

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 202-662-2420 or at postalrecord@nalc.org. We'll follow up with you to obtain news clippings, photos or other information.

Honoring heroic carriers

Heroism, 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.

Carrier saves 3-year-old from busy intersection



David Moulton

On Dec. 9, 2023, eight-year Massachusetts Northeast Merged Branch 25 carrier **David Moulton** was on his route in Salem when a 3-year-old boy ran past him in the opposite direction into a nearby park.

Moulton said, "I found it odd that he wasn't wearing a jacket and a hat or shoes."

About a minute went by and he again saw the boy running out of the corner of his eye, this time toward a busy intersection.

Moulton knew that meant trouble. "I just made a run for him before he could get to the street," he said. "And it's a good thing that I did make a run for him, because, I mean, he's just a tiny little kid and there were cars coming. They would have never seen him. He would have been struck."

Manuel Lastre and the retired rural letter carrier he rescued



After Moulton scooped him up, the boy began to cry. The carrier put him down on the sidewalk and called his supervisor and 911.

"I felt bad that I scared him half to death because I'm a stranger to him," Moulton said, but added that he was glad he had intervened, because the child's skin was showing effects from having been out in the cold for so long. "I mean, I'm wearing four layers and I'm still cold, you know?"

Emergency personnel showed up a few minutes later and were eventually able to deduce that the child had escaped from a nearby day care facility.

Moulton's story appeared in multiple local news outlets and the child's parents called Moulton to personally thank him for rescuing their son.

"I don't even think I'm a hero," Moulton said. "I just didn't want anything to happen to the little guy."

Retired rural carrier's hero is his city carrier

Manuel Lastre, a Lynchburg, VA Branch 325 member, was starting his route one warm and sunny August day in 2023 when he dropped off the mail to the first house on his route and heard a faint scream.

The four-year letter carrier didn't know where it was coming from and thought that someone must have been screaming in the distance. As he continued onto the next house and went up the porch steps, however, he heard the scream much

more clearly, and eventually found out that it was an elderly man on the floor of the house screaming for help.

The man had an elderly friend over at the house, but she hadn't heard his faint screams. When she heard the knocking at the door, she looked out the window and saw Lastre. She opened the door for him and then Lastre saw the man on the floor.

The elderly homeowner had been trying to get up the stairs with his cane when he tripped and fell. He had been on the floor for about 20 minutes, leaning on his shoulder, when Lastre found him. Lastre helped the man onto his back to relieve the pressure from his shoulder, then the carrier slowly helped him up.

As Lastre was helping the man, who had sustained only a small cut on his arm, the city carrier learned that the customer had had an almost 40-year career as a rural letter carrier before retiring. Lastre said he continues to check up on the man and to have conversations with him, adding, "He's doing great."

Carrier finds woman trapped in her house

Dennis Rudenauer has been a letter carrier for eight years and has worked on his current route for four or five, so he notices when things are off or out of place.

"I just know people, their habits and stuff, and what people will leave mail, what people pick up mail every single



Dennis Rudenauer

day like clockwork," the Elmira, NY Branch 21 member said.

On a chilly day in November 2022, Rudenauer had just returned from a few days of vacation. As he was going about his route, he noticed that an elderly woman who he knew retrieved her mail every day hadn't picked up her mail since the last day he worked.

"She always, always, always, always gets her mail, like, every day," Rudenauer said.

Having a "bad feeling," he went up to the door, but before he reached the door, he heard something. He thought it was the elderly woman saying, "Help." He responded by telling her that it was the mailman, then he heard a clear "help" from the woman. He called 911.

"I'm getting you help right now," he told her. "They're coming. I'll wait here until help gets here." He kept reassuring her, even though he was uncertain of her condition.

He stayed until first responders arrived and found that the woman, who lived alone, had fallen in her house and was unable to get up. Rudenauer said he found out from neighbors that this wasn't the first time this had happened. He tried to check on her several times, but eventually learned that she had moved to an assisted-living facility.

Woman 'pinned' by recycling bin helped to safety

Jan. 19 was a wintry day in East Providence, MA, and while delivering his route, first-year letter carrier **Jeffrey Cabral** heard someone calling out for help. It had snowed within the past few days, and snow and ice were still on the ground.

The Providence, RI Branch 15 member was talking to a homeowner when he noticed an elderly woman across the street who had fallen on the slippery ground and was trapped. "I see her trying to get up, pinned underneath a recycling bin," Cabral said.

He dropped his satchel and got over to the opposite side of the street as quickly as he could, he said. He asked the woman if she needed help, before picking up her cane, which she had dropped, and helping her get out from under the bin.

"I walked her over to her side door because it was still icy and slippery," Cabral said. "I wanted to make sure she was OK."

The woman said she had been stuck for about 25 minutes with no one there to help her. The woman called him her "angel," and fortunately she walked away with only a small scratch on her hand. The customer's daughter later called the post office to thank Cabral for helping her and said she was glad that her mother had a new friend. **PR**



Jeffrey Cabral