

# Tampa Letter Carrier

Volume I, Issue 1

### A.R. "TONY" HUERTA - NALC BRANCH 599

**MAY 2002** 

## INSIDE THIS

B	011	_
Branch	Officers	2

#### Shop Stewards 3

And The	Beat 4	4
Goes On		

#### Over The Edge 5

Minter, Watts	7
Line	

#### Birdseye View 8

#### Golf Discounts 9

#### MAY MEETINGS

Shop Steward Training April 30<sup>th</sup>, 2002 7 P.M.

Branch Meeting May 2, 2002 7:30 P.M.

TLC May 28<sup>th</sup>, 2002 7 P.M.

Executive Board May 30<sup>th</sup>, 2002 7 P.M.

#### **President's Report**

by Jim Good

Let me begin my first report by thanking the members of Branch 599 for allowing me to serve as your President. It's a great honor and I promise that I will represent all members of this great Branch with honesty and integrity.

I recently attended a Committee of Presidents' meeting in Milwaukee, WI. It was a great opportunity to meet and talk with other Branch Presidents from across the country. I wasn't surprised to learn that other branches share many of the same problems and concerns that we are addressing here in Tampa. Among those are the IRM call-in center, FMLA issues, route adjustments, forced overtime, and general concerns regarding the future of the USPS.

National Association of Letter Carriers' President Vincent Sombrotto addressed the committee concerning the ongoing contract negotiations. He didn't paint a pretty picture. The Mailhandlers' Union, APWU, and Rural Carriers' Union all failed to negotiate contracts. All were sent to Binding Arbitration and the results were not good. President Sombrotto voiced his concerns about these results, but stated that he would not offer a contract to the membership that he himself would not vote for. If a contract is not negotiated by April 19<sup>th</sup> it will be sent to arbitration.

I'm sure that everyone is aware of management's "Transformation Plan." The Union agrees that changes need to be made if the USPS is to survive in the future, but some proposals listed cause me great concern. These include DPSing of flats, less time in the office and more on the street, five day delivery in some areas, "outsourcing " to reduce costs, work outside the USPS for employees injured on the job, and changes in the collective bargaining process.

For the first time in memory letter carriers may be put in an unheard of position. One of the proposals submitted by the USPS would place our members under the "Railway Labor Act" if a contract were not signed. This would give us the right to strike, but would (continued on page 6)

#### **Branch Officers**

President

Jim Good 813-960-3759 5021 Carrollwood Meadows Tampa, Fl. 33625 Treasurer

Michael Anderson 813-681-5688 430 Hickory Tree Circle Seffner, Fl. 33584 MBA/NSBA

Albert Guice 813-621-7931 3001 N. 46<sup>th</sup> St. Tampa, FL. 33605

Executive

Vice President
John Watts
813-971-5525
806 Lexington Boulevard
Tampa, Fl. 33612

**Trustees** 

Arnold "Butch" Smith 813-933-4676 12911 Oakleaf Avenue Tampa, FL. 33612 **Health Benefits** 

Michael Brousseau 727-726-7355 One Octavia Way Safety Harbor, FL 34695

**Vice President** 

Biclie "Dean" Minter Jr. 813-645-6538 620 Jamaica Circle E. Apollo Beach, FL. 33572 Henry Dupree 813-621-6471 4211 E. Paris Street

4211 E. Paris Stree Tampa, Fl. 33610 **Legislative Officer** 

Sam Docimascolo 727-596-8081 P.O. Box 8 Indian Rocks Bch,Fl. 33785

Recording Secretary

Clark Alday 813-238-9685 6205 N. Rome Avenue. # 101 Tampa, FL. 33604 John Derosa 813-996-2539

22554 Weeks Boulevard Land O Lakes, Fl. 34639 **Director of Retirees** 

Financial Secretary

John Gebo 813-985-5474 6122 E. 111<sup>th</sup> Avenue Tampa, Fl.33617 **Sergeant At Arms** 

Lance Jones 813-842-2819 3413 Ellenwood Lane Tampa, Fl. 33618

#### Tampa Letter Carrier

The National Association of Letter Carriers Branch 599, 3003 W. Cypress Street, Tampa, FI 33609-1698, publishes The Tampa Letter Carrier monthly. The opinions expressed in this publication are those of the writers, and do not necessarily reflect the opinions of NALC Branch 599. It is the policy of this publication that all articles submitted for publication must be signed by the writer. Please submit any and all articles to be published in The Tampa Letter Carrier to the branch office no later than the tenth of each month, in order for us to meet our deadline with the printer.

