



Gary Fitch celebrates the end of his journey.



Photo courtesy of NASA

The final frontier, at last

Two summers ago, when letter carrier Gary Fitch made his 2,800-mile, cross-country bicycle trek from Seattle, Washington, to Washington, DC, to raise money for the Muscular Dystrophy Association, he also collected nearly 23,000

“Letters of Hope” from schoolchildren and other well-wishers along the way—special notes containing their aspirations for a brighter and happier future.

Fitch, a member of St. Paul, Minnesota Branch 28 and the NALC’s National Humanitarian of the Year for 2007, later scanned and stored the letters and postcards on compact discs, then lobbied NASA to have the CDs carried into orbit. His dream was at last realized in

May when the crew of the shuttle Atlantis took the discs with them on their 11-day mission to repair the Hubble space telescope.

Fitch and his wife, Joan, were on hand to witness the shuttle’s May 11 launch from the Kennedy Space Center at Cape Canaveral, Florida. As with other space “souvenirs,” the discs returned to Earth with the crew at the conclusion of the mission.

“For everyone who supported Gary and helped us with fund-raising along the way, I just want to say, ‘Mission accomplished,’” said Dan Garhofer, Branch 28 president.

Detailed accounts of Fitch’s journey can be found in the September and November 2007 issues of *The Postal Record*, available online at nalc.org. ✉

2009 JCAM now online

The 2009 *Joint Contract Administration Manual (JCAM)* is now available on the NALC website, nalc.org.

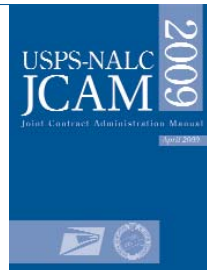
In addition to the manual itself, the PDF document includes a letter from NALC President William Young and Postal Service Vice President of Labor Relations Doug Tulino providing direction to delivery unit managers and NALC shop stewards on the use of the *JCAM*, as well as a letter from NALC Executive Vice President Fred Rolando to NALC branch officers regarding the use of the *JCAM*.

The jointly prepared manual is the definitive document of agreed-upon interpretations of the National Agreement and was developed so contract disputes

could be resolved at the lowest level and repetitive grievances could be eliminated.

The manual explains in plain language “how the contract should be applied based on national-level grievance settlements, arbitration awards and agreements,” Young and Tulino wrote. “When a dispute arises, you should go to the *JCAM* first to see if the issue in dispute is addressed. If the issue is addressed in the *JCAM*, any dispute should be resolved in accordance with that guidance.”

A notice will be posted on the website when a print version of the new *JCAM* is available. ✉



Through Customer Connect, letter carriers are taking advantage of their special relationships to encourage business patrons to use USPS instead of private delivery services. Since the startup in mid-2003, letter carriers have generated more than **\$702 million** in new annual revenue.

