

What's happening on social media

Various news stories and interesting anecdotes that celebrate letter carriers and the mail have been flying around social media. The following are some that have come to the union's attention. If you come across a story you'd like us to consider featuring, send it to social@nalc.org.

DOJ honors Washington, DC, carrier for his help in finding a missing child

The U.S. Department of Justice has recognized Washington, DC Branch 142 member **Keith Rollins** for helping to find a 2-year-old who had been reported missing.



Keith Rollins

The carrier technician had been driving one rainy morning in February 2020 when he noticed Ethan Adeyemi, a toddler who had wan-

dered away from home, on the side of the road.

A search party consisting of authorities and volunteers had been out overnight looking for the child, who was barefoot, shivering and soaking wet when Rollins spotted him.

Rollins called 911, covered Adeyemi with clothes the carrier had with him, and sheltered him in his vehicle until emergency responders arrived. The youngster was later treated for hypothermia at a hospital and reunited with his parents.

Justice Department officials honored Rollins by presenting him with the Missing Children's Citizen Award, which recognizes people who safely

recover missing or abducted children, during an event on May 25. The ceremony was part of the 38th annual commemoration of National Missing Children's Day.

"The safety of our children depends as much on the alertness and concern of ordinary citizens as it does on the expertise of seasoned law enforcement professionals," Amy Solomon, a deputy assistant attorney general, told USPS Link.

"We shudder to think what might have happened to this young boy were it not for Mr. Rollins' quick reaction and compassionate response. We are grateful to this good Samaritan for his extraordinary act of kindness," Solomon added.

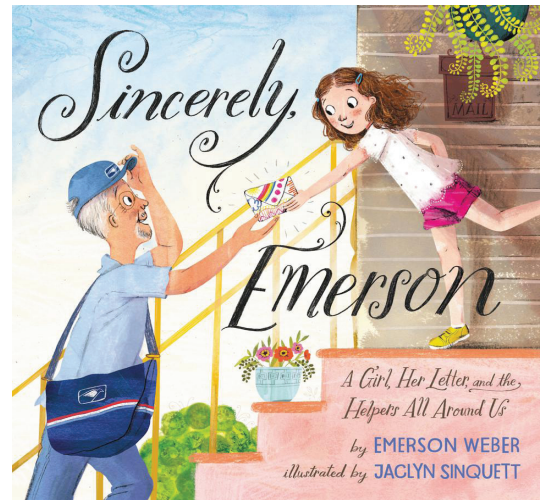
Le Gretta Ross-Rowlins, acting manager of the Postal Service's Maryland District, told USPS Link that Rollins "is a great example of a postal employee."

Despite the accolades and the national media attention for his actions, the carrier said to USPS: "A hero? Nah, not at all."

He added that he simply was thankful that he was "able to help at that particular time and be in the correct place at the right time."

Young patron publishes book after gratitude for carriers goes viral

In April 2020, 11-year-old Emerson Weber wanted to thank her letter carrier, Sioux Falls, SD Branch 491 member **Doug Scott**, for always picking up her mailed letters, so she decided to write to him. Scott in turn shared the letter with his supervisor, who shared it within the region, and soon responses from fellow postal workers poured in. Many of them told her that they finally



An 11-year-old South Dakota customer, Emerson Weber (right) wrote a book (above) after a letter and social media post thanking her carrier garnered national attention.



felt seen, and she wrote back to all of them.

"In this time that's a little crazy, they're still out there doing their job, so we can stay connected to our pen pals and people we love," Weber told Denver ABC affiliate KMGH-TV.

Weber's father, Hugh, also started a Twitter thread about her passion for writing letters and posted her thank-you note to Scott. It went viral, with the youngster gaining media attention from, among others, CNN and ABC's "Good Morning America." After her story spread, people from across the country started writing to Weber—she even received a package from her idol, Taylor Swift. It also caught the attention of a HarperCollins editor.

