

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.

and ran back to the house, which he had delivered to earlier, and saw that it was now engulfed in flames. He knocked on the door, then turned to knock on the neighbors' doors—but as he turned the corner, he saw a woman, a baby and a dog all on the side porch. The woman was “petrified” by the fire when he found her, the carrier added.

“I ask her just to hand off the baby to me, but she's worried about the dog getting loose, so I grab the dog [with a makeshift leash made out of his Arrow Key chain], I bring him out and I give him off to a neighbor,” Quillen said. “Now she [the woman] is in the back yard trying to go out through the back gate, but the fire's moving pretty quick. So, as I made contact with her, I grabbed the baby and tucked him into my shoulder, and we ran past the fire, and I got them both out of the back yard, past the fire of the house.”

About two minutes after Quillen helped everyone out, the fire department arrived. Firefighters were able to put out the two-alarm fire, but the house has been razed and has been vacant since. The woman and child were checked out for smoke inhalation at a nearby hospital.

After talking to the fire officials, Quillen went on with the rest of his route.

“I was just completely happy that the only thing that was lost was the house, and nobody's life was lost,” Quillen said. “Nobody lost their pet. It was a good feeling.”

Letter carrier hears calls for help from shed

Royal Oak, MI Branch 3126 member **Tayseer Kassab** was delivering his route on June 28 when he approached the house of an elderly



Camden, NJ Merged Branch 540 member Kyle Quillen speaks to a local TV news station about how he helped a family escape a house fire on his route.

Letter carrier saves woman, baby and dog from house fire

On April 23, **Kyle Quillen**, a one-year letter carrier, was on his route in Cherry Hill, NJ, turning from one street to the next when he smelled smoke.

When the Camden Merged Branch 540 member turned his head back, he said he saw “a plume of smoke coming from the house.” Quillen called 911



Tayseer Kassab

customer, Violet Bidinger.

"I heard her yelling for help, but I didn't know where [it was coming from]," the two-year letter carrier said.

He went to the back yard but couldn't see anyone at first. Once he entered the shed, he saw Bidinger on the floor. She had fallen while looking for something about 15 minutes earlier. Her family was inside their house with the windows closed, so they couldn't hear her yelling from the shed.

Kassab helped bring her inside to her family, who assessed her injuries. Luckily, she had only sustained a few scrapes and bruises.

Kassab said, "I was just glad she was OK."

He hadn't told anyone at the post office about the incident, but Bidinger was so grateful to Kassab that she called the Hazel Park Post Office to tell his supervisor about the incident.

"You make us proud, Tayseer Kassab," Branch 3126 President **Paul Roznowski** wrote to NALC. "Thank you for your service!"

Carrier alerts neighbor of piled-up mail

On April 5, Branch 2544 letter carrier **Michael Cain**, who has been on the same route in Park Falls, WI, for eight years, noticed that one of his elderly customers, Fred, hadn't picked up his mail from the day prior, so, Cain said, he "was concerned."

"I take a little bit of extra care with my seniors who are living by themselves," he said. "This gentleman picks up his mail every day. He has for years, and suddenly one day he didn't pick up his mail. So, I put the second day's mail in the mailbox, and I started walking away [thinking], Why didn't he pick up his mail?"

Cain then saw Fred's neighbor Jeff drive past. "I asked him if he knew if Pete was on vacation, if he was out of town or visiting his kids," the carrier said. "He said he didn't know anything about it. And he's kind of like the caregiver of that house when Fred is gone."

Now even more concerned, the two men approached the house. "So, he went in, unlocked the door," Cain said of the neighbor, "and there [Fred] was, lying on the floor right by the recliner, alive," but severely dehydrated.

"Apparently he had fallen out of his recliner two days earlier and been lying on that floor for two days," Cain said. "He was sitting in his recliner, and he went to get up and then he either lost his balance, or his legs gave out, and then he fell, and he wasn't able to move from that location."

Jeff called an ambulance, and once Cain saw that the situation was in good hands, he returned to his route.

Since the incident, Fred has not been able to walk and is living in a nursing home, but Cain has heard from the nursing home staff that he is "doing fine." **PR**

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—Kyle Quillen

Know a hero? Nominate them.

Visit nalc.org/heroes and select "Click here to download NALC's Hero Nomination Form." Complete the form and send it to NALC Headquarters by mail or email.