Jim Good - Publisher Kit Kelley - Editor

Branch 599 Office 813-875-0599

A.R. "TONY" HUERTA -		Page 3				
Shop Stewards						
Brandon	33510	Jim Brophy	813-875-1680			
Carrollwood	33618	Duane Dosal	813-920-7991			
Commerce	33602	Dook Ramotar Sr.	813-780-6254			
Forest Hills	33612	John Watts	813-971-5525			
Forest Hills	33612	John Derosa	813-996-2539			
Forest Hills Annex	33613	Ella Winner	352-583-0626			
Hilldale	33614	Gilbert Cabanas	813-855-0516			
Hilldale Annex	33634	Lance Jones	813-889-3913			
Hyde Park	33606	George McEndree	813-935-0244			
Interbay	33611	Dean Minter	813-645-6538			
Interbay	33629	Sammy Graham	813-837-6257			
MacDill	33608	Sammy Graham	813-837-6257			
Northdale	33624	Freddie Nimphius	813-968-7491			
Palm River	33619	J.C. Howard	813-621-1976			
Plant City	33565	Ray Chesser	813-759-2033			
Port Tampa	33616	Sammy Graham	813-837-6257			
Produce	33610	Henry Dupree	813-621-6471			
Ruskin/Sun City	33570	Jack Hencoski	813-633-5422			
Seminole Heights	33603	Tony Diaz	813-872-1542			
Sulphur Springs	33604	Albert Guice	813-621-7931			
TCA	33609	Alan Peacock	813-962-0646			
TCA	33607	Mark Winklepleck	813-837-2227			
Temple Terrace	33617	Michael Anderson	813-681-5688			
Town & Country	33615	Brian Obst	727-507-0135			
Ybor	33605	Detlev Aeppel	813-907-9685			

#### And The Beat Goes On

#### by Ray Wallace

Our new president says there will be a paper. Great! Tons of NALC Branches large and small put out a paper. It's the best way in the world to keep the membership aware of what is going on with their branch and, just in general, the inside news of the NALC and the PO From my years of being a Shop Steward in Brandon, I have found out that the friendly guy with the tie on who calls himself a "manager" (a big misrepresentation to the real managers of the world) - really the word should be "supervisor" - well, any way, they have a way of not telling you the whole picture or the whole truth.

Again the turnout at the Annual Dinner Dance was low on Saturday, January 19, 2002. Why? I don't know. The food was plenty and very good. (**Lenny** didn't cook it - only kidding.) The D.J. and the music were great (by one of Branch 599's own: **Tony Diaz**. If you need a good D.J., see Tony.)

I went to get a bucket of ice and there were no ice buckets. No one knew where they were. Damn **Herbie Puig** - WE MISS YOU! Herbie died in November 2001. He took care of the building and knew where everything was.

**Bill Young**, National Vice President was the installing Officer of our own new President **James Good** and all of the slate was re-elected to their respective offices except for Vice President **Mike Brousseau** who was upset by **Too Tall John Watts.** I give much credit to Mike Brousseau who was at the installation dinner. Of all who ran for President and lost, not a one was there except Mike Brousseau. As **Allan Peacock** said at the December Union Meeting, **everyone** should put aside their differences of opinion and all work together in the Best Interest of Branch 599 and its members. If you are really dedicated as you say you are then you will prove it by being at all the future meetings helping our new President and the members by applying yourself.

The one carrier who I have always thought a lot of is **Mike Anderson**. He was Shop Steward, ran for President and won, ran at end of term and lost. Did he say to hell with the Branch? NO! He has stayed on and became Treasurer and has been involved with anything that had to do with Branch 599. Mike is truly a dedicated Union Officer of which Branch 599 can be proud.

When I read about Enron I was wondering if any of our ex-Postmaster Generals were running the place? No one is better than the Post Office for working with numbers and/or changing them. Let's hope that this year we can let all the members know what amount of bonus your friendly manager is getting on your performance.

I'll never forget the time I asked a supervisor, what kind of money are we talking about? He replied "Oh, a couple of hundred." When I got the report it was over a thousand. An easy mistake. I'm sure---right, yeah! Tell me another one.

