

Carriers and the mail make news online

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.

Wisconsin carrier delivers 100 letters for centenarian's birthday

Milwaukee, WI Branch 2 member **Michelle Kuenn** has maintained a friendly relationship with Bob Charles, a now-100-year-old man who lives on her route in Grafton.

Kuenn wanted to do something nice for Charles, so she delivered him 100 birthday cards that she wrote and decorated herself, one for every day leading up to his 100th birthday.

"Bob's a nice guy," Kuenn said in an interview with the local CBS affiliate. "We talk often, when the weather's nice and he's out, and we chat a little bit when I'm walking into the building. And I don't know, it doesn't take much to make someone else's day better."

Charles called Kuenn "a great friend" and kept every one of the 100 letters.

Postcards used to teach AANHPIs contributions

The important contributions of Asian Americans, Native Hawaiians and Pacific Islanders (AANHPIs) to American history are being showcased in many schools across the country. Some state legislatures, including those in Illinois and New Jersey, have chosen to pass legislation to mandate that this material be included in the state curriculum for students kindergarten through 12th grade. Others, including in Ohio and Texas, continue to advocate for inclusion.



Michelle Kuenn delivers mail to 100-year-old Bob Charles.

In 2023, the Smithsonian Asian Pacific American Center, in collaboration with the YURI Education Project, launched the Co-Creation Initiative to develop educational resources about local AANHPI histories. Teams of educators worked together to create diverse resources for students to learn from. They made cookbooks, postcards and zines, small booklets providing relevant information on the topic, to demonstrate the importance of AANHPI history in the United States.

Orange County, CA, chose to create two postcards to incorporate into its schools' lesson plans. One postcard says *Ăn Quả Nhớ Kẻ Trồng Cây*, a Vietnamese saying that translates to "When eating fruit,

The postcards used to highlight the contribution of Vietnamese Americans





John Leslie

Online news (continued)

remember who planted the tree,” and depicts a colorful array of fruit in the background. The second depicts the Asian Garden Mall, Phước Lộc Thọ, the first and largest Vietnamese-American shopping mall in the United States. Another hope its creators had for the postcards is that it would help students learn how to send mail through the postal system.

The Co-Create Initiative enabled them to launch the Community History Postcard Project, which included AANHPI communities all over the United States, according to *Smithsonian* magazine.

‘Hearsemail’—the goth way of getting mail

Jennifer Chesson, a rural carrier in Rocky Point, NC, delivers mail five days a week, but not in an LLV or a customized Jeep. She instead opts for a hearse, a vehicle typically used for transporting the dead, but in this case it is a vehicle bringing the mail to the living.

She used to have a Jeep Wrangler to deliver mail, but someone hit it, totaling it.

Jennifer Chesson uses this hearse to deliver the mail.



“I said, ‘You know what, I’m going to get a hearse,’ because [of] everything that I could fit in it. And I figured, who’s going to hit me in a hearse?” Chesson said in an interview with WWAY-TV, an ABC and CBS affiliate.

When she asked her supervisor if she could, he said something like, “Well, I think it will be kind of weird, but OK,” Chesson said. Then she asked her postmaster, who told the carrier that she thought it was genius.

The carrier says that people are always taking photos of her, and little kids ask her to beep her horn at them.

Chesson called herself a “goth kid” and told the news outlet that she always had wanted a hearse as a child, so it was something of a dream come true for her.

Georgia carrier honored for 44 years of service

John Leslie was recently celebrated for 44 years at the Postal Service and 43 years on the same Hogansville, GA route. The Branch 3091 member’s unwavering commitment to his community has made him a beloved pillar of the neighborhood.

He is known to check on elderly residents, and in his free time he volunteers coaching baseball, basketball and football for youngsters in the community. He also is a small business owner—he has run John’s Tax Shop for 35 years, where he helps people prepare their taxes and he has a DJ and entertainment business, Windjammers Entertainment, as well.

Leslie has been praised for his impact on the community and his overall high character.

Hogansville Post Office Officer in Charge Leigh Goodman said Leslie is “an exemplary employee with perfect

Emily Conn was surprised by Brenda Stowe, her 60-year pen pal.



attendance” and highlighted his “great work ethic, positive attitude, and [the fact that he] comes to work every day.

Another community member, Hogansville Utilities Customer Service Manager Ameia Williams, spoke highly of Leslie: “You can see his smile and hear his laugh from a mile away,” Williams said. “John is always willing to lend a helping hand to anyone.”

New York carrier celebrated for 50 years of service

In August, Flushing, NY Branch 294 member **Henry Moslen** was celebrated for more than 50 years of service. He has been on the same residential route with large apartment buildings since 1974.

He manages 900 delivery points each day he works, and walks about 3 miles daily with his mail cart.

“I learned to do my job correctly and stay focused,” Moslen said in an interview with the *Jackson Heights Post*. “I really don’t think about weather patterns. I think about keeping the customers satisfied—whether it’s a snowstorm outside or if it’s 100 degrees. I focus on the job.”

60-year pen pals finally meet

Emily Conn from Pennsylvania and Brenda Stowe from Georgia were paired as pen pals by their middle school teachers to help them learn to write cursive.

In the beginning of their penpalship, they wrote weekly or monthly letters to each other. Eventually, they began to call each other and were there for one another in difficult times. Their friendship never took to modern forms of communication such as email, text or video call. Even after 60 years of a friendship, the two never met in

person until September, when Conn’s daughter, Christina Schrecengost, organized a meeting.

She contacted Stowe and got her to surprise Conn with a visit, where Stowe walked up from behind Conn, putting her hands in front of Conn’s eyes. “I don’t recognize the voice,” Conn said. Once she realized who it was, she exclaimed, “Brenda!” before turning around to embrace her friend for the very first time.

The video of their meeting went viral on Instagram and now has more than 480,000 likes, and has been featured on national media including NBC’s “Today” show.



Henry Moslen

Ohio carrier showered with love on his last day on the job

Cuyahoga Falls, OH Branch 1629 member **Bill Buda** celebrated his last day on the job in September. His daughter made a video that went viral on Instagram. He had worked as a letter carrier for 31 years, nearly 25 of which were on the same route.

His customers decorated their porches with balloons and streamers and gave him handwritten notes as he delivered the mail.

“I guess for 24 and a half years on this route I must’ve done something right. It was a fantastic day,” Buda told ABC’s “Good Morning America.” **PR**



Bill Buda