

A life and a family's happiness saved— seatbelts do work



Manuel L. Peralta Jr.

Montgomery and requested that he interview Jeremiah and his wife. I personally thank Kenny for the following information, which he gathered to share with you and your families.

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Jeremiah was hired as a CCA on Feb. 22, 2014, and was converted to career status on Nov. 29, 2014. The temperatures had just begun to drop to 8 degrees with light snow and a 25 mph wind. Little did Jeremiah know that this was to be no ordinary delivery day.

It took emergency crews 35 minutes in freezing temperatures to extract Jeremiah from the mangled LLV. The impact was so severe that the engine and transmission

On Jan. 7, 2015, the driver of a private vehicle suffered a heart attack. He slumped, drifted into oncoming traffic, and without realizing it, pressed on the accelerator.

Letter carrier Jeremiah Lighthouse, of Rochester, NY Branch 210, was behind the wheel of his LLV headed in the opposite direction and, as fate would have it, these vehicles collided in what anyone would describe as a horrific head-on collision that no one would survive. These are events that we see depicted in Hollywood movies; however, they were very real in Rochester this winter.

When I saw photos of the accident scene (see below), I contacted Branch 210 President Kenny Mont-

were located more than 40 yards away. Mail was strewn all over the neighborhood, and yet Jeremiah was conscious, in good spirits and able to assist with his extraction. He said he recalls during orientation the union telling new carriers that a seatbelt is the *only* thing in the LLV that will save your life, as there are no airbags. He has many injuries that will keep him sidelined for many months, and he will require surgery and physical therapy for knee injuries and shoulder injuries. He is scarred and bruised but *alive!*

Though Jeremiah will require extensive therapy, his family is more than happy to help with it because he is still here and will be around to watch them grow up, teach them right from wrong, give advice and grow old with his wife. The story would have ended tragically had the carrier not buckled up.

Jeremiah is, as his wife Christy says, a stickler for wearing his seatbelt and she shared that “he refuses to move his personal car until everyone inside is buckled up,” even to the point of once telling his in-laws to buckle up or the car goes nowhere, a lesson he learned partly as a member of the military.

Jeremiah served honorably in the Army from 1999 to 2006, serving one tour in Iraq and another in Afghanistan, then served in the New York National Guard from 2006 to 2008, then on to the Marines for the next four years. Montgomery reports that Jeremiah told him that during his 12 years of military service, 18 months of which he spent deployed overseas, he had never been beaten up as much as his first year in the Postal Service.

Jeremiah's wife Christy, along with their four children, Christopher, 9; Samuel, 4; Merida, 2; and Gideon, 10 months, are thankful that Dad was buckled up.

Are you prepared to take the time to buckle up for your family?



A driver who had suffered a heart attack collided head-on with Rochester, NY Branch 210 member Jeremiah Lighthouse's LLV in January. Because he was wearing his seat belt, the carrier survived. Above, left and center: Scenes from the accident. Above, right: Lighthouse's four children.