



Eye on the ELDERLY

AFTER SPENDING MORE THAN AN HOUR on the ground bleeding and unable to get up, an elderly patron was beginning to despair that help would ever come when her letter carrier, **Mark Martin**, arrived. The Tampa, Florida Branch 599 member quickly ascertained that the woman had fallen and struck her head on a stone. He promptly called 911 and waited with the woman, comforting her, until paramedics arrived.

HEARING MUFFLED CRIES FOR HELP, **Steve Agresto** focused in on the sound and concluded it was coming from the home of an elderly customer. He recruited a neighbor and they entered the house, where they discovered the man lying on the floor after suffering a fall. Agresto called 911 and stayed with the patron until help arrived. It turned out the man had been incapacitated for a day and could have been there longer without the alert assistance of the Harrisburg, Pennsylvania Branch 500 member.

STACKED-UP MAIL AT THE HOUSE OF AN elderly customer began to worry **Pupi Lafaele**. The Seattle, Washington Branch 79 carrier knocked on the door, but heard no response. He went next door to tell a neighbor, who fortunately had contact information for the customer's son, who soon arrived. The group entered the home and found the elderly woman lying on her back on the basement floor. Paramedics were summoned and the woman, who had fallen down the stairs, got the medical care she needed. ☒

Baton Rouge, Louisiana Branch 129 member **Ed Baker** was on his route when he noticed customer Bob Hausey was just staring at him blankly. The carrier tried to get the man's attention, but got no response. Baker vaguely recalled hearing that Hausey was a diabetic, so he sought out a neighbor who is a nurse—and also diabetic. She checked Hausey's blood sugar level, which was dangerously low. Paramedics were summoned and Baker is credited with helping to save Hausey's life.

When **Sandro Larson** turned a corner in his vehicle on his route, he saw a boy lying in the middle of the street. He quickly called 911 and got out of his vehicle to check out the situation. The boy apparently had been riding on the bumper of a friend's car and fell off, striking his head on the pavement. He was bleeding profusely from his head and nose and was drifting in and out of consciousness. Larson stayed with the boy and ensured that his friends—who had eventually realized what had happened and returned to the scene—did not try to move him. Police and an ambulance arrived shortly to take the boy to the hospital. The Salt Lake City, Utah Branch 111 carrier was commended for his vigilance and concern for members of the community.

Returning to his route following his lunch break, **Corey Grotte** saw a two-car, rear-end accident. Reaching the scene, he saw

that the car that had been rear-ended had an elderly driver. He immediately checked her condition and she reported feeling neck and back pain. He called 911 and, as they waited, did his best to calm the woman. He also called her husband and was able to stabilize her neck. An off-duty fire fighter arrived and assisted the Eau Claire, Wisconsin Branch 728 member until the ambulance arrived. The woman later wrote to Grotte, expressing her extreme gratitude.

Hearing loud cries coming from the backyard of a house on his route, **Gregory Karalias** went to investigate and discovered that a man had fallen from a ladder. Seeing a bone protruding from the customer's broken leg, the Rochester, New York Branch 210 member called for assistance. He waited with the man, keeping him calm and coherent, until the ambulance arrived.

Making his regular rounds, **Patrick Kimmell** noticed Ted Mayers, one of his customers, lying face-down on the ground. The carrier rushed to the man's side and carefully turned him over. He saw that Mayers was covered in blood and realized he wasn't breathing. A neighbor soon appeared and Kimmell yelled for him to call for help. The Omaha, Nebraska Branch 5 member began chest compressions and traded off with the neighbor until a rescue team arrived to take over.

Noticing two days' mail piled up in a customer's box, **Nikita Brockington** grew concerned. The carrier went up to the home and knocked on the door. In response, the customer, Mr. Attanasio, yelled that he could not come to the door. The Long Island Merged, New York Branch 6000 member thought his patron must be in distress and notified the local police. When a police officer entered the premises, he found Attanasio on the floor, desperately in need of medical attention, which he soon received at a hospital.

Thomas Fearon was delivering one day when he was approached by a customer, Irene Ruschman. She told him that she believed her blood sugar was low and wasn't feeling well. She became woozy and appeared to be losing her balance, so the carrier helped her back into her home. Ruschman insisted she would be fine without further assistance, but Fearon persuaded her to allow him to help her get a blood sugar reading and to call her husband. When the Long Island Merged, New York Branch 6000 member contacted the husband, the spouse told Fearon how to stabilize her condition. Following the man's instructions, the letter carrier gave the woman some food and her condition soon improved. ✉

Customer Connect contributors

Here's a sample of the successes carriers have had promoting USPS products:

USPS Area	Carrier	Branch	Company	Sale Amount
Capital Metro	Joseph Schenna	Br. 461, Winston-Salem, NC	Teamlogos.com	\$14,040
Eastern	Sandra Rudolph	Br. 40, Cleveland, OH	Wholesale Supplies	120,000
Great Lakes	Joni Worland	Br. 39, Indianapolis, IN	Federal	3,000,000
Northeast	Edwin Morales	Br. 36, New York, NY	Gem Stone King Inc.	263,880
Pacific	Walli Schuh	Br. 1100, Garden Grove, CA	Solaro	49,140
Southeast	Gail Giustino	Br. 1690, West Palm Beach, FL	Liberator Medical	832,000
Southwest	Jamie Sanchez	Br. 1203, San Angelo, TX	K2 Herbal	308,750
Western	David Miller	Br. 2502, Las Vegas, NV	Shelby American	245,210

Through Customer Connect, letter carriers are taking advantage of their special relationships to encourage business patrons to use USPS instead of private delivery services. Since the startup in mid-2003, letter carriers have generated more than **\$863 million** in new annual revenue.