I don't know what happened to Brandon but it's a disgrace the amount of freeloaders getting all of the benefits that the UNION has fought to obtain and keep throughout the years. A freeloader is a SCAB or NON-UNION MEMBER who wants (continued on page 7)

#### Over The Edge

#### by Marilyn Cutting

"Over the Edge" --- I'm hanging on my finger tips right now—waiting—waiting—for a supervisor to push. **PUSH**—me to work my route in eight hours only to force me to take an hour trip. **PUSH** –me to take a trip when I come back off the street, when ten and twelve hour people have gone home. **PUSH**—me to leave review mail for days, because to them that's work that doesn't count. **PUSH**—me to case on other routes when I don't know them; then have them ready to go when the carriers are leaving; then know what an hour or half hour trip is. **PUSH**—me to get bumped off my T-6 string and put up a route I'm unfamiliar with. **PUSH** me to case my route and another and still have an eight hour day. **PUSH**—me to explain why in the last two weeks I've had to put in change of schedules to go to doctor appointments. **PUSH**—me to work six days a week. **PUSH**—me to do a review mail on another route. **PUSH**—me to two different start times for the week. **PUSH**—me to talk with malice about my fellow letter carriers. **PUSH**—me not to have any vacation time because they are holding spots for people who don't and haven't been working in this office for well over a year, some two years. **PUSH**—me to work until 6, 7 p.m. on the street. **PUSH**—me to explain to customers why I'm there so late. **PUSH**—me to explain to customers why their mail is not getting forwarded when I'm on a trip. **PUSH**—me to explain to my family why I can't get a day off. **PUSH**—me to explain to customers why we need an increase when I deliver their mail later each day. **PUSH**—me to work with possible anthrax letters. **PUSH**—me to work in filthy trucks and not allow me to clean it myself on the clock. **PUSH**—me not to call in sick for fear of being called into the office and being "counseled" on abusing sick leave. **PUSH**—me to ignore my own aches and pains and just keep taking pills to mask the pain. **PUSH**—me to tears when I have to explain day in and day out to a supervisor why I can"t do trips on under time. **PUSH**—me to embarrassment after this incident. **PUSH**—me to listen to someone tell me that I can't have a cell phone on the floor and then be o.k. with it when I call about being late. **PUSH**—me with talks about customer service when I know full well it has deteriorated. **PUSH**—me with the scanners. **PUSH**—me with finding five certifieds in my DPS when I only sign for one. **PUSH**—me for giving a leave and return time and then having a 20 minute meeting. **PUSH**—me to hear an announcement from a clerk to pick up our own flats from the hot rack because every day flats come in tubs sorted every which way. (Remember those days when they were put in the coffins and counted correctly?) So no wonder why I feel like I'm getting so close to that edge everyday. Will I soon join the ranks of the "stressed out"?

I think, hope and pray that better days are ahead, that this won't last much longer and life as a letter carrier will be a proud job to have.

P.S. Overheard a supervisor saying "NALC is a joke." Think about what that one statement says. Why are we are being treated the way we are?

#### **President's Report** (continued from page 1)

also allow a lockout by management. It would also allow for the appointment of a Mediator by the Secretary of Labor, and a ninety-day cooling off period, as well as discontinuing the system of Binding Arbitration.

It is therefore imperative that we protect our local "Work Stoppage Fund" that was established years ago, by those who came before us, for just such a situation as we are now in. A proposed by-law change was made at the Branch Meeting on April 4<sup>th</sup> that would open up that fund for purposes other than what it was intended. That bylaw change will be voted on during the Branch Meeting on May 2<sup>nd</sup> with a two-third's majority needed for passage. It is a vote that could affect every letter carrier in Branch 599 currently employed by the USPS. Please come to the meeting and let your voice be heard!

In closing, I want to invite all members to contribute their thoughts and opinions by submitting letters for publication in our monthly newsletter. The deadline for submission will be the 10<sup>th</sup> of each month. It has been re-established because I believe it is the best forum for getting information to the members, as well as giving you an opportunity to voice your concerns. Please become involved, this is your Union!

