

# Carrier's marathons add up for Mile 19 film

To marathon runners, Mile 19 symbolizes where their mettle is truly tested—it's the point in the 26.2-mile race where many runners must use their last drop of determination to overcome the urge to quit. "Mile 19" also is the name of a short documentary film about Los Angeles Branch 24 letter carrier **Johnnie Jameson** and his 32 consecutive completions of the Los Angeles Marathon.

As in his marathon runs, Jameson has powered through his personal Mile 19s. After being drafted to serve two years in the Army during the Vietnam War, Jameson came home and experienced what many combat veterans face—difficulty re-adjusting to civilian life.

"I had a lot of issues, man," he said, "I really had it going on. Trying to get all that noise out of my head."

Fortunately, he had some help as postal recruiters came to his Army barracks at Ft. Hood, TX, in 1970 just before he was discharged, to urge him to apply to join the Postal Service. He started as a clerk in his hometown of St. Louis, but when he moved to California in 1982, the weather prompted



him to switch to the letter carrier craft so he could work outdoors.

Jameson turned to running to help relieve the stress caused by his wartime memories. "I've always been an athletic kind of guy," he said. "I would just jog around the neighborhood back in the day. I did a lot of that," he said. Soon he was running long distances.

When Los Angeles held its first marathon in 1986, Jameson entered. "Once the marathon hit, I was prepared to just get out there and dig in and grind

that sucker out," he said.

It would be the first of 32 consecutive L.A. Marathons that Jameson has completed—so far.

The film "Mile 19" is about Jameson's attitude in life as well as in marathons.

"When you get to Mile 19 during a marathon, you hit a wall," he said. "It will eat you up like it always does to me. But I use Mile 19 to remind me to use my inner strength to finish anything I start. You have to just grind it out because life ain't nothing but a grind."

One way Jameson pushes through Mile 19 is by keeping things interesting. He participated in the first marathon with a twist—he ran the course backward. (He finished last.) He did it again, backward, the second year. In his third run, Jameson took a basketball with him and dribbled it most of the way.

One year, he inspired a group of about 20 fellow letter carriers in his station to run with him.

"They didn't think they could do it," he said. "I got a football and we ran and threw the football at each other for 26 miles, just to keep the joy going."

Jameson is one of about 150 runners who have completed every Los Angeles Marathon. The Legacy Runners, as they call themselves, meet every other



Sunday to run a few miles and keep in touch. “We encourage each other, make sure our health is right, and support each other,” he said.

At age 69 now and with seven grandchildren, Jameson is still going strong—although there are legacy runners much older than he. “They call me a ‘young buck,’” he said. To mark his achievements, Jameson had the number 26.2—the number of miles in a marathon—tattooed on each of his calves.

Jameson was delivering the mail to a high-rise building in 2014, wearing shorts, when a customer who lived

in the building noticed his tattoos. It turned out that the postal customer, Vincent DeLuca, was a documentary filmmaker. Intrigued by Jameson’s story, DeLuca fetched his camera and began shooting what a year later would become “Mile 19.”

The movie has won accolades at several film festivals, including the Mountainfilm festival in Telluride, CO, which selected the film for a screening tour around the United States. “I’ve been all over the country with this 10-minute short film,” Jameson said. He traveled about once a month to screenings.

The best experience, he said, was when “Mile 19” was shown for high school students who were too young to know much about the war that helped shape Jameson’s life. “They would show it to the high school students who only read about Vietnam. They look at me as an old guy,” he said. “It’s amazing how the children just wanted to gather around me, ask questions. They were really interested in my life.”

For more information on the film and to learn how you can see a screening, go to [mile19.com](http://mile19.com). The film is also posted on this website. **PR**

## Submit your pics to the NALC Photo Contest

**I**n this age of smartphones, nearly everyone has access to a camera. But do you have a great eye for using it?

NALC is looking for photos that capture the triumphs and struggles of letter carrier work. In the office or out on the route, interacting with co-workers or delivering to patrons, in rain, snow, sleet or on those sunny days, we want to see what you’ve got.

The NALC Photo Contest will run from Sept. 1 through May 31, 2018, so we want to see carriers in all kinds of weather and seasons.

The best photos will be recognized in an upcoming issue of *The Postal Record* and put on display at the NALC convention in Detroit next year.

“Letter carriers are among the hardest-working men and women in America, and this contest is one more way that we can honor their work,” NALC President Fredric Rolando said in announcing the contest. “We hope the membership will join in and deliver images that show everyone who sees them just what an integral thread letter carriers are to the fabric of the nation.”

Entries will be accepted in either hard copy or digital format and must be received by May 31. All submissions must be labeled clearly with the name

and branch of the photographer and identification of people in the photo.

For hard copy, you can include a slip with the necessary information or print it on the back of the photo. Please do not write on the image of the photo. Be certain that all subjects are aware they are being photographed for the NALC contest and might be displayed by the union. Photographers are limited to three entries apiece. All entries become property of NALC.

### Suggestions for better entries:

- No photos of people standing around looking at the camera, please. Seek action shots of carriers doing their work.
- Try to picture as many different carriers as you can; we want to see members of both sexes and all races to best represent the diversity of the United States Postal Service and our union.



- Consider framing and backgrounds, lighting and shadows to capture the best photo.
- For hard copy entries, please submit prints that are printed on photo paper with the proper color configuration.
- Digital photos should be high resolution.

For entries by mail, send to: NALC Photo Contest, 100 Indiana Ave. NW, Washington, DC 20001-2144. Send digital entries by e-mail to: [postalrecord@nalc.org](mailto:postalrecord@nalc.org), with the subject line “Photo Contest.” **PR**