

Proud to Serve

Proud to Serve is a semi-regular compilation of heroic stories about letter carriers in their communities. If you know about a hero in your branch, contact us as soon as possible at 202-756-7403 or at postalrecord@nalc.org. We'll follow up with you to obtain news clippings, photos or other information.

Honoring heroic carriers

Heroism, like the mail, comes in many packages—think of police officers or firefighters. But for some citizens in need of assistance, their heroes come in the form of concerned letter carriers.

Letter carriers are members of nearly every community in this nation and know when something is wrong. Spotting fires and injuries, they often are the first to respond. The following stories document their heroism. For them, delivering for America is all in a day's work.

A friend to all in the community

On Jan. 18, Jamaica, NY Branch 562 member **John Quesnell** had just begun his route when a woman walked by with two small dogs. "As I delivered mail to the first house, I heard screaming," the carrier said. "As I delivered mail to the next house, the screaming got louder and more intense," he said.

The carrier couldn't see what was going on, so he walked back to the corner. The woman was standing in the middle of the street holding one of her dogs in her arms and screaming for help. A pit bull had snatched her other dog by the neck and run down the block with it in its mouth.

"The poor woman was beside herself," Quesnell said. Drivers and passersby had stopped to look but didn't take action.

Quesnell ran after the aggressive dog. "I noticed that the pit bull was wearing a collar, so I thought maybe it knows some commands," the carrier said. "As I'm running after it, I was yelling 'Stop, drop it, sit, stay'—pretty much anything I could think of." After chasing the animal for about 20 yards, it dropped the small dog and stood looking at Quesnell.

But when the carrier got within about 10 feet, the pit bull picked the dog up again and took off in a different direction. Quesnell again went running

after it. After about another 20 yards, it stopped and dropped the dog and backed off a few feet.

"It was just enough for me to get in between it and the woman's dog," the carrier said. "I swung my carry bag at the pit bull and yelled at it to get away."

The dog then turned its attention to the woman, who was still holding her other dog. "It made a few aggressive attempts to snatch the other dog," the carrier said.

Quesnell ran to the woman and began yelling at the pit bull. It backed off enough for the woman to escape to a nearby yard, where she was able to secure herself. The pit bull attempted to get into the yard where the woman was, but could not get in, so it took off down the block and went into a yard. A man there closed the gate, locked the pit bull inside and called police.

The carrier then went back to the other dog, which was lying in the street. "As I'm kneeling over the small dog in the street, I was looking for any signs of life—I didn't see any," he said. "It was bleeding from its neck and hind leg."

Quesnell went to the yard where the woman was with her other dog. "I picked the dog up and placed it on a table in the yard," he said. "She was hysterical."

The carrier didn't think there was anything else he could do, so he soon continued his route. The next day, the woman's daughter handed Quesnell a thank-you note from her mother and said, "Your actions saved our dog's life." They had apparently rushed the dog to the vet and it appeared to be recovering.

Quesnell doesn't think he's a hero, though. "My feeling of heartbreak turned into heart lift knowing the dog survived," the 27-year letter carrier and Navy veteran said. "Being a dog owner, I can't imagine the absolute horror and feeling of helplessness this woman must have felt watching her dog being mauled. I'm just happy I was there to help."



Jamaica, NY Branch 562 member John Quesnell was commended for his role in helping a customer and her small dog when they were attacked by a larger dog.



Mark Lyman

Brave carrier steps in to help

Milwaukee Branch 2 member **Mark Lyman** was delivering to a cluster box at an apartment complex on his route on June 16, 2015, when “a guy came running out to me, crying, screaming,” he said.

The man asked the carrier for a phone and said that he needed help because his girlfriend had just shot herself in the head. Lyman attempted to calm the man and then headed to the apartment with him. They had trouble getting in, so they rang the buzzer until someone let them in.

The two made it to the apartment. “The door was open,” the carrier said. They went in, and the man pointed to the bathroom, where the woman was.