#### **Letter Carriers' Food Drive**

#### by Cheryl Clothier

Hello, Branch 599! May 11th is almost here! That means collecting lots of canned goods. The year 2002 marks a great milestone for letter carriers. It is our 10th year nationally collecting food for the needy. Last year in Tampa we collected close to 832,000 pounds of canned and dry goods. Our goal this year is one million pounds. It sounds like a lot and it is. The need this year is even greater than in years past, because of the September 11th disaster. All the local food banks have been depleted to empty shelves because the charitable contributions made by corporations, businesses, and private persons were not available locally. Most companies set up their annual budgets to include charitable contributions. But when I started making phone calls and visiting our contributors from the past they were not able to help us. They gave so much for 9-11 that they maxed out their charitable contributions for this year. It takes approximately \$4500 to buy the paper for the flyer handouts, which we put in each residential mailbox. It also costs about \$3500 for the purchase of the bags. It has been extremely difficult to get cash donations. Some companies have sponsored the food drive with the use of their equipment. In this department we have had no problems. The FLYER has gone above and beyond by donating their time and expertise to assist in our cause. They have made the templates for the flyers for their print presses, and in turn forwarded those same templates containing the sponsor logos to our T-Shirt printer, and to our plastic bag manufacturer. Mayor Dick Greco will be here at the Letter Carriers' Hall on April 30 @ 10:00 to sign a proclamation claiming May 11th as the Letter Carrier's 10th Annual Food Drive Day. All of our sponsors feel that we are doing the community a great service. I don't know about you, but I personally feel good to know that I helped in such a worthy cause.

#### Vice-President's Report

#### by Dean Minter

Brothers and Sisters of NALC Branch 599, I want to thank you all for your trust in my abilities and electing me as the Vice-President. Regretfully, I now have to inform you I must now resign for personal medical reasons. I believe I could have done a good job representing you, but cannot jeopardize my health. I hope you all will have trust in Jim Good, Branch 599 President, appointing a qualified replacement for myself. I believe Jim is outstanding, both as an individual and as President, who has our best interest in mind whenever he makes decisions. Our Branch is in safe hands with Jim at the helm and I hope that you all will give him your continuing support in these trying times.

The Watts Line by John Watts

I would like to thank the members of Branch 599 for their support in electing me Executive Vice President. I will continue to represent the members of this great branch with the same passion and dedication that the membership has grown to know.

It's been long over due but our branch newsletter is back in business. We will use the newsletter to keep the membership up to date on concerns and issues that have an effect on all letter carriers.

The branch filed a class action grievance on taking the collections off a letter carrier's route and moving the collections to the airport. The B Team has impassed this issue to arbitration. The branch has also filed a class action grievance on moving the PTFs from the stations in the city of Tampa to the airport to do the collections that management pulled off letter carriers' routes. We are grieving the fact that this is violating the rights of the PTFs to put in preferred bids on vacant routes or bid to a higher level position. We are waiting on a ruling from the B Team. Hopefully we will prevail and the PTFs will go back to their bid stations. In solidarity until next month...

#### And The Beat Goes On (continued from page 4)

everything for free on the backs of the carrier working next to him WHO DOES PAY UN-ION DUES. I don't know how they do things in Tampa working next to SCABS but in Brandon it never made a difference. When I worked in Brandon, I never talked to a SCAB. Some were past friends, but my convictions run strong with the UNION. In New York, if you were a SCAB, you lived a lonely life as no one talked to you. But this is Florida, a right-to-work state, where half the people never heard of a UNION and "who NEEDS one". You only need a UNION when you have nothing and from what I see, that is not too far down the road.

ATBGO

#### **Birdseye View**

#### by Allan Peacock

It has been along time since I have written an article for our newsletter but then again it has been a long time since we had the opportunity to have a newsletter. Being a member of this union for almost 29 years has given me the hindsight as well as some insight to the current state of affairs and its affect on all of us. When I started working for the Postal Service we were going through a period of time that is similar to what is taking place today. There were a lot of changes that were being implemented, there were hiring freezes in place, and there was concern about things that affected our benefits. The one thing that stood tall through that time was the strength of the union and how we fought together to protect our rights and our benefits. We battled for fair labor standards and won. We negotiated in good faith for numerous contracts and most of them ended in our favor even while having to go to arbitration. In the entire time I have been a member, we only ratified one contract--the only one in history of the Postal Service's entirety under the Reform Act of 1970. We are probably more uncertain of our future now than we have ever been and now is the time to become involved in the one and only hope that we have ever had, the rock that we can cling to only through our mutual support for each other. The resistance is strong and it has the support of technology and is driven by the kind of individual greed that is destroying so many aspects of culture. Nothing can be taken for granted or assumed that it will last forever. In light of the recent testimony the Postal Service proposed in its documents to Congress, the options do not seem to appreciate the dedicated service that has been provided by its employees throughout it history and especially in these current trying times. With unemployment heading towards all time highs, and it is not inclusive of people who have given up trying or applying for opportunity to improve their situation, is it difficult to understand why there is so little concern for the American worker?

