

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 202-662-2420 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 their 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.



Joshua Hall

Carrier stops to help car crash passengers

Joshua Hall, a Mansfield, OH Branch 118 letter carrier, was driving to work on the morning of Sunday, Aug. 24, in Crestline, when he came across a two-vehicle crash that had happened only one or two minutes earlier.

A truck had pulled out in front of a

Camaro, and as the driver did so, the Camaro swerved out of the way and hit a guardrail. The truck driver had a similar reaction, swerving and hitting a guardrail as well.

Coincidentally, Hall's parents were on their way to church, saw the crash and called 911.

The one-year letter carrier put his hazard lights on and parked his truck vertically, blocking the two lanes of traffic from the crash.

Before becoming a letter carrier, Hall's entire career had been in emergency response. Beginning in high school, Hall was a 911 dispatcher and after that he became a police officer.

Hall approached the driver of the Camaro, who was attempting to get an unconscious female in the passenger seat out of the car. In the back of the car was a child, conscious and crying, whom Hall worked to free first. He used his sleeves to cover his hands so they wouldn't be cut by the broken glass, and he lifted the child out of the top of the convertible. Hall brought the child to his postal van, and Hall's parents stayed with the child.

He then returned to help the woman, who was having a seizure and whose leg was wedged beneath the console. Hall reclined her seat all the way back, rolling her onto her left side. When he noticed that the car was beginning to emit smoke, he knew that he needed to get her out. Breaking the seat, Hall freed the woman, turned off the engine to stop the smoking, pulled her out through the driver's side, then carried her to his van as he heard sirens approaching.

Hall wanted to help the driver and passenger of the other vehicle exit the truck, but the airbags had deployed and the letter carrier was worried about disrupting the airbags, as the occupants hadn't sustained any injuries. Hall recalled that during his time as an emergency responder he "had a couple accidents ... where I was stupid

enough to try to pop an airbag and get somebody out, and it just made a huge mess. It was not worth it."

But Hall stayed with him. "The guy in the truck ... just kept asking me if they were OK," he said.

Once the emergency responders arrived, Hall said he helped them "rip the door off the truck to get [the truck driver] out without busting any airbags."

Although the truck driver was unscathed, the family and Hall himself sustained injuries. The Camaro driver had a large forehead wound that needed stitches. The woman had a gash on her forehead and a fractured skull, and Hall said that the last he had heard she was still in the ICU. The child tore his rotator cuff and sustained a fracture to his skull. Hall has not been able to contact the family since the incident.

Hall describes himself as being "wired to help people" due to his experiences and says he is "kind of used to it ... I was on my toes like that all the time."

He continued: "When people need help, you give out your hand because you never know if you'll be that person that needs help."

Letter carrier alerts 911 and neighbor about elderly woman who fell

Cecil Cloyed, a 11-year letter carrier in Kerrville, TX, has one elderly customer who regularly picks up her mail. On

Thursday, Feb. 27, the Branch 3028 carrier noticed that his elderly customer hadn't collected her mail from Monday, the last time she received any.

He didn't



Cecil Cloyed

think much of it until he put the mail in the box and was about to continue to the next house—but heard a faint call coming from inside the house. Cloyed tried to open her door, but it was locked. So, he shouted, “I’m going to get you some help,” and called 911.

While he was waiting for emergency responders to arrive, he went across the street to ask the neighbor if she had a key. She didn’t, but she was able to call the woman’s daughter, who arrived on the scene around the same time as an ambulance did.

The EMTs found the woman where she had fallen on her face and twisted her left arm. She had been unable to move for three days. They took her to the hospital, where she stayed for a few days. She hadn’t sustained any major injuries but was very dehydrated.

Since the incident, Cloyed has seen her many times and says, “She’s doing much better now.” Her daughter moved in with her, and the woman now always wears a life alert necklace.

Carrier helps customer having a stroke

Almost every day on his route, **Lane Wolfe**, a one-year letter carrier, would stop, drop off the mail and have a brief chat with his customer Brad McLennan, who would meet Wolfe outside. However, on May 16, McLennan’s door was open, but he was nowhere to be seen.

“I’m glad I was the one that found him... I don’t think [anyone else] would have known his routine enough to think that something was wrong,” the Buffalo-Western New York Branch 3 letter carrier said.

Concerned, Wolfe went through the open door and found McLennan slumped in his office chair with his hands on his knees, sweating and vomiting. The man appeared confused and had been unable to reach his cell



phone a few feet away. He was soft-spoken, which was unusual for him.

“He did not look good,” Wolfe said. The man told him, “I’ve been here for two hours. I can’t move.”

Knowing something was wrong, Wolfe asked his customer if it would be OK if he called 911. McLennan was “very, very hesitant,” Wolfe said, but the carrier got the man’s permission after five to 10 minutes.

“He wasn’t in the state of mind to know he needed help,” Wolfe said.

In the 10 minutes it took for EMS to arrive, Wolfe stayed with McLennan and kept him calm.

Wolfe answered EMTs’ questions before returning to complete his route.

The carrier later met McLennan’s family, who thanked Wolfe for helping him. McLennan has since recovered after spending time in the ICU. “I am forever grateful to Lane for his incredible help,” the man later wrote to the postmaster.

McLennan continues to greet Wolfe and chat with him when he delivers his mail. As McLennan has been trying to exercise more since the incident, they often discuss exercise.

“He told me after, ‘If you didn’t call and you did [after five to 10 minutes of talking to McLennan], I probably wouldn’t be here,’” Wolfe said.

Bleeding customer gets help from carrier

In January, **Daniel Eaton**, an 18-year letter carrier, was going about his route in Dayton, OH, when he saw Gisela Shipley, his 95-year-old customer, waving through her glass door.

“It’s so strange—she never gets mail, and that day she got mail,” the Branch 182 letter carrier said.



The glass was frosted and a bit dirty, so Eaton couldn’t see much through it. At first Eaton thought she was just waving hello, but when he got closer, he realized something was wrong.

“She was so covered in blood that I thought, ‘What did you do to yourself?’ Then it snapped—I was like, ‘Oh, she’s bleeding everywhere,’” he said.

When he opened the door, Eaton saw blood had streaked the floor all the way down the hallway. Shipley sat in front of the door wrapped in a blanket covered in blood. Based on the direction the blood seemed to have come from, Eaton believed she had fallen in the laundry room and hit her head on something before making her way to the front door for help.

Shipley told him she was on blood thinners, which had caused the severe bleeding. Eaton called 911 and fetched towels from her bathroom to use to apply pressure to her wound and stop the bleeding.

“Her whole head was just [so] red that I was having troubles trying to actually figure out where the blood was coming from,” Eaton said. “I put as much pressure as I could, but the blood was still just coming.”

During the situation, Eaton said he had “relied on [his] training from the Army.” After waiting with Shipley for about eight minutes, EMS arrived and told Eaton that without him, they weren’t sure if she would have made it.

Eaton is happy to have helped Shipley and likes to remind newer carriers that for “some of these elderly people, you’re the only person they may see all day. You gotta keep an eye out.” **PR**