

Carriers and the mail make news online



Jacqueline La Rosa

Mail-centered stories frequently appear on social media and online news sites. The following are a few that have come to NALC's attention recently. If you find a story you'd like us to consider featuring, send it to postalrecord@nalc.org.

New York carrier recognized for 38 years of service

Jacqueline La Rosa, a Long Island Merged, NY Branch 6000 letter carrier in Garden City, marked 38 years delivering mail in her community in December. She was honored as part of the U.S. Postal Service's "For the Long Haul" campaign honoring employees with more than 25 years in the same job.

"I've made so many friends here," she told the Garden City Patch. "We've shared many life events together. Many people still remember when I was having my son 26 years ago, and they love hearing how far he has come in

life. ... I enjoy watching other people's families grow as well, so many beautiful babies that I have had the pleasure to watch grow up, including three children that I watched grow up, have now moved back onto my route and started families of their own."

She typically walks 23,000 steps a day, and on long days up to 36,000. Despite the challenges being a letter carrier can present, she enjoys serving her community.

"I am a people person," she said. "I love people. I love being outside in nature, and I even enjoy the cold. You just have to know how to dress for the weather. I love working in Garden City because there is such a sense of community—they watch out for each other; they watch out for me."

Postal Service releases stamp honoring Muhammad Ali

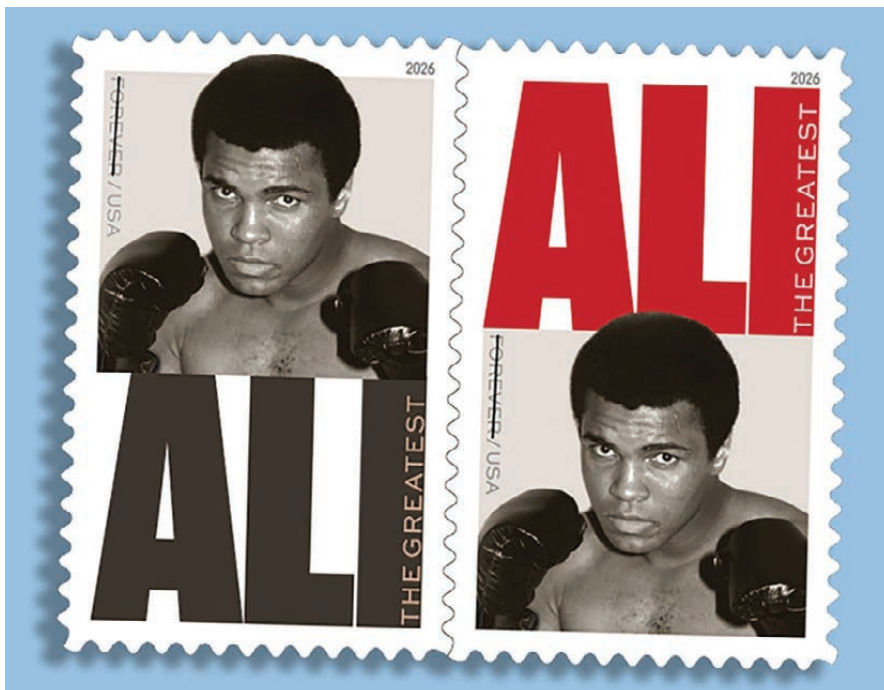
Muhammad Ali, a three-time world heavyweight boxing champion, will be featured on a panel of two stamps. The stamps depict an image of Ali with his gloves up and "ALI" in black on one variation of the stamp and in red on the other.

Ali was more than just a boxer, despite his multiple titles and Olympic gold medal win. After being drafted to the Vietnam War in 1966, he refused to serve—both as a conscientious objector and because of his religion, Islam. He was sentenced to five years of jail time.

Ali's popularity took a hit for these actions, but as the anti-war sentiment grew, so did his popularity. He continued to champion civil rights and humanitarian causes throughout his life. He died in 2016.

The stamp was released during a First Day of Issue Ceremony on Jan. 15 at the University of Louisville in Kentucky.

The new Muhammad Ali stamps



Ali famously said, “I should be a postage stamp, because that’s the only way I’ll ever get licked.”

49th Black Heritage stamp issued



The 49th Black Heritage stamp was released on Jan. 29 in Boston, MA. It honors Phillis Wheatley, who was the first African American author to publish a book. The stamp depicts a drawing of

Wheatley sitting at a table looking up from what she was writing.

Wheatley was enslaved in Boston and her book, *Poems on Various Subjects, Religious and Moral*, was denied publishing due to racial discrimination in the American colonies during the 18th century. So, she traveled to London, where her book was published in 1773. Her poems explored themes of religion, her African heritage and the injustice of slavery. Due to her influence and achievements, she is often called “the mother of African American literature.”

From pen pals to doctor and patient

Megan Lewis, a woman living in Pennsylvania, was visiting her parents for Thanksgiving when her mother had her go through some papers she had saved from Lewis’s childhood. She found letters from Suzanne Pugh, a pen pal she wrote to during the 1994-1995 school year, when Lewis was in second grade and Pugh was in 11th

grade. She googled her pen pal’s name and found that it was the doctor who delivered her two children in southeastern Pennsylvania.

“I was shocked to get your picture when I googled the name,” Lewis told Pugh in a video captured by the local news affiliate. “My mouth dropped. I could not believe my pen pal was Dr. [Suzanne] Pugh, who was my OB-GYN and delivered my two kids, Caroline and Jack.”

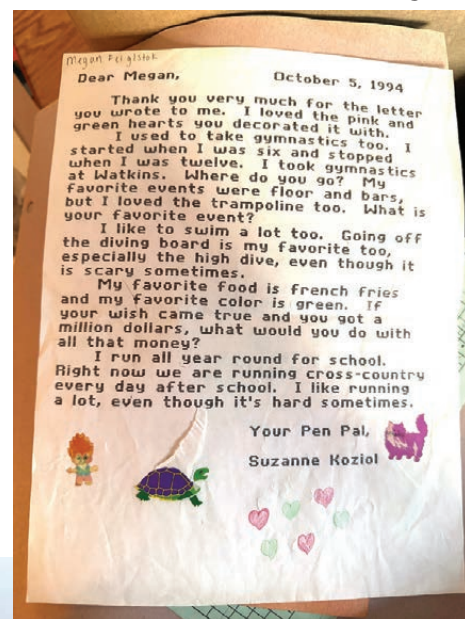
According to one of the letters, they had met each other in person at some point. Despite that, neither of them had any idea that they had been pen pals until finding the letters.

The story has since appeared in national media outlets, such as ABC News and *People* magazine.

“It’s really cool, because I’ve always just felt like Megan was such a special person, and we really connected, and to take care of people I kind of knew when I was younger is really fun, so to find out that Megan was one of those people is really cool,” Pugh said. “We have this, like, really awesome connection.”

Lewis concurred, telling ABC News, “If I could go back in time and tell my 7-year-old self that the pen pal that I would be writing to would end up taking care of me during my pregnancies and delivering my kids, I don’t know that I’d believe it. I feel like it’s just an incredible connection that she and I both have.” **PR**

The pen pal letter Lewis received in second grade



Dr. Suzanne Pugh (l) delivered Megan Lewis’s children.