Her ode to mail led her to create a book, "Sincerely, Emerson: A Girl, Her Letter, and the Helpers All Around Us," that was published by the end of the

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year. It documents Emerson's letter-writing adventures.

"Knowing that all those people felt touched by my action and wanted to reach out was mind-blowing," Weber told *Forbes*. "A lot of them said thank you to me for thanking them. That really made clear to me how people need to know that the work they do matters, and we are thankful for them. I'm glad I could show my gratitude to them in that way."

Weber writes somewhere between one and a dozen letters daily. And when asked why she thinks her preference for writing letters in the digital age went viral, Weber said, "I think people were touched by my story because in this unfamiliar time, a feel-good story might have been what people needed. It gives you a sort of comfort that good things are still happening."

She told USPS Link, "It's kind of crazy. This all started out with me just wanting to thank my mail carrier."

Scott told the USPS publication that he's not used to being in the limelight, but that he's glad to be an important part of his young patron's life and to help showcase the Postal Service.

"It is good for the Post Office to get some good press. People can see what we do every day," he said.

Weber said she mostly wants to keep the attention on her inspiration: the Postal Service. "It is really meaningful that this story is going to get out," she told USPS Link. "It really brings attention to postal workers. We really need them."

New Jersey science teacher turns to USPS to ship STEM kits

As the COVID-19 pandemic closed schools and made virtual learning at home the main way for children to receive education, New Jersey science teacher Medinah Eatman began a subscription service to help homeschooling parents and fellow teachers keep students engaged in the STEM subjects

(science, technology, engineering and math).

Eatman's e-commerce business, ScienceTeacher.Mom, now ships an average of 200 boxes each month to customers, which provide recipients with lesson plans, worksheets and other learning materials.

"It definitely started because of the pandemic and by accident," Eatman told USPS Link.

In spring 2020, at the declaration of the pandemic, Eatman and her husband, Tariq, found themselves spending a lot of time at home with their two sons. The teacher began sharing Instagram videos of her and the boys conducting science experiments, then began putting together and gifting science-themed boxes to friends and family when her social media posts proved popular.

"The word got out and people were like, 'Do you have more?'" she said.

Inspired, Eatman created a subscription service for the boxes, making it one of the estimated 4.4 million businesses started in 2020.

A ScienceTeacher.Mom box costs \$35 per month for subscribers and \$39.97 to \$49.97 for one-time purchasers. Some boxes are themed, like an Earth Day box in April and a "summer camp in a box" in July and August. She'll also create customized boxes for science-themed birthday celebrations.

At the beginning of the business endeavor, Tariq dropped off the boxes for shipment at the local post office. But when employees there noticed how many trips the Eatmans were making, they arranged Package Pickup service for the family.

"I only use USPS," Eatman said. "It's the easy and economical choice for me to let subscribers know that their fun is on the way."



New Jersey science teacher Medinah Eatman created her own STEM subscription box business during the pandemic that ships via USPS.

Beloved Washington carrier retires

After more than 37 years of service and 14 years on the same route, Puyallup, WA Branch 1484 member **Paul Mahoney** is joining the "last punch bunch."

The carrier's last day of delivering mail was June 30, though his official retirement date is the end of August.

Mahoney has always considered it a part of his job to watch out for the people on his route.

"I've gotten to know them, and they are like family to me," he told *The News Tribune*. "They become part of your daily life, and you get to know them and have good conversations."

He also helps out wherever he can. When the Cherokee Park neighborhood talked to him in 2013 about convincing the city to install speed bumps in their neighborhood, Mahoney knew which official to contact to get the ball rolling. He then assisted neighbors to contact homeowners on the affected street to sign on to the project. They got the signatures needed to move forward.

"Neighbors were having a hard time and couldn't figure out how to go about it, so I contacted the city and got the forms," he said.

Another cause that Mahoney helped with was approaching the city to consider Rainier Woods Park as the location for a dog park. The newspaper explained that the city's plan was to locate the dog park in a different park, though it would be expensive. He and the residents talked to others to see if anyone would object to the project, and, when the neighbors all agreed, Mahoney met with the park board and was able to facilitate the dog park's installation.

