

Letter carriers and the mail on social media

Various news stories and interesting anecdotes that celebrate letter carriers and the mail have been appearing on 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.

Beloved Wisconsin carrier retires

On Tuesday, Sept. 19, the Milwaukee Common Council honored **Michael Boothe**—also known as “Mailman Mike”—for 30 years with the Postal Service.

The Branch 2 member, who retired on Sept. 23, worked as a letter carrier with the North Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Drive Post Office. He grew up in Wisconsin, joined the Army and then spent the rest of his career in West Allis.

“I have to wake up every day and go to work. So, my truth to me is to have a good day,” Boothe said during his speech in front of the council. “And I think all of us in here are dog-tired; [I] think we should hold ourselves to that. We have to live like the children are watching us. You know, when they think you're cool, they're going to emulate you. So, it's very important that you show the right example because they're sponges, and they're going to soak it up.”

Boothe's customers didn't let him retire without a celebration, however. On Sept. 24, they threw a party in his honor, showering him with well wishes and gifts. Artist and business owner Brandon Oaks presented Boothe with a portrait of the letter carrier, wearing a smile and a colorful shirt, with sunflowers swaying and bees flitting around him and the words “Be a Good Guy” at the top.



Michael Boothe

“I just wanted to capture Mike's spirit, which is such a beautiful beacon of light and hope,” Oaks told WTMJ-TV, the area's NBC affiliate. “The kids would always see him in the morning, and every day he walks away telling them to be a good guy. Now they say [that] to each other and it's a really wonderful thing.”

The residents also gave Boothe a cardboard replica of a mailbox, signed with well wishes and words of love.

Boothe is starting out his retirement with a vacation in Italy. In the meantime, he reminded the partygoers to focus on life rather than solely on work: “Maybe we all can be a little nicer to each other. Y'all have a good day, enjoy yourselves, enjoy yourselves.”

Virginia carrier brings joy to neighborhood

Ira Hopkins Jr. of Richmond, VA, adds a special ingredient to his routes: a smile. A customer told WWBT-TV, the local NBC affiliate, that it makes their day: “He has such a great smile. Every time I see him, he's just smiling.”

His kindness isn't limited to smiling, either. “Ira checks in on all of us. He's friendly, he's always got a smile

on his face, even in the heat,” another resident said. The Branch 496 member also knows many of the residents by name and is always friendly to the dogs on his route.

Hopkins's good spirits brought such joy to the neighborhood that his customers nominated him for the station's Acts of Kindness program. For the honor, WWBT gave him \$300. “He's performing a vital public service that we probably take for granted too much, and he always does it in a good mood, and that's something to be valued these days,” one resident explained.

Hopkins says he appreciates seeing his customers happy. “I take care of them, and obviously they take care of me. It's a good feeling when [they] appreciate my hard work.”

USPS releases wintery stamps

Snow globes make for beautiful souvenirs to bring home from one's travels—and these snow globes will do the traveling all by themselves. The U.S. Postal Service has issued a new set of stamps for the holiday season.

Each stamp displays a snow globe sitting on a brown base, with vary-

Ira Hopkins Jr.





The new snow globe stamps

ing scenes inside of them: a snowman smoking a pipe against a green background, Santa Claus entering a chimney with his sack of presents against a blue background, a reindeer in the snow against a red background and a snowy Christmas tree decorated with lights against a purple background. The stamps were designed by Derry Noyes, an art director for USPS, using original art by artist Gregory Manchess.

The dedication ceremony for the stamps was held at the Stephen C. West Ice Arena in Breckenridge, CO, with attendance by Eric Mamula, the mayor of Breckenridge and Harry Rinker, author of a book about snow globes and member of the Postal Service's Citizens' Stamp Advisory Committee.

"Snow globes cause wonder," Rinker told TBR News Media. "Every shake is different and each time a globe is shaken, it is the beginning of a new adventure. Shaking a snow globe is an

opportunity to relive a multitude of childhood, winter, and winter holiday memories."

California carrier retires to hometown

Dolly McPherson of San Diego, CA, is retiring from the Postal Service after 40 years. The Branch 70 member was born in Serra Mesa, grew up there and spent her career there—and now she plans to retire just down the street.

"It's been the pleasure of my lifetime to be able to work here. I've had tons of fun and moved tons of mail," McPherson told NBC. "It feels really good, but a little awkward thinking that I'm not going to be getting up every morning at 5 and getting ready to come into work to case and carry the route."

McPherson started her postal career in University City until a route opened up in her hometown. She promptly transferred. McPherson's route was an average of 18 miles per day—"I've gone through a lot of shoes," she said.

In the 1960s, Serra Mesa went by a different name—several, in fact. It was broken up into several sections back then. However, the council decided to join the sections together. About 450 people entered a contest to decide on the area's new name, and Dolly's mother, Frances, won. Dolly explained that this adds to how meaningful the neighborhood is to her.

"It's been the best experience of my life. I'm truly going to miss all of you," she told her customers via NBC.



Dolly McPherson

'Most senior' carrier in Osceola, IA, retires

On Sept. 29, **Randy Pierson** of Osceola, IA, retired from the Postal Service after 27 years. Upon his departure, Pierson held the title of the area's most senior postal worker.

"Randy has been a huge asset to our office, and we will greatly miss him. We wish him the best in his upcoming journey," Ashley Schaff, Osceola Post Office supervisor, said.

Pierson, a Branch 2195 member, started with the Postal Service in 1996 after transitioning from a construction job due to a slow market. He worked for five years as a rural carrier and spent the last 22 as a city carrier. In 27 years, Pierson recalls only one day on which he didn't have to deliver mail: a snowy, blustery day with dangerous wind levels. "I will not miss the winter walks," Pierson told the *Osceola-Sentinel Tribune*.

However, the carrier is holding his options open—he says he might work as a substitute carrier if necessary. "I'll miss my co-workers and my customers," Pierson said. **PR**