Dismantling large institutions has become Corporate America's favorite past time, through merger, downsizing, contracting, outsourcing and even lockout or work stoppage. When nobody least expects it is when it can happen, without notice or preparation, without concern for the worker or family.

There have been very rare occasions when the majority of our members have gathered together at our union hall in the 29 years I have been a member of Branch 599. There was always great attendance at our picnics when we had them, and there was the time the building was busting at the seams when National was contemplating a possible strike. Even though we all knew that the consequences of a walk out could cost us our jobs, we were committed to each other and agreed to stand together. When we established a work stoppage fund, we considered all the possibilities that this fund might grow and hopefully never find it necessary to have to use it, but there was the security of knowing that there was a plan in place for the what if. Well, the what if is knocking at our door and the members should make every effort to insure that the plan remains intact for what it was intended. Now more than ever it is the time for all active and retired member to unite together to be prepared for the what if and show our commitment to each other. Attending our union meetings at this time should be given the same importance as securing our future for each other and our families.



#### Labor Management Members

Tony Diaz 813-872-1542 4710 N Freemont Ave. Tampa, Fl. 33603

Matt Kokich 813-715-1350 4721 Wisteria Dr. Zephyrhills, FL. 33541

#### MAP'S Coordinator

Christian Albrecht 727-791-7162 112 K Avenue Clearwater, Fl. 33759

#### Presidents Emeritus

Milton McConnell James Butler Sam Docimascolo Garland Tickle Howard Carter Orbe Andux Don Thomas Michael Anderson Lenin V. Perez

# Great Offers For NALC Golfers at ACE GOLF

The National Association of Letter Carriers, since it's inception, has strived to be an association that is aimed at providing an array of benefits to its members. Keeping true to this, the Tampa Bay chapter of the association has now teamed up with **Ace Golf**, a golf driving range on W. Linebaugh Avenue and Veterans Expressway to provide long lasting benefits and offers to our members.

Ace Golf is a lighted, 15 acre practice range with 1 acre Bermuda tees, target greens and a short game area with chipping greens, putting greens and sand bunkers. The facility also offers Covershots, covered grass tees for shade and inclement weather play. They also offer group and private lessons to improve one's game with classes taught by their own **PGA/LPGA** certified instructors.

Ace Golf has specials lined up for NALC members, which include getting a small bucket of balls **FREE** with the purchase of a medium bucket and **DISCOUNTED** prices on lessons and merchandise in the pro shop.

NALC members receive a **Preferred Member Card** entitling them to these discounts and more. Get your Preferred Member card by displaying your Postal Service ID or Association ID on your next visit to Ace Golf.

Interested members can also hold events at Ace Golf for fundraising and other special occasions. Ace Golf offers a complete package of group events that can include unlimited buckets at the range, rental clubs for your group and a golf pro for the entire time at an all-inclusive **special price for NALC members**. Call for details. The National Association of Letter Carriers is hopeful that it's members will make the best utilization of the benefits that Ace Golf has in the offering. For further information, **contact Dave Baer at Ace Golf at 813-960-GOLF (4653)** 

## What A Federal Employee Should Do When Injured at Work



Report to Supervisor

Every job-related injury should be reported as soon as possible to your supervisor. Injury also means any illness or disease that is caused or aggravated by the employment as well as damage to medical braces, artificial limbs and other prosthetic devices.

Obtain Medical Care

Before you obtain medical treatment, ask your supervisor to authorize medical treatment by use of form CA-16. You may initially select the physician to provide necessary treatment. This may be a private physician or, if available, a local Federal medical officer/hospital. Emergency medical treatment may be obtained without prior authorization. Take the form CA-16 and form OWCP-1500/HCFA-1500 to the provider you select. The form OWCP-1500/ HCFA 1500 is the billing form physicians must use to submit bills to OWCP. Hospitals and pharmacies may use their own billing forms. On occupational disease claims form CA-16 may not be issued without prior approval from OWCP.

