

Fighting the good fight



**Mack I.
Julion**

I will start my column this month by thanking everyone for all the love and support extended to my family and me concerning the transition of my wife, Veronica Julion. She fought a courageous battle with breast cancer and was a three-time survivor. To the very end, I can attest that she never stopped fighting. She displayed the true spirit of a city letter carrier in a way that would make us all proud.

Not only was she a phenomenal mail lady, but she was also a loving mom and dedicated wife. She was the backbone of our home and a true partner to me in every sense. The sacrifices she endured

as the wife of this union officer cannot be understated. She was proud to be the “first lady” of Chicago Branch 11, and was active in her own local.



It was because of her activism that we first met. It was at a union training in Peoria, IL. She was a union steward for the Carlton Sauer Branch 2076 in Des Plaines, IL. Eventually she became the branch secretary, and in 2022, she was elected vice president.

Throughout her tenure as a representative of city letter carriers, she also was advocating and supporting those like herself, who were fighting and surviving breast cancer. In 2013, when Branch 11 began hosting an annual walk and brunch for breast cancer awareness, she was always there every year, walking and sharing her experience. Each time that she was diagnosed and received chemo treatment, she seemed even more determined to overcome not only for our family, but to return to work and to serve her customers. She loved being a city letter carrier!

The third time she was diagnosed, she endured both chemo and radiation. It seemed unlikely that she would return to work, especially as a carrier. Disability retirement appeared to be on the horizon. But once her treat-

ment was completed and she was told once again that the cancer was in remission, she defied the odds and returned to work. She literally had to learn to walk again. Initially, when she went back, she was primarily casing the mail. Fortunately, she secured a bid on a mounted assignment and was back on the overtime trail! This was her passion: her co-workers, her customers, and carrying mail. She did this for 30 years. She said that she would work until we could retire together.



Veronica was equally passionate about fighting for letter carriers. We shared the same disdain for postal management and defending the rights of carriers. She also was active when it came to making phone calls or knocking on doors to support candidates who supported us. We did a lot of that together. Probably the most memorable moment was in 2008 when President Obama won his first presidential election. We were there for that historic event, sitting in a tree among thousands in Grant Park!

In the end, “Ronnie” still had a lot of fight in her, but her body couldn’t keep up. If she were still here, she would be gearing up for whatever fight was ahead of us. And there are some fights ahead: for a fair contract that will appropriately reward letter carriers for our hard work; the attacks that will come against labor and the Postal Service from a hostile administration; and, of course, those ever-present battles on the workroom floor.

To paraphrase Paul the Apostle: She fought the good fight, she finished her race, and she kept the faith. The rest is now left to us.