Lyman saw that the bathroom door was closed. “I was banging on the door,” he said. “There was blood pooling under the door.” He attempted to open it, but

the woman was lying against the door. Lyman managed to poke his head inside and could see that she was still alive and moaning.

The carrier was eventually able to push the door open enough get into the bathroom. “There was blood all over the ceiling, the walls, everything,” he said.

He called 911 and talked to the operator, then told the woman that help was on the way.

Then he noticed something of concern: “The gun was still in her hand,” the carrier. Lyman, an Army veteran, knew guns well and gingerly took the gun from the woman, removed the bullets and placed them out of reach.

He then held the woman in an attempt to comfort her and handed the phone to her boyfriend, telling him, “Stay on the line with 911.”

The carrier tried to calm the distraught boyfriend and stayed with the couple

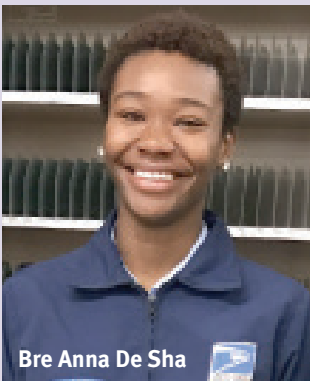
until emergency units responded. EMTs placed the woman on a sheet, lifted her and then carried her to a stretcher. Lyman filled in police with the details he had.

The carrier then washed the blood off of him and went outside. He stayed on the scene for another few hours to continue to answer detectives’ questions as dozens of onlookers watched the situation unfold.

The woman was taken to the hospital, where she was kept on life support long enough for her family to be able to say their goodbyes before she died.

Lyman was commended by the Milwaukee police and fire departments for his bravery, but the 21-year postal veteran brushed off any superlatives. “I don’t know how much of a hero I am,” he said. “I tried to help her. What would you do if that was your daughter, your wife, your sister? I couldn’t stand by.” **PR**

Eye on the elderly



Bre Anna De Sha

On Saturday, Aug. 6, 2016, Hazelwood, MO Branch 5847 member **Bre Anna De Sha** had just put mail in the mailbox of an elderly customer. “As I was walking away, I heard her banging on the window,” the carrier said. The woman usually sits at her front window, but De Sha did not

see her. She heard the woman through the front living-room window, and when the carrier went up to the house, she saw that the woman was on the floor inside. The customer asked if De Sha could help her, and she directed the carrier to another door that was unlocked. De Sha made her way around the house and inside to her patron. “She said she had fallen at around 6 that morning,” De Sha said. “She was waiting for me to get there.” The woman had gone to the hospital the day before and had misplaced her life alert necklace in the meantime. She did not have her walker nearby and could not get up. “She said she was fine,” De Sha said, but consented for the carrier to call 911. The carrier comforted the woman until an ambulance

arrived. The third-year letter carrier didn’t think her actions were all that heroic. “It’s nice to help someone,” De Sha said simply.

Arveda, CO Branch 4405 city carrier assistant **Sean Day** has a daily routine at the house of one of his elderly customers, Dick Leventhal. “He puts the flag up so he could look out from the window,” the CCA said. When he would deliver mail to the customer’s mailbox, he would put down the flag so that Leventhal could come retrieve the mail. Day had a day off and when he next delivered to Leventhal’s house on Oct. 28, 2016, he noticed that the flag was still down and that there was three days’ worth of mail in the box. Leventhal didn’t pick up his mail every

day, but it was unusual for him to leave too much mail in the box. The man usually told Day if he was on vacation. “His car was in the driveway,” he said. “Something’s wrong.” Day knocked on the door but got no response. He then called his supervisor, who in turn asked police for a welfare check. When first responders got to the house, they had to break in and found Leventhal on the floor. “He fainted and he fell pretty hard,” the carrier said, adding that he had been there for three days. Day answered paramedics’ questions and was commended for his concern for his customer. Day took his actions in stride, calling it just part of the job. “We’re out on the streets,” the second-year letter carrier said. “We got to take control [when we see something].” **PR**