File Written Notice

In traumatic injuries, complete the employee's portion of Form CA-1. Obtain the form from your employing agency, complete and turn it in to your supervisor as soon as possible, but not later than 30 days following the injury. For occupational disease, use form CA-2 instead of form CA-1. For more detailed information carefully read the "Benefits . . . " and "Instructions . . . . ' sheets which are attached to the Forms CA-1 and CA-2.

Obtain Receipt of Notice

A "Receipt" of Notice of Injury is attached to each Form CA-1 and Form CA-2. Your supervisor should complete the receipt and return it to you for your personal records. If it is not returned to you, ask your supervisor for it.

Compensation For Wage Loss

Submit Claim for COP/Leave and/or If disabled due to traumatic injury, you may claim continuation of pay (COP) not to exceed 45 calendar days or use leave. A claim for COP must be submitted no later than 30 days following the injury (the form CA-1 is designed to serve as a claim for continuation of pay). If disabled and claiming COP, submit to your employing agency within 10 work days medical evidence that you sustained a disabling traumatic injury. If disabled beyond the COP period, or if you are not entitled to COP, you may claim compensation on form CA-7 or use leave. If disabled due to occupational disease, you may claim compensation on form CA-7 or use leave. A claim for compensation for disability should be submitted as soon as possible after it is apparent that you are disabled and will enter a leave-without-pay status.

The Federal Employees' Compensation Act (FECA) is administered by the U.S. Department of Labor, Employment Standards Administration, Office of Workers' Compensation Programs (OWCP). Benefits include continuation of pay for traumatic injuries, compensation for wage loss, medical care and other assistance for job-related injury or death. For additional informal on about the FECA, read pamphlet CA-11, 'When Injured at Work" or Federal Personnel Manual, Chapter 810, Injury Compensation, available from your employing agency. The agency will also give you the address of the OWCP Office which services your area.

# TAMPA LETTER CARRIERS PRESENT BINGO

#### Come join the fun EVERY WEDNESDAY AND FRIDAY

DOORS OPEN AT 5:30 GAMES START AT 6:30

AT THE TAMPA LETTER CARRIERS HALL 3003 W. CYPRESS St. Tampa, Fl. 33609 813-877-4785

Don't Fail To Check That Pain In Your Neck!

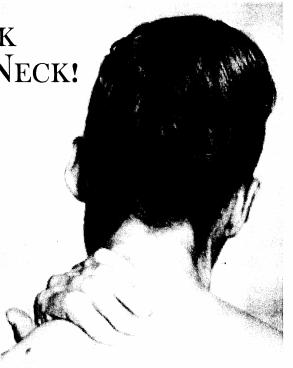
Many neck problems, though not life-threatening, can impair your health if not corrected. Damaged or irritated nerves from misaligned cervical vertebrae can cause neck pain.

The chiropractic approach to treating neck pain is to find the source of the problem and correct it without surgery or the use of medication. By correcting the source of the problem, the body can heal naturally without nerve interference.

# Sheldon Road Chiropractic and Massage

8412 Sheldon Road Tampa, Fl. 33615 ph. 884-1457

Or visit us on the Web at: www.drkollias.com



#### TAMPA POSTAL DISTRICT FEDERAL CREDIT UNION

#### POST OFFICE BOX 22407 - TAMPA FL. 33622

AIRPORT (813) 876-3128 N. FLORIDA (813) 264 -4969 VALRICO (813) 661-5868 SPRING HILL (352) **683-9711** 

New & Used Autos 5.50% APR

CHECK OUT New & Used RV, Motorhome 9.75% APR

OUR LOAN Computer Loans 10.50% APR

RATES Revolving Line of Credit Loan 10.50% APR

Home Equity Line of Credit PRIME +1% APR

(APR – Annual Percentage Rate. Rates and terms subject to change. Line of credit loans variable rate not below 6%. Prime rate is based on the rate published in the Wall Street Journal. Certain conditions and credit approval apply.)

## **Call Your Local Branch for Details**

A.R. "Tony" Huerta NALC Branch 599 3003 West Cypress Street Tampa FL 33609-1698 (813) 875-0599 fax (813) 870-0599 email: nalc599@verizon.net

NONPROFIT ORG. U. S. POSTAGE PAID TAMPA FL PERMIT NO. 1285