

## 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 202-662-2851 or at [postalrecord@nalc.org](mailto:postalrecord@nalc.org). We'll follow up with you to obtain news clippings, photos or other information.

# Honoring heroic carriers

**H**eroism, 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 concerned 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.

## Going above and beyond

Southeast Massachusetts Merged Branch 18 member **Michael Canty** stopped by 92-year-old customer Charles "Ed" McGovern's house every day to deliver his mail. On the night of Feb. 14, McGovern fell out of his

recliner and ended up face-down on the floor. He was hurt, couldn't get up, and was dehydrated. He was too weak to press the emergency call button he wears around his neck, and a recent storm had knocked out the power anyway—but, McGovern knew that Canty, whom he called "Tuna," would be there the next morning to deliver the mail.

Canty stopped by, as he always did, grabbed McGovern's newspapers from outside to deliver along with his mail, and did the special tap and sound at the door, which his customer had a response to. "This one day, I knocked, didn't hear anything, knocked, went inside, and saw him lying there," Canty said.

"He was kind of out of it," Canty said. He was able to get McGovern to the bathroom to clean him off, but the customer wouldn't go to the hospital. "I carried him into his bedroom and put him down," Canty said. Then he called the man's brother to get permission to call rescuers. All in all, Canty stayed with McGovern for more than an hour making sure he was OK. "He's just a great guy," the 29-year postal veteran said.

The two men have been friends for more than a decade, and McGovern had consoled himself for 12 hours, knowing Canty would come. "I'm laying there thinking, 'Oh, I have to wait for Tuna; he's the only one I can depend on,'" McGovern told *The Cape Cod Times*.

After a short stay in the hospital followed by rehabilitation, McGovern returned home. Canty made sure to stop by on a number of occasions with his son. The customer's family thanked the carrier for all he did to help save McGovern.

But Canty doesn't think he is a hero; he said he was just doing his job. "I have a lot of old-timers on my route, and we are their lifeline," he said. "I will always make sure they are OK." **PR**

**The Cape Cod Times** story about Branch 18 member Michael Canty and his customer, Charles "Ed" McGovern.

## Mail bonding



Postal worker Michael Canty, left, visits with good friend Charles "Ed" McGovern in his South Yarmouth home. McGovern, who fell out of his chair Valentine's Day night, credits Canty for saving his life the next morning when he stopped by to deliver the mail.

STEVE HEASLIP/CAPE COD TIMES

Postal carrier's daily visit to a

By MARY ANN BRAGG  
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SOUTH YARMOUTH — Charles "Ed" McGovern, who is 92 and lives alone, fell out

ing that Michael Canty, whom he calls "Tuna," would come to deliver the mail, as he always does, at around 10:30 a.m. McGovern and Canty have

"I'm laying there thinking, 'Oh, I have to wait for Tuna; he's the only one I can depend on,'" McGovern said Tuesday at his home. He said the door and

## Eye on the elderly



Michael Boles

**M**ichael Boles had just pulled up to a park point on his route on May 23 when he saw an elderly customer lying in her front yard. “The lady was lying flat on her face,” he said. She had been walking her dog and had fallen after becoming tangled in her dog’s leash. The Southern Illinois Merged Branch 1197 member rushed over to her and found her in considerable pain. “I was really worried,” Boles said. Concerned that the customer may have broken her hip, he asked her whether there was a phone number of a relative whom he could call, but the woman was unable to recall her son’s cell phone number. So, Boles contacted his supervisor, who called for an ambulance. The carrier then put the customer’s dog inside the house and was able to track down the name of the son’s employer so that he could be contacted. Boles waited with his patron for an ambulance to arrive before continuing with his route. Boles denies being a

hero, though. “I was glad I was able to be there at that point in time. Luckily it was right after it happened,” he said. “I didn’t do anything anyone else wouldn’t have done in that situation.”

**A**rsenio Berrios was approaching the mailboxes of a condominium complex on his route on April 30 when he heard a faint cry of “Help me, help me!” repeated several times. It was 100 degrees that day, and the Greater East Bay, CA Branch 1111 member knew that this customer, Ms. Cummins, who was in her 90s, had had some health issues.

Berrios was able to see the customer lying on the patio floor, so he made his way over to her. “Her face was very red and her lips were dry,” Berrios said. “She could barely talk.” But, Cummins asked Berrios to help her up, and he knew he needed to get her out of the sun. The door was open, so he lifted her and dragged her to a chair in the kitchen. Berrios gave her some water and asked whether there was someone he could call. Cummins gave Berrios her son’s number, and he called him. The son was on his way out



Arsenio Berrios

of town, but said he would instead come over. Berrios wasn’t sure the son would get there in time, so he called 911 to get assistance. The carrier checked in with a neighbor to watch Cummins until paramedics arrived so he could continue his route, but soon stopped in to make sure she got into the ambulance OK. The 29-year postal veteran brushed off any accolades, though. “I don’t look at it as being a hero,” Berrios said. “I look at it as helping someone who needed help.”

**O**n Jan. 12, Presque Isle, ME Branch 2394 carrier **Don Cyr** was delivering mail on his route. “I heard banging on the door, but I didn’t pay too much attention to it,” he said, so he began to walk away. But, he decided to look in through the window, and he saw elderly customer Emily Lloyd on the floor. Two hours earlier, she had been cleaning and had a box of books on the front of her walker. When she went down the stairs, her walker flipped

forward and she fell backward. Lloyd told Cyr that she didn’t have any extra house keys hidden outside, so she allowed him to force the door in. The front door had a deadbolt that Cyr knew he couldn’t tackle, but he noticed that there was another

door in the back, so he headed around the house. “I busted down the door and picked her up,” the carrier said. Cyr asked Lloyd if there was anyone he could call. The woman said he could call her son, but she could not remember the number. When Cyr saw that the woman was OK, he continued with his route but called his supervisor a short time later to ask if she would check on her. Coincidentally, Lloyd’s son is the supervisor’s neighbor, so she was able to get in touch with him to let him know about his mother. Lloyd’s family sent a letter of appreciation to Cyr, thanking him for caring enough to come to the urgent assistance of their mother. But the six-year postal veteran doesn’t think he’s a hero. “It’s just doing my duty,” Cyr said.

**W**hile on her route on Feb. 21, carrier **Linda Basch** had a large parcel requiring her to dismount and deliver it. After she knocking on the front door, an elderly woman motioned for Basch to meet her at the back door. The Traverse City, MI Branch 618 member proceeded to the back door, but the woman inside did not show up. Concerned, Basch notified the neighbor across the street that there might be a problem. The neighbor tried calling the woman, but did not get an answer. Basch and the neighbor went to check the door. It was unlocked, so they went in together and found the woman on the floor. The customer asked them to help her up, but warned them that she may have hurt her hip. The carrier called 911, and responders advised her not to pick the customer up, and to comfort her until they arrived. **PR**