"All they had to do there was put up a fence," he said.

Mahoney considers it part of his job

to keep “his” neighborhoods safe.

“You get to know your customers and things go pretty smoothly most of the time,” he said.

When the carrier and his wife, Lori, lost their adult daughter to a sudden illness in 2018, many of his patrons comforted him.

“I had just gotten back to work from the loss and there was a group...at a baseball game for the kids. One of the gals saw me and she brought everyone with her and I stopped my vehicle in the middle of the street,” he said. “That day, I cried like a baby.”

Following hip replacement surgery, he and Lori, who retired from USPS 15 years ago, will sell their house and move closer to their son.

“What I will miss is the people,” he said. And it appears that his customers will miss him, too.

Million Mile Award achieved by California carrier

Eureka, CA Branch 348 **Michael Bishop** was inducted into the National Safety Council’s “Million Mile Club” in July after accumulating 1 million accident-free miles in his 34-year career.

Since joining USPS in 1987, Bishop has driven on different routes through changing seasons and geography and in the same vehicle for 23 of those years.

Safety isn’t just about himself but his family as well, Bishop told USPS, adding that his daily goal is to finish his route and return home to his family knowing he has performed his duties as a carrier safely each day.

“Our postal drivers are dedicated to safety,” California-1 District Manager Jagdeep Grewal said. “The truly remarkable achievement by our Fortuna Post Office carrier exemplifies how postal employees continue to deliver on the promise of delivering their best every day with care, courtesy and concern for the safety of others.”

Bishop will be presented with a plaque from the Safety Council and have automatic membership in the prestigious National Safety Council “Million Mile Club.” The award is a lifetime enrollment, and it is given to drivers who have achieved either a million miles or 30 years of driving without being involved in a single preventable motor vehicle accident.

Minnesota carrier serves as grand marshal in community parade

Dean Krug, a member of St. Cloud, MN Branch 388, received the honor of serving as the grand marshal in his local Watercade Grande Day Parade in June.

When the 39-year carrier was notified by the Watercade Board of Directors earlier this year that he had been chosen to serve as grand marshal for this year’s parade, “I got goosebumps!” he told the *Litchfield Independent Review*, though he added that he wasn’t exactly sure what the duties of a grand marshal were.

He initially thought that it was a joke, and he suggested a few other people the

board could consider instead of him.

“I just hope I can live up to the role of grand marshal in representing the town,” Krug told the newspaper. “It’s just really an honor.”

Though his route takes him to downtown businesses and much of Litchfield’s south side, most people don’t know him beyond his role as a letter carrier. But Krug says he works hard to maintain a cheerful public persona.

“Just like everyone else, you have extremely good days and extremely bad days,” he said. “I deal with the public eye, and you can be in the foulest mood in the world, but you better not let them know that, because that’s a perception they have when they see you 10 seconds a day.

“In the end, people along the way make it very, very fun,” he added. “Because even if they come out and talk to you for 10, 15 seconds, a minute, that makes their day, and they’re happy to see the mailman.”

Krug is known by his patrons for looking after the elderly in his community. “You feel kind of responsible for the accuracy of the mail as well as the well-being of your patrons on your route,” he said.

He’s also helped organize the local Stamp Out Hunger Food Drive for the past 25 years.

In addition, Krug helped with initiating the carriers at the Litchfield Post Office having their own entry in the Watercade parade, in which they walked and threw candy to people along the route.

Krug has returned to the parade route this year in a different manner—riding in a convertible as the grand marshal.

“I don’t know if I can handle all the hoopla,” Krug said. “I kind of like to stay below the radar.

“I know I’m kind of flamboyant when I come by [delivering mail]. But that’s all in the blue [of his USPS uniform]. This grand marshal thing ... I will never have so many friends again in my life as I will on that Saturday.” **PR**



Michael Bishop was recognized in July for achieving the Million